

VILNIUS UNIVERSITY

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POSTMODERNISM IN SALMAN RUSHDIE'S NOVELS
MIDNIGHT'S CHILDREN AND SHAME

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VILNIAUS UNIVERSITETAS

Jūratė Radavičiūtė

**POSTMODERNIZMO APRAIŠKOS SALMAN RUSHDIE
ROMANUOSE „VIDURNAKČIO VAIKAI“ IR „GĖDA“**

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	6
PART I. Postmodernism: Decentering the Discourse.....	11
1.1. The Perception of Language in Postmodernity.....	15
1.2. Postmodern Literature: Author-Reader-Text.....	27
1.3. The Concept of a Sign in Postmodern Literature.....	35
PART II. Undermining the Traditional Usage of Synecdoche in Salman Rushdie's Novel <i>Midnight's Children</i>	44
2.1. The Sources of the Images.....	45
2.2. The Connotations of Sexuality.....	59
PART III. The Indeterminacies of the Narrative in Salman Rushdie's Novel <i>Midnight's Children</i>	71
3.1. The Image of the Void and Its Supplements in the Portrayal of Aadam Aziz	72
3.2. The Interpretation of the Void and Its Supplements in the Portrayal of Saleem Sinai.....	78
3.3. The Role of the Imagery of Liquidity within the Little Narrative of the Novel.....	86
3.3.1. The Image of a Leaking Narrative.....	86
3.3.2. The Image of Food.....	90
3.3.3. The Image of the Ghost.....	91
3.3.4. The Image of the Dream.....	95
3.4. The Indeterminacy of the Ending(s) of the Novel.....	102
PART IV. The Play of Simulacra in Salman Rushdie's Novel <i>Shame</i>	106
4.1. The Manipulation of Simulacra to Create a Public Image.....	108
4.2. Omar Khayyam's Search for the Supplement.....	118
4.3. Reality Preceded by Simulacra.....	128
CONCLUSION.....	138
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	149

INTRODUCTION

Postmodernism is generally regarded as an ambiguous term due to a great variety of its tendencies as well as to its still lasting continuity which does not allow us to view the term from a historic perspective. In the field of literary criticism, postmodernism offers two different perspectives for approaching a literary work: inward and outward directed in respect to the text. The inward-directed approach has been chosen as the basis for this dissertation. This approach represents a cluster of propositions by individual theorists rather than distinct theories, in contrast to the outward-directed approach to the text which is represented by numerous theories such as feminism and post-colonialism.

The concept of decentering has been chosen as the key concept to discuss text-oriented propositions within the theoretical framework of postmodernism. The concept embraces such terms as *the death of the author*, *the elimination of the transcendental signified*, *indeterminacy*, *simulacra* and *supplement*. The theoretical discussion and the practical analysis of Salman Rushdie's works are carried out with the view to the concept of decentering.

The aim of the dissertation is to consolidate the ideas, defining the inward-directed approach to a literary text, and to provide an interpretation of Salman Rushdie's novels *Midnight's Children* and *Shame* with the view to these ideas.

The tasks of the research are as follows:

- To identify the change in the perception of language in postmodernism,
- To explicate the impact which the transformed concept of language has had on a literary text,
- To provide an account on the postmodern perception of a sign with the view to the concept of simulacra,
- To interpret Salman Rushdie's novels *Midnight's Children* and *Shame* on the basis of the provided theoretical background.

The Methodology of the Research

The propositions within the framework of deconstruction have been taken as the methodological means for the research. The theory of deconstruction explicated by the French philosopher Jacques Derrida has been selected as the basis for this research. In addition, the commentaries on the method of deconstruction voiced by Barbara Johnson and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak have also been relied upon.

The theoretical background of the dissertation is based on the following works by the theorists of postmodernism:

- the postmodern concept of language - M. Foucault's *The Order of Things*, J. Derrida's *Dissemination, Of Grammatology, Writing and Difference*;
- the method of deconstruction - J. Derrida's *Dissemination, Of Grammatology, Writing and Difference*, B. Johnson's "Translator's Introduction" in J. Derrida's *Dissemination*, G. Spivak's "Translator's Preface" in J. Derrida's *Of Grammatology*;
- the postmodern literary text - R. Barthes' *Empire of Signs, Image-Music-Text, The Pleasure of the Text*, U. Eco's *The Role of the Reader*, P. Ricoeur's *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*,
- the concept of a sign - J. Baudrillard's *The Conspiracy of Art, The Illusion of the End, Simulations*, I. Hassan's *The Dismemberment of Orpheus, The Right Promethean Fire*.

The Actuality and Novelty of the Dissertation

The actuality of the dissertation lies in the choice of the theoretical approach and the material for the research. In her book *The Politics of Postmodernism*, a theorist of postmodernism Linda Hutcheon rightly notices that the inward-directed approach to a text can be called 'individual postmodernism', for it is not represented by any definite school or theory. This dissertation aims at addressing the problem of the indeterminacy of the inward-directed approach to the text by proposing the consideration of the concept of decentering as one of the nuclear concepts which could serve as the uniting point for the inward-directed approach to a text.

Regarding the material which has been selected for the practical research in this dissertation, it must be pointed out that Salman Rushdie has been largely underestimated by Lithuanian literary critics. Despite a big number of the translations of his novels into the Lithuanian language, there have not been any attempts to write a doctoral dissertation on S. Rushdie's works. There is a Master thesis by Indre Tichonoviene (Siauliai University), written in the field of translation, "Indian Cultural Phenomena in Translations of Salman Rushdie's Novels into Lithuanian". However, in the field of Lithuanian literary criticism, this dissertation appears to be the first attempt to approach S. Rushdie's literary works.

The Structure of the Dissertation

The dissertation consists of an introduction, four parts and a general conclusion. The first part of the work provides the theoretical background for the analysis of S. Rushdie's novels; it consists of three chapters. The first chapter provides a detailed account on the transformation the perception of language has undergone in postmodernism in comparison to the concept of language in the Classical episteme. Two conflicting views on the issue are presented: Michel Foucault's attitude towards the change in the role and the understanding of language as an integral part of Western metaphysics; and Jacques Derrida's proposition to view the postmodern concept of language as a break with the Western philosophical tradition. The second chapter provides an overview of the discussion about the role of the writer and the reader as well as the constituents of a literary text. The works of Umberto Eco, Roland Barthes and Paul Ricoeur are referred to in this chapter. The third chapter deals with the question of a sign in postmodernism. Two viewpoints are presented: Jean Baudrillard's theory of simulation which points to the break between the sign and basic reality; and Ihab Hassan's proposition to interpret the process of dematerialization of a sign as a creative rather than a destructive process.

The second part of the dissertation analyses the process of the undermining of the traditional connotations of the synecdoche in Salman Rushdie's novel *Midnight's Children*. It consists of two chapters, the first of which includes the analysis of the sources of the imagery. The connotations of the images are discussed with the view to undermining of the traditional meanings and the ambiguity caused in the process of the undermining of the

traditional connotations. The second chapter provides the interpretation of the connotations attributed to the concept of sexuality which is very important both to Salman Rushdie's prose and to the literature of postmodernism in general; the images of the nose, hair and voice are focused on in this chapter.

The third part of the dissertation deals with the indeterminacy of the narrative in Rushdie's novel *Midnight's Children*. This part consists of three chapters where the imagery, related to the concepts of the void and the supplement, is discussed. The first two chapters investigate the indeterminacy of the connotations attributed to the concept of the void and its supplements in relation to two characters of the novel Aadam Aziz and Saleem Sinai. The third chapter dwells on the concept of indeterminacy in relation to the supplement-related imagery of the novel, focusing on the connotations of the images of a leaking narrative, food, ghost and dream. The third chapter also provides an interpretation of the multiple endings of the novel with the view to the indeterminacy of the position of postmodern literature with regard to the literary tradition of the West.

The fourth part of the dissertation discusses the concept of a simulacrum within the literary world of Salman Rushdie's novel *Shame*. This part consists of three chapters which deal with different aspects of the theory of simulation. The first chapter investigates the mechanism of the creation and manipulation of the simulacrum, revealed in the portrayal of Iskander Harappa and Raza Hyder. The second chapter provides an interpretation of the processual nature of a simulacrum with the view to the portrayal of Omar Khayyam. The final chapter analyses the phenomenon of the precession of the simulacrum through the interpretation of three female characters: Bilquis Hyder and her daughters Naveed and Sufiya Zinobia.

The choice of the two novels *Midnight's Children* and *Shame* for the research has been determined by the selection of the theoretical background to approach Salman Rushdie's novels. The imagery of the novels enables an in-depth investigation of the concepts of indeterminacy and supplement as well as the theory of simulacrum. However, it must be pointed out that Salman Rushdie's novel *The Satanic Verses* appears to provide

valuable material for the further investigation into the postmodernism in Rushdie's novels, although this famous novel would call for a different approach and different interpretations.

PART I. Postmodernism: Decentering the Discourse

The postmodern discourse is often related to the concept of decentering through the use of concepts such as *the absence of the transcendental signified* or *the death of the author*. This chapter aims at exploring the conditions for the increase in the importance of the concept and the directions the discourse has taken under its influence. The direction which has been selected as the grounds for the interpretation of Salman Rushdie's novels will be provided a more extensive discussion, covering the following areas: language, text and sign.

To start with, most schools of postmodern literary criticism refer to the works of Michel Foucault as a source of inspiration for the contemporary philosophical thought as well as the perception of the postmodern discourse per se. In this respect, Umberto Eco's proposition is often quoted in the works of the theorists of postmodernism: "postmodern is 'the orientation of anyone who has learned the lesson of Foucault'." (in Hutcheon, 2002, p.3) Clair Colebrook maintains that the impact of Foucault's works resides in his viewing history as a process:" for Foucault it is only through practices, such as history writing and interpretation, that identities are produced." (Colebrook, 1997, p. 35)

The emphasis on the perception of the discourse as a process dependent on the factor of subjectivity has given rise to the emergence of two major trends within the postmodern discourse. Linda Hutcheon explicates them in her definition of postmodernism:

It is one which juxtaposes and gives equal value to the self-reflexive and the historically grounded: to that which is inward- directed and belongs to the world of art (such as parody) and that which is outward-directed and belongs to 'real life' (such as history) (Hutcheon, 2002, p. 2)

In spite of the apparent difference in viewpoints, both the schools provide their interpretations of the concept of decentering, thus remaining within the postmodern framework.

The tendency to relate the discourse to the outside of the text is typical of the representatives of such schools of literary criticism as New Historicism, as well as its

subdivisions such as Post-colonialism and Feminism, to mention a few. They rely on Foucault's idea about the relation between the power and the discourse. According to Peter Widdowson, Foucault's works such as *The History of Sexuality, Discipline and Punish* or *Madness and Civilisation* imply that "real power is exercised through discourse." (Selden, Widdowson, 1993, p. 158)

The connection between the power and the discourse has been treated differently by the representatives of different schools. The theory of feminism asserts the role of a gender in relation to the manifestation of power through the discourse. In the work *Sexual/Textual Politics*, Toril Moi distinguishes between two major schools within the theory of feminism: Anglo-Saxon and French. The first school represented by such theorists as Toril Moi and Linda Hutcheon (*A Poetics of Postmodernism* (1988), *The Politics of Postmodernism* (2002)) focuses on the social aspect of feminism, relying on the theory of Marxism. Alternatively, the French school of feminism relies on the theory of post structuralism, represented by R. Barthes, J. Derrida, et cetera. The contributions of Julia Kristeva, Helene Cioux and Luce Irigaray should be mentioned with the view to the main directions within the French school of feminism. All three theorists explore the theme of feminine writing (*écriture féminine*), proposing different interpretations of the theme within the theoretical framework of post structuralism. Julia Kristeva researches the role of language with the view to Lacan's theory of psychoanalysis (*The Revolution in Poetic language* (1984), *Tales of Love* (1987), *Desire in Language* (1980)). Helene Cioux relates the theme of feminine writing to the woman's body (*Writing Differences* (1988)), while Luce Irigaray explores the mythological dimension of the woman's self-perception within the theoretical framework of psychoanalysis (*This Sex Which Is Not One* (1985)).

The representatives of New Historicism and its subdivision Post-colonialism discuss the relation between power and the text with the view to the political discourse. The research carried out by new historicists has mainly aimed at revealing the connections between the literary texts of a certain historic period and the forms of power reinforced through these texts. The key theorist of New Historicism Stephen Greenblatt investigates William Shakespeare's texts to provide an insight into the epoch of Renaissance, his major

works including *Shakespearean Negotiations* (1988), *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* (1980), *Marvelous Possessions* (1991), *Practicing New Historicism* (2000), *Representing the English Renaissance* (1991). Colebrook asserts that new historicists do not see culture as a counter-product of a political discourse. In contrast, they see “the cultural domain as a contradictory site: a place where capitalism is both enforced and challenged; (...) an area which is both carved out as autonomously aesthetic and as ideologically determined.” (Colebrook, 1997, p. 25) Thus, the point of view of new historicists echoes Foucault’s idea of history as a process, dependent on the discourse and its interpretations.

Post-colonial literary criticism explores the relation between the text and the outside world through the focus on the concepts of the center and the periphery as well as the ability of the discourse to interact with the outside. Post-colonial literary theory embraces different approaches to the issue of center vs. periphery. The works by Frantz Fanon (*Black Skin, White Masks* (1986), *The Wretched of the Earth* (1967), *Toward the African Revolution* (1967)) provide a psychological evaluation of the relationship between the center and the periphery. Gayatri Chakravorti Spivak focuses on the gender aspect of this problem in her works such as *In Other Worlds* (1987) or “Three Women’s Texts and a Critique of Imperialism” (1985). Homi Bhabha adds a philosophical dimension to the post-colonial discussion (*The Location of Culture* (2007) and *Nation and Narration* (1990)), while Edward Said presents a point of view related to sociology and history (*Orientalism* (2003), *Culture and Imperialism* (1994), *The World, The Text and The Critic* (1983) and *Covering Islam* (1981)).

In terms of power and the discourse, Edward Said provides a deep insight into the problem in his work *Orientalism* where he elaborates on the concept of the discourse of Orientalism. There he claims that although initially Orientalism was an artificially and systematically created entity, through its development though it started to create the outside reality: affecting the perception of themselves, that is of the people of the Orient and forming the identity of the Occident as an opposite to the Orient as well. In this respect, Said is a new historicist in his interpretation of the discourse as a location where the forces within the text and of the outside interact.

The post-colonial interpretation of the concept of decentering lies not only in the perception of the discourse as a process, but also in the understanding of the center as such. Homi Bhabha, another important figure in post-colonialism, defines the post-colonial perception of the center through an allusion to his literature studies in England:

the canonical 'center' may, indeed, be most interesting for its elusiveness, most compelling as an enigma of authority. What was missing from the traditional world of English literary study, as I encountered it, was a rich and paradoxical engagement with the pertinence of what lay in an oblique or alien relation to the forces of centering (...)(Bhabha, 2007,p. xi)

The concept of the center as proposed by Bhabha is a postmodern one, for it is understood as a function rather than a fixed locus: it is seen as elusive and enigmatic instead of determined and fixed. However, the attention of the author here is paid not to the concept of the center as such but to the supplement for the center which is identified as being previously marginalized. The perception of the supplement which Bhabha provides is close to that of Derrida's who sees an impossibility of a supplement to become an equivalent for the missing center because of the estrangement characteristic of their relationships.

Another direction which the postmodern theory has taken is inwards the text. This trend is not represented by separate schools; however, the works of individual postmodern theorists such as Jacques Derrida, Roland Barthes or Ihab Hassan form a body of texts which presents a different point of view from the first trend discussed above. As this direction of the postmodern thought has not been unified under any names or schools, it is represented by an ambiguous or sometimes conflicting collection of texts, which Linda Hutcheon calls 'individual postmodernisms'. This chapter aims at revealing certain tendencies within this direction of postmodernism and using them as the background for the interpretation of Salman Rushdie's novels.

The contribution of Michel Foucault's works to the inward-directed interpretation of the discourse should not be underestimated. The perception of the changing role of language in the postmodern discourse, which was asserted in Foucault's book *The Order of Things*, has initiated the discussion over the significance of language in postmodernism and given rise to the emergence of a different direction of the research. The subsequent division will

overview the discussion between Foucault and Derrida regarding the role of language and will set the background for the further discussion of the inward-directed approach to the discourse.

1.1. The Perception of Language in Postmodernity

The perception of language has undergone a significant transformation in the Modern period. The change was initiated by Modernists who challenged the concept of language as a reflection of reality by declaring the supremacy of form over content and the autonomy of language. However, a hundred years later this concept still remains a dominant point of the discussion in the studies of postmodernism. There is no common agreement regarding the origins of the perception of language in the postmodern period as well as the theoretical background for the study of language. As the further research will be conducted in the field of postmodern literature, it is important to overview the dominant approaches to language here as they will help to define the methodology of the research.

The aim of this chapter is to present the conflicting views on language in the postmodern period and highlight the impact that the change has produced on literature. With the view to the above mentioned aims, the ideas of two key theorists of Postmodernism will be overviewed: Michel Foucault's history of language in the Western world and Jacques Derrida's critique of the perception of language within Western philosophical tradition and his ideas on *deconstruction* as a method of interpreting texts.

In *The Order of Things*, Michel Foucault suggests that the concept of language dominant in the 20th century is not unique; on the contrary, it fits within the historic development of the concept of language in Western philosophy and has affinities with the perception of language in the 16th century. According to Michael Foucault, in the 16th century, language was perceived as an independent entity in-between real and esoteric worlds. As Foucault describes it, in the 16th century, language

is an opaque, mysterious thing, closed in upon itself, fragmented mass, its enigma renewed in every interval, which combines here and there with the forms

of the world and becomes interwoven with them (...) the role of content or of sign, that of secret or of indicator. (Foucault, 2006, p. 38)

It was believed that the original language used by the people was a direct reflection of the real world; however, due to the anger of God caused by the builders of Babel, the unity between things and words had been destroyed and language lost its representative function. It became a mediator between the man and the world; this role related language to certain qualities so that the language could be used for a definite purpose.

In the 16th century, language is perceived as “the figuration of a world redeeming itself, lending its ear at last to the true word.” (ibid, p. 48) Knowing just one language limits the truth that is accessible to a person as only all existing languages make the image of the world complete. What is more, although languages do not bear a direct resemblance to the world, it is possible to recognize a true nature of the world through language using analogies.

A literary work that exemplifies this perception of language is *Don Quixote*, in Foucault’s opinion. The very image of Don Quixote is that of a written sign, as Foucault puts it, “he himself is like a sign, a long graphism, a letter that has just escaped from the open pages of a book.” (ibid, p. 51) He reverses a quest of the 16th century to investigate the nature of language through analogies to the real world. Don Quixote explores the real world looking for analogies in language. In the second part of his adventures, it becomes obvious that Don Quixote has managed to counterfeit the reality which for him and people he meets is based purely on the story that he tells.

Don Quixote has achieved his reality- a reality he owes to language alone, and which resides entirely inside the words. Don Quixote’s truth is not in relation of the words to the world but in that slender and constant relation woven between themselves by verbal signs (...). Words have swallowed up their own nature as signs. (ibid, p. 54)

Thus, in *Don Quixote*, the language of the 16th century reaches its ideal state: it becomes equivalent to reality which presupposes the equal status of the language to that of the world

outside the language. Under this condition, the man's perception of the world can be completed under the condition that he understands the mysteries of language.

However, the 16th century is not so optimistic regarding the possibilities to uncover the secrets either of the world or of a text. The way of approaching texts in this century commentaries can serve a good stead. Commentaries do not aim at revealing the truth, as a complete understanding of a text is impossible. In Foucault's opinion, commentaries target mysterious elements within texts: "it calls into being, below the existing discourse, another discourse that is more fundamental and, as it were, 'more primal', which it sets itself the task of restoring." (ibid, p. 45) As this task can hardly be fulfilled, there appears an abundance of interpretations which creates a certain network of texts around the primary text.

Foucault maintains that in contrast to the perception of language in the 16th century, the language of the 17th-18th centuries undergoes fundamental changes due to the revival of natural sciences; consequently, it regains a representative function. Signs lose their esoteric dimension as the reign of natural sciences requires clarity in all spheres of life. Michel Foucault claims that in this period signs are divided into two categories: the certain and the probable. (ibid, p. 65) The relation between a sign and the signified is thought to be fundamental as "for the sign to be, in effect, what it is, it must be presented as an object of knowledge at the same time as that which it signifies." (ibid, p. 67) Thus, the function of language is diminished to that of an instrument for representing knowledge, which leads to it becoming "so transparent to representations that its very existence ceases to be a problem." (ibid, p. 87)

In Foucault's opinion, literature in the Classical period moves towards the certitude of science: it "proceeds from the figure of the name to the name itself, passing from the task of naming the same thing yet again by means of new figures to that of finding words that will at last name accurately that which has never been named before." (ibid, p. 130) Thus, the word is bound to its representative function and is not supposed to reveal anything in addition to what it directly says. Foucault believes that Romanticism marks the end of this epoch, because Romanticism is also concerned with the naming of things.

In this period, criticism replaces commentary as a tool used to investigate language in terms of truth. Foucault distinguishes four forms that criticism assumes. First, it is a critique of words whose main function is to analyze vocabulary aiming at creating a perfect artificial language. Second, it is a critique of syntactic units which searches for the best ways of composing a perfect language in terms of tenses, word formation, and etcetera. Third, it is also the analysis of the forms of rhetoric, for example, types of discourse, tropes. Finally, it is a critique of texts in relation to what they represent, in other words, the truth that lies beyond a text. (ibid, p. 87)

In the 19th century, once again the concept of language undergoes a transformation by recovering, as Michel Foucault puts it, “the enigmatic density it possessed at the time of the Renaissance.” (ibid, p. 324) However, its function is different from the one in the Renaissance when it aimed at uncovering the primary word. The function of language in the 19th century is to shatter the systems created and imposed on it by the Classical period by “disturbing the words we speak, denouncing grammatical habits of our thinking, dissipating the myths that animate our words, rendering once more noisy and audible the element of silence.” (ibid, p. 324)

Literature and literary criticism emerge in a different form in the 19th century. Michel Foucault claims that the Mallarmean experiment with a literary work that is focused on revealing the infinite possibilities of the word marks the transition to the modern perception of literature which “breaks with the whole definition of genres as forms adapted to an order of representations, and becomes merely a manifestation of a language which has no other law than that of affirming...its own precipitous existence.” (ibid, 327) In Foucault’s view, modern criticism is close to the commentary of the 16th century; however, its target is not a signified but a signifier: language in its primal form.

To summarise, Michel Foucault proposes to consider the current concept of language to be a part of the evolution of this concept in Western philosophy. He relates the modern perception of language to that of the 16th century. Back then language was considered to be a mysterious phenomenon whose main function was to reveal the primary word hidden beneath the graphic image of the word, and it did not fulfill a representative function: one

word was not supposed to name a particular object. Although there are affinities between the two concepts of language, in the 19th century language is no longer considered the key to deciphering other phenomena. Alternatively, it has become an object of analysis itself, for both writers and critics focus their attention on discovering the primal forms of language and comprehending them rather than the phenomena outside of language.

Jacques Derrida questions M. Foucault's attempt to explain the contemporary perception of language through its historical development. Firstly, he expresses doubts concerning the credibility of the methodology that has been chosen. Secondly, Derrida suggests that the very philosophical tradition of the West might have been founded on wrong grounds, which would question a possibility of its continuity in the Modern period.

In Derrida's view, the methodology that is traditionally applied to the analysis of language is obsolete as it is a product of the Classical period and therefore incompatible with the perception of language in the Modern period. In his essay "Cogito and the History of Madness", Derrida discusses Michel Foucault's *The History of Madness* and claims that the very concept of history is rational and thus belongs to the Classical period as well as do its methods of analysis that were applied in those times. He distinguishes the creation of a certain "historical structure" or "historical totality" as its aim; the main principle, guiding the creation of this structure, is the elimination of secondary elements in favour of highlighting the central ones. What is more, the principal element that guides the architecture of such structures is that of a binary opposition, where, as in the case of *The History of Madness*, madness can only be understood in relation to reason and only as inferior to reason.

On the other hand, J. Derrida claims that there is no necessity to reject the methods that have been used for the analysis for a number of years; what is more important is to change the attitude to them. In his essay "Structure, Sign and Play in the Human Sciences", he borrows the term *bricolage* from Claude Levis-Strauss who uses the term to refer to the activity when a person uses 'the means at hand' to accomplish his task instead of inventing new ones. In terms of science, Derrida explains *bricolage* as "the necessity of borrowing one's concepts from the text of a heritage which is more or less coherent or ruined."

(Derrida, 2007, p. 360) Thus, he suggests that it is possible to use the old methods; however, it is essential to realize what is being researched using them.

In terms of what Postmodernism creates using the old methods, and how it treats the key concepts of Western philosophical tradition. Jacques Derrida claims that it is not Western philosophical tradition that lays the foundation for it. The theorist insists that the roots of the postmodern perception of language are to be found in mythology and in the philosophy of Ancient Greece that has been misinterpreted for centuries. In order to define Derrida's views on language, his essay on Plato's *Phaedrus* will be discussed further. Plato is not an accidental choice for discussion, for Platonism is believed to be the grounds, defining the perception of language in the Classical period. As a commentator on Derrida's works Barbara Johnson points out, Platonism "can indeed be seen as another name for the history of strongly stressed metaphysical binarity." (Derrida, 2004, p. xxv) Derrida's comments on *Phaedrus* explore Plato's attitude towards a binary opposition between spoken and written language with the view to the classical interpretation of the work.

Regarding the structure of binary oppositions, it must be mentioned that traditionally the first element of any opposition is considered to be a positive version of the second element as the first element stands for immediacy and truth. On the other hand, the second element is perceived as a supplement which is vulnerable to corruption as there is a certain distance between it and the present. In the case of writing, there is no direct and immediate link between the author of a text and the text itself, which leaves the text open to interpretations by the reader and thus possibly vulnerable to alterations. This supremacy of spoken language over its written version has dominated Western philosophical tradition till the Modern period.

In his commentaries on Plato's *Phaedrus*, Jacques Derrida questions an assertion that Plato makes a clear distinction between the constituents of binary oppositions. Interpreting the usage of the word *pharmakon* (which stands for writing) in *Phaedrus*, Derrida stresses that not Plato but the translator of the original text attached a negative meaning to the word, while in Old Greek *pharmakon* had two meanings: 'poison' and 'medicine'. Overlooking the positive meaning of the word, the translator changed the

meaning of the whole concept of writing that Plato developed in *Phaedrus*. Looking for more proof to support his claim, Derrida turns to the mythology of Ancient Greece. There is Thoth, the god of writing, who is an ambivalent rather than negative figure and whose main feature is indetermination that allows for a substitution and play. (Derrida, 2004, p. 94)

The substitution of speaking by writing in this opposition presupposes that in this process a supplement does not replace the original, but, as Barbara Johnson explains, in Derrida's interpretation of substitution, "instead of A is opposed to B, we have B is both added to A and replaces A. A and B are no longer opposed, nor are they equivalent." (ibid, p. xiii) Following this logic, writing as the second element of the opposition acquires different characteristics from those traditionally attached to it: it is bound rather than opposed to the first element and although the two elements do not become equivalent, they are at least adequate for replacing each other under certain conditions.

Regarding the aspect of truth, Plato insists that writing "is only worth its weight in truth, and truth is its sole standard of measurement." (ibid, p. 200) This assertion has a twofold effect on language: firstly, it attaches a representative function to language as it is presupposed that there is always some kind of outside referent which can determine the value of what is said or written; secondly, in the case of writing, the absence of immediacy turns writing into the mimesis of what memory has recorded. To evaluate mimesis in terms of truth is complicated as, according to Derrida, "there is always more than one kind of mimesis; and perhaps it is in the strange mirror that reflects but also displaces and distorts one mimesis into the other, as though it were itself destined to mime or mask itself." (ibid, p.204) The effect which memory has on a written text obviously reduces the value of writing, for it can no longer be considered true. However, regarding literature, the question of truth becomes more complicated. Despite attaching so much importance to truth, Plato recognizes the value of literature that extends beyond the truth as "through the liberties it takes with nature, art can create or produce works that are more valuable than works they imitate." (ibid, p. 205)

Derrida's commentary on Plato's *Phaedrus* highlights certain assumptions that set the background for *deconstruction* as a method of analysing language. Firstly, he questions

the bond which holds the constituents of binary oppositions together and suggests replacing *opposition* with the term *supplement*. In the analysis of the opposition between spoken/written languages, he demonstrates that writing has been perceived as not inferior to speaking but as a supplement which cannot be considered equivalent but under certain conditions is more beneficial than the first element of the pair. As in the case of literature, Plato recognizes a surplus value of a written work in contrast to the reality that it is supposed to imitate.

Secondly, in the commentary, Derrida refers to the mythology of Ancient Greece revealing the ambivalence of the elements constituting the pair of the spoken and written languages. The reference is not accidental. In the essay “Structure, Sign and Play in the Human Sciences”, the philosopher points out that the understanding of language in mythology is close to the perception of language in the postmodern period. The feature of the language of myth that Derrida emphasizes is the lack of center. Referring to Levi-Strauss’s works in the field of ethnology, Jacques Derrida claims that the research of myths reveals that a myth has no definable centre: an author or a subject; therefore, a finite interpretation of a myth cannot be proposed. Similarly, a postmodern text has formed under the conditions of a change, which Derrida calls *rupture*, and this change has eliminated the center that used to bind a text to a *transcendental signified*: reason, man, God, existence and so forth, a signified outside the text. Consequently, the text is freed from a fixed connection with the outside reality, or to quote a famous statement by J. Derrida, “il n’y a par rien au dehors du text.” In this context, the term *supplement* acquires a complementary meaning to the one that has already been discussed. In the centered structure, the role of a sign used to be a substitute for a center. The absence of the center opens a possibility for a sign not to substitute but to supplement the lack of a center. As there is no binding idea just a function of a center left, the play of supplements for the center becomes infinite.

Deconstruction is often treated by the commentators on Derrida’s works such as the German philosopher Jurgen Habermas (*The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* (1987), *Knowledge and Human Interest* (1987)) as a method of the destruction of meaning, suggesting that what Derrida proposes is the reduction of a signifier into itself. However, in

this research a different point of view will be asserted, following the interpretation of Derrida's theoretical propositions by a representative of the Anglo-Saxon school of deconstruction Barbara Johnson.

Regarding the Anglo-Saxon school of deconstruction, it must be mentioned that this school formed after 1966 when Jacques Derrida started teaching at Yale, winning over the most prominent American critics. The works of Paul de Man (*Allegories of Reading* (1979), *The Resistance to Theory* (1986), *Blindness and Insight* (1971), *The Rhetoric of Romanticism* (1984)), and Harold Bloom (*The Anxiety of Influence* (1973), *A Map of Misreading* (1975), *Agony: Towards A Theory of Revisionism* (1982)) present the examples of the deconstructive reading of Romantic poetry which aim to uncover the multiplicity of meanings within a text. The critics employ the theory of tropes to assert that the multiplicity of the significations of the text depends on the figurativeness of the language due to the nature of tropes. The works of J. Hillis Miller (*Victorian Subject* (1990), *Tropes, Parables and Performatives* (1990)) contribute to the application of the deconstructive reading to the interpretation of realistic literary works with the focus on the theory of tropes.

The works of Jonathan Culler (*On Deconstruction* (1983), *The Pursuit of Signs* (1981), *Barthes* (1983)) and Geoffrey Hartman (*Saving the Text* (1981), *Criticism in the Wilderness* (1980)) offer a more theoretical approach to the method of deconstruction. Culler and Hartman explore the relationship between the language of philosophy and literature, implying that there is no opposition between them, which presupposes the possibility of the philosophical reading of a literary text as well as the literary reading of a philosophical work. Paul de Man (*Blindness and Insight* (1971)) and Barbara Johnson (*The Critical Difference* (1980)) propose a deconstructive interpretation of the relationship between critical and literary works, putting a mark of opposition between these types of texts under erasure.

Regarding the method of deconstruction as explicated by Jacques Derrida, it is important to define his point of view to the concept of a sign. Providing a background for his research on sign, Derrida emphasizes that the opposition between a signifier and a signified is central for understanding the concept of a sign:

The concept of the sign, in each of its aspects, has been determined by this opposition throughout the totality of its history. It has lived only on this opposition and its system. But we cannot do without the concept of the sign, for we cannot give up this metaphysical complicity without also giving up the critique we are directing against the complicity, or without the risk of erasing difference in the self-identity of a signified reducing its signifier into itself or amounting to the same thing, simply expelling its signifier outside itself. (ibid, p. 355)

The alternative approach to the concept of sign that the theorist proposes is to view the opposition that holds the signifier and the signified together as supplementary in respect to both elements of the opposition. Under this condition, none of the elements is treated as central or dominant, which enables the elements of the pair to supplement each other. Regarding the supplement, the double sense of the term that has been discussed earlier is presumed.

The term *supplement* which Derrida uses to propose a different approach to the concept of a binary opposition is a key to understanding the whole concept of *deconstruction* as a method of analysis. In the introduction to the English translation of Derrida's *Dissemination*, Barbara Johnson claims that a *deconstructive* reading of a text does not presuppose the destruction of meaning; alternatively, this strategy aims at revealing a variety of meanings that are hidden within a text. The idea that should guide the reader is that "a text signifies in more than one way, and to varying degrees of explicitness." (ibid, p. xv) In Johnson's opinion, deconstruction does not aim at discovering the flaws of a text but rather the meaning that has not been intended by the writer of a text, or rather a multitude of meanings which coexist within a text without forming a hierarchical structure. Thus, all the variety of meanings, which can be attributed to a particular text, is granted credibility and equal importance, none of the meanings is considered to be more significant than others.

In respect to the literature of the Modern period, Derrida suggests that the breach with the tradition of Western philosophical thought in the Modern period is particularly obvious in contemporary literature which, in his opinion, distances itself from a representative function of language which would enable the perception of a text through

outside referents. The crisis of truth in the contemporary society results in the increase in the importance of writing in literature and literary criticism. Plato considered the distance between the writer and the text to be a flaw which makes the text vulnerable in terms of truth, distancing itself from the truth outside the text; alternatively, contemporary literature attempts to free the text from the writer. To the Nietzschean question: ‘Who is speaking ?’, French writer Mallarme answers, “by saying that what is speaking is, in its solitude, in its fragile vibration, in its nothingness, the word itself - not the meaning of the word, but its enigmatic and precarious being.” (Foucault, 2006, p. 333)

According to Jacques Derrida, namely writing enables a poet to free the word so that it could start speaking on its own, for

this overpowerfulness as the life of the signifier is produced within the anxiety and the wandering of the language always richer than knowledge, the language always capable of the movement which takes it further than peaceful and sedentary certitude. (Derrida, 2007, p. 89)

The significance of writing is reflected in the abundance of forms of writing in arts in the modern period. It is not restricted to graphic signs, but extends to hieroglyphic writing, dancing, painting, the art of tattoos, etcetera. Antonin Artaud, creating plays for his Theatre of Cruelty, made use of multiple forms of writing as he believed that each form of writing had its restrictions, but when applied together with other forms of writing, each of them could extend the limits of its use, reaching an esoteric dimension. Describing the idea for his plays, Artaud explained:

The overlapping of images and movements will culminate, through the collusion of objects, silences, shouts, and rhythms, or in genuine physical languages with signs, not words, as its root. Words themselves will once more become physical signs that do not trespass toward concepts, but will be constructed in an incantational, truly magical sense (...). (ibid, p. 240)

The change in the perception of language requires new methods of interpreting language and literature. Criticism in the Classical period aimed at the search of truth behind the text; in the Modern episteme, the text becomes of primary importance. Jacques Derrida

suggests two directions for the interpretation of texts: focusing on a sign or play. The first, according to Derrida, “seeks to decipher, dreams of deciphering a truth or an origin which escapes play and the order of the sign, and which lives the necessity of interpretation as an exile.” (ibid, p. 369)

Although this direction for interpretation reminds us of classical criticism, in its nature it is closer to the commentaries of the texts typical of the 16th century. Derrida does not imply that it is possible to uncover the real essence of the text as, in his opinion,

A text remains, moreover, forever imperceptible. Its law and its rules are not, however, harboured in an inaccessibility of a secret, it is simply that can never be booked, in the present, into anything that could rigorously be called a perception. (Derrida, 2004, p. 69)

Thus, a complete perception of a text through the analysis of signs is impossible, or can only be dreamed of as the text is undecidable and uncipherable: each text deconstructs and subverts itself, so does each reading.

The second direction turns away from an attempt to humanize a text, instead it “affirms play and tries to pass beyond man and humanism... [the man who] has dreamed of full presence, the reassuring foundation, the origin and the end of play.” (Derrida, 2007, p. 370) This kind of interpretation is compatible with the vision of the development of Western metaphysics as proposed by Michel Foucault. In *The Order of Things*, he claims that man is losing his central position to language, which alters our perception of the world for now “everything may be thought within the order of the system.” (Foucault, 2006, p. 392) This concept could be applied to the interpretation of literary texts whose elements may be analyzed as parts of a specific text but not as representations of certain outside referents.

To conclude, although Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault suggest different approaches to the modern perception of language, there are certain affinities among their theories regarding its essence. Both of them agree that in the Modern period, language is freed from its representative function that used to be its core function in the Classical period; therefore, it is no longer analysed in relation to outside referents. At present, language is perceived as an autonomous entity that cannot be fully understood or explained.

However, the theorists propose new methods of analysis of linguistic material which do not aim at revealing a true nature of a text but attempt to uncover the multiplicity of meanings that is hidden within a particular text.

1.2. Postmodern Literature: Author- Reader-Text

Neither Derrida nor Foucault are literary critics; therefore, their works on the transformation of the perception of language do not focus on the analysis of literary texts. However, the ideas that have been discussed above have had a major influence on the theorists conducting research in the field of postmodern literature. It is said to be undergoing a major change in terms of the role of the writer, the text he produces and the contribution of the reader to the process of creating a text. With the view to these transformations, the concepts of the death of the author, the open text and the model reader will be discussed.

To begin with, the theme of the changing role of the writer is discussed in a number of works by the theorists of postmodernism. The term *the death of the author* firstly appears in Roland Barthes' collection of critical essays *Image-Music-Text* (1977). Making a reference to Michel Foucault's theory of epistemes, he points out that the focus of Modern episteme shifts from man to language, which leaves the author, whose authority was always sought in Classical episteme, powerless, granting language the role of the creator:

it is language which speaks, not the author; to write is, through a prerequisite impersonality, to reach that point where only language acts, "performs", and not "me". (Barthes, 1994, p. 223)

Similarly to Barthes, Jacques Derrida claims that a characteristic feature of a modern text is the absence of the writer. Although he does not use the concept *the death of the author*, he is close to Barthes in the interpretation of the role of the writer. In his readings of Edmond Jabes' *The Question of the Book*, Derrida asserts that

to write is to draw back. Not to retire into one's tent, in order to write, but to draw back from one's writing itself. (...) To leave speech. To be a poet is to know how

to leave speech. To let it speak alone, which it can do only in its written form. To leave writing is to be there only in order to provide passage-ways, to be the diaphorous element of its going forth: everything and nothing.(Derrida, 2007, p. 85)

Derrida's insistence could be explained by his assumption that language has a certain supremacy over knowledge, for he states that "the language is always capable of the movement that takes it further than peaceful and sedentary certitude." (Derrida, 2007, p.89)

In contrast to Derrida and Barthes, Umberto Eco implies that the author of the modern text plays a vital role as a mediator between the text and the reader. Eco assumes that the language of a particular text is open to the reader only to the extent the author intends it to be open. In his view, texts

are able to produce the 'jouissance' of the unexhausted virtuality of their expressive plane succeed in this effect just because they have been planned to invite their Model Readers to reproduce their own processes of deconstruction by a plurality of free interpretative choices. (Eco, 1984, p. 40)

Thus, according to Eco, the author imposes a certain structure on his work which allows a variety of interpretations; nevertheless, it also imposes certain limitations regarding the reader's interpretations. Otherwise, the theorist claims a work of literature would be just "a conglomeration of random components ready to emerge from the chaos." (ibid, 62)

To sum up, theorists of postmodernism offer a few alternatives regarding the role of the author in a postmodern text. Jacques Derrida and Roland Barthes assert that the absence of the author is characteristic of a new type of texts that are written under the influence of the changing role of language. Such texts should be approached overlooking the authority of the writer and his personal experience and focusing on the infinite possibilities of interpretation that the language of the texts offers. On the other hand, Umberto Eco represents a different point of view towards the role of the author, for he believes that the author imposes a certain structure on the work, which limits the variety of interpretations of a text.

In terms of the role of the reader, Eco and Barthes suggest different interpretations of what an assumed reader of a modern text should be and what determines his way of reading. To start with, Eco asserts that the author composes a text with the view to his Model

Reader. He distinguishes two types of texts: open and closed, which aim at different Model Readers.

Closed texts belong to low culture; these are comic strips, scripts of action films or soap operas, lyrics of pop songs, etc. They, as Umberto Eco claims, “obsessively aim at arranging a precise response on the part of more or less precise empirical reader.” (Eco, 1984, p. 8) On the other hand, when approached by the reader who does not belong to the category of its Model Readers, a closed text can be interpreted in an infinite number of ways.

In contrast, open texts are attributed to high culture, and they set different requirements for their Model Readers. An open text does not aim at a specific audience; however, it requires readers to possess certain intellectual abilities enabling those supposed readers to interpret certain texts. In Eco’s view, if someone interpreted Kafka’s novel *Process* as a detective story, he would completely miss the essence of the story.

Alternatively, Roland Barthes overlooks the impact of the writer on the reader and distinguishes between two types of readers on the grounds of literary works they read: classical or modern. According to Barthes, classical literary works by Zola, Tolstoy or other writers need a reader who would be able to grasp the inner rhythm of a work, “unconcerned with the integrity of the text.” (Barthes, 1994, p. 11) He implies that classical texts allow their reader to read a text in parts, skipping the segments of the text which are irrelevant to the understanding of the anecdote. The source of the pleasure of reading such texts lies in the possibility of selecting “what is useful to the knowledge of the secret against what is useless to such knowledge.” (ibid, p. 11)

On the other hand, the reader of the modern text has to approach his text differently. Barthes calls him “an aristocratic reader”, for the process of reading a modern text takes time as it cannot be read in fragments. Otherwise, “it becomes opaque, inaccessible to your pleasure.” (ibid, p. 12) This process of reading is determined by the absence of a narrative element, of an anecdote, which results in the increase in the importance of language, its individual units rather than a sequence of these units.

What is more, the reader of a modern text is engaged in an active interaction or rather a confrontation with the text as it, in Barthes' opinion," unsettles the reader's historical, cultural, psychological assumptions, the consistency of his tastes, values, memories, brings to a crisis his relation with language. (ibid, p. p. 14) This conflict is determined by the fact that the reader of the modern text is also the reader of the classical text. Due to the tendency of the educational system to introduce a potential reader to the literature divided into parts according to historical periods, the reader gets accustomed to being a receiver of a message issued by the Author, a representative of a certain historical period. However, as Barthes states, a modern text which "is made of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations to dialogue, parody, contestation" has "one place where multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader." (Barthes, 1977, p. 225) To acknowledge the change in his role and to enjoy reading a modern text, the reader has to adopt a different strategy of reading, which Roland Barthes calls "applied reading." It

skips nothing; it weighs, it sticks to the text, it reads, so to speak, with application and transport, grasps at every point in the text the asyndeton which cuts the various languages- and not the anecdote: it is not (logical) extension that captivates it, the winnowing out of truths, but the layering of significance. (ibid, p. 12)

Using this strategy, Barthes believes, "the aristocratic reader" of the modern text can achieve the bliss of reading.

Summarising, both Umberto Eco and Roland Barthes agree that the modern text sets specific requirements for its reader. Eco asserts that the author of the modern text intentionally composes his work the way that only his Model Reader could effectively interpret the work. In contrast, Barthes implies that the reader of the modern text has to employ a strategy different from the one used by the reader of the classical text. He calls the strategy "applied reading" and provides an explanation of the strategy, which, if applied appropriately, should enable the reader to access a modern text.

Regarding the constituents of a postmodern text, there have been a number of attempts to identify and classify them. One of these is Roland Barthes'. In *Empire of Signs*, he characterizes postmodern writing through the analogy to Japan and its culture. Barthes

emphasizes that he does not aim at recreating the true nature of the Japanese life; he bases the analogy on the concept of strangeness that both an exotic culture of Japan and postmodernism seem to share. Barthes finds it useful to apply this analogy as making references to certain aspects of Japanese culture which are familiar to the Western reader; and it is easier to explain the nature of postmodernism which tries to alienate itself from the Western tradition of writing at the same time displaying the features that are recognizable by the Western reader.

With the Death of the Author, a postmodern text loses its traditional center- the authority of the writer over the text. Roland Barthes suggests that although the center no longer functions, the tradition of having one is so strong that a postmodern text develops while retaining the same structure as a classical text but around an empty center in contrast to the Classical and Romantic texts. Here he draws an analogy between a Western city and a Japanese city in terms of the center, thus comparing a classical text to a postmodern one:

in accord with the very movement of Western metaphysics, (...) every center is the site of truth, the center of our cities is always full. (...)Tokyo offers this precious paradox: it does possess a center but this center is empty (...).One of the two most powerful cities of modernity is thereby built around an opaque ring of walls, streams, roofs, and trees whose own center is no more than an evaporated notion subsisting here, not in order to irradiate power, but to give to the entire urban movement the support of its central emptiness (...)(Barthes, 1982, p31-32)

Thus, Barthes implies the elimination of the central figure of the text, the Author, does not mean that a postmodern text becomes a chaos of random elements with no power to organize them. It does follow the same patterns of organization as a classical one; however, its organization does not presuppose a hierarchy when one structural element is higher or lower (more important or less important) than the other one.

Regarding the composition of different elements of a non-hierarchical postmodern text, Barthes suggests that the equal treatment of the constituents of a text provides the space for creativity for the reader. While the process of writing is compared to the process of making Japanese food, the process of reading is paralleled with traveling in a Japanese city.

The essence of the Japanese cuisine, in Barthes' opinion, is the ingredients of food, the way of processing them and the tradition of serving them. First of all, the rawness of ingredients is an essential feature of Japanese dishes: "the raw substances (but peeled, washed, already garbed in an aesthetic nakedness, shiny, bright-coloured, harmonious as a spring garment...) are gathered together and brought to the table on a tray... (ibid, p.19) Secondly, the process of making food involves both the cook and the diner, for a dish is prepared in front of its consumer. Barthes explains that this might be due to the philosophy of Japanese cuisine:

This Rawness, we know, is the tutelary divinity of Japanese food: to it everything is dedicated, and if Japanese cooking is always performed in front of the eventual diner (a fundamental feature of this cuisine), this probably because it is important to consecrate by spectacle the death of what is being honored.
(ibid, p. 20)

The "consecration by the spectacle of death" reminds us of the pleasures of reading a text which Roland Barthes elaborates in *The Pleasure of the Text*: it is the process of reading which brings the pleasure, not the discovery of a particular meaning, hidden beyond the text, for the meaning alongside with the author has died and plays no significant role in the process of jouissance.

Finally, the way the food is served complements to the concept of rawness as well. Although the food has been processed, different ingredients are arranged as ornaments without a clear center:

here everything is the ornament of another ornament: first of all because on the table, on the tray, food is never anything but a collection of fragments, none of which appears privileged by an order of ingestion (...) (ibid, p. 22)

Drawing a parallel to the process of writing a text, the importance of language for a text could be compared to that of raw ingredients for a dish. Carefully selected units of language are united in a text which preserves an identity of each unit so that it could be recognized by the reader and complement the remaining units composing the text, without dominating it. It

is the prerogative of the diner/reader to decide on the dominance of one or another component.

Regarding the role of the reader in the composition of the text, Barthes insists that a postmodern text requires an active participation of the reader to be fully appreciated. Using the analogy of food consumptions, he states that “this food - and this is its originality - unites in a single time that of its fabrication and that of its consumption.” (ibid, p. 22) Thus, a postmodern text gains significance through the process of reading exclusively.

Through the analogy with an unclassified Japanese city, Barthes offers a few strategies for approaching a postmodern text. The fundamental assumption that has to be accepted before starting is that there is always a system which can be perceived irrespective of how illogical it might seem in the beginning

to be a mastery of the real (...), it suffices that there be a system, even if the system is apparently illogical, uselessly complicated, curiously disparate: a good bricolage can not only work for a long time, as we know; it can also satisfy millions of inhabitants inured (...) (ibid, p.33)

The postmodern text as an anonymous Japanese city is illogical, complicated, and disparate, for its content is not significant, what is significant is the exploration of its form which allows infinite strategies of interpretation to emerge. The reader can start with the familiar and proceed in one or another direction, making sure it is clear where they lead; to follow a strategy which has been devised by someone and improve it during the process of accessing the text; to make use of the guidelines that a writer has left in the process of writing; the simplest and most labour-intensive strategy is to discover by the means of trying and making mistakes, thus creating one's own strategy of exploring the text.

In his views on the connection among the text and the reader, Roland Barthes is close to Paul Ricoeur, a theorist of hermeneutics. Ricoeur claims that a literary text exists as an opening for a dialogue between a text as such and its reader and possesses an infinite number of meanings, for

an essential characteristic of a literary work, and of a work of art in general, is that it transcends its own psycho-sociological conditions of production and

thereby opens itself to an unlimited series of rereadings, themselves situated in different socio-cultural conditions. In short, the text must be able (...) to 'decontextualise' itself in such a way that it can be 'recontextualised' in a new situation - (...) by the act of reading. (Ricoeur, 1994, p. 139)

By the meaning of the text, Ricoeur does not imply the message of the writer but the message of the text as reinterpreted in a particular context by the reader. The relationship which is established between the reader and the text in the process of the interpretation of the text is guided by the text rather than the subjective intentions of the reader. According to Paul Ricoeur, "the text seeks to place us in its meaning, that is - according to another acceptance of the word sense - in the same direction." (ibid, p. 161) The newly created world of the literary work guides, controls and involves the reader in the process of the creation of new meanings, which are not only the new meanings of the text, but also the new meanings for their creator, the reader of the text. Thus, in Ricoeur's perception, the literary text is a future-oriented text which is capable of reaching to the horizons of the future.

In terms of the essence of a literary text, Ricoeur uses the term proposed by Hans Georg Gadamer to refer to the essence of a literary text- *play*. Thus, a text is a playful world whose phenomenon can be interpreted within the limits that the rules of the game impose. However, the researcher points out that a game does not eliminate the element of reality, but the reality of the game is not the same as everyday reality. It is "something which comprises a future horizon of undecided possibilities, something to fear or to hope for, something unsettled." (ibid, p. 187)

According to Paul Ricoeur, the writer and the reader also become playful figures when they enter a fictional world of a text. The author is stripped of his authority over the text when the text is considered a game with its own rules, but he does not disappear completely. The author still structures the text, creating the space for the meaning of the text to emerge, and he still stays in the text as a narrator, according to Ricoeur. Although the narrator is not identical to the author, he can be seen as a certain metamorphosis of the author into a fictional character. The reader of the text also undergoes a transformation by accepting the rules of the game that the text offers. As Ricoeur puts it, "the reader is this

imaginary 'me', created by the poem and participating in the poetic universe." (ibid, p. 189) What is more, the reader constantly recreates himself through the process of reading, emerging as a different "self" as a result of the process of reading.

To conclude, both Roland Barthes and Paul Ricoeur acknowledge that a postmodern text is a game with its own rules that both the author and the reader have to accept in order to penetrate the world. Although the author creates the space for the game, he does not impose the superiority of his position over the reader, for the text exceeds the socio-cultural boundaries that limit the author and creates its own reality, free of any restrictions.

The reader, on the other hand, has to devise a strategy of interpreting the text by following the rules of the play offered by the text. In contrast to the author, he has to discover the structures that hold the text together in order to find his destination, the meaning of the text. What makes the labour of the reader of a postmodern text more difficult is the structure of the text which follows its own logics rather than a traditional pattern with a clear center to start from. Therefore, the reader's interpretation is not guided by the requirements of a genre or style; for each particular work he has to devise a new strategy to penetrate the rules of the game.

1.3. The Concept of a Sign in Postmodern Literature

The concept of a sign in postmodern literature will be discussed further in order to establish its relevance to the interpretation of postmodern literary works. Firstly, Jean Baudrillard's theory of simulacrum will be overviewed. Secondly, the ideas of Ihab Hassan will be discussed in order to establish the relevance of the postmodern concept of sign within the framework of postmodern culture and literature in particular. Finally, the aims of the research to be carried out will be stated.

To begin with, Jean Baudrillard relates the change that the sign undergoes in the postmodern period to the transformations of the social sphere. He insists that a postmodern society has undergone a major shift in respect to human relations. Firstly, Baudrillard suggests that the society that functions within the linguistic model cancels the traditional

symbolic order, thus altering the relationship between the subject and the object, and offers nothing to replace the traditional order of things. In order to emphasise the importance of certain elements for social relations, he uses the terms “symbol-dominated” and “sign-dominated” systems to refer to traditional and postmodern societies.

William Pawlett explains that in a symbol-dominated system, “objects ...are ‘symbolic’ in the sense that they symbolize the lived relations that exist between desires (primarily sexual) and culture (respectable, hierarchical, normative).” (Pawlett, 2007, p. 11) In this system, the function of an object is dual: it is considered to be a commodity under certain circumstances (although within imposed limitations as in the example of a marriage bed that could be purchased only under a condition that it is bought by a married couple) or a symbol in the process of symbolic exchange.(ibid, p. 13) Regarding the latter function, Baudrillard states that

in symbolic exchange (...) the object is not an object: it is inseparable from the concrete relation in which it is exchanged the transferential pact that is sealed between two persons: it is thus not independent as such. It has properly speaking, neither use value nor exchange value. (ibid, p. 22)

The central feature of the symbol-dominated system is its ambivalence: “opposition between signifier and signified, sign and referent is dissolved.” (ibid, p. 67)

The contemporary society, according to Jean Baudrillard, is a sign-dominated society. The sign differs from the symbol in one crucial aspect: it is based on opposition rather than ambivalence. As Pawlett explains,

the sign system offers relief or even deliverance from the ambivalences and restrictions of the symbolic order; [signs] make living social relations into things, objects no longer possess essential values rooted in lived experience. (ibid, p. 12)

In the discussion of the sign-dominated system, Baudrillard opposes the attitude towards the subject of the system as freed from traditional social bonds and free to construct his/her own systems. He insists that in this model autonomy and individuality are possible only within the limits of a certain system that is offered by the society. Baudrillard also

claims that the limitations that the society imposes are stricter than ever; consequently, they have led to the formation of the 'other-directed' subject that "requires social radar that enables constant self-monitoring and adaptation in terms of what others are doing." (ibid, p. 10) Baudrillard calls this process of change "the dissolution of the subject" or "the crisis of representation."

The crisis of representation is further discussed in Baudrillard's most often commented theory of simulation. In short, he suggests that the increase in the importance of abstraction in the sign-dominated system caused the evolution of simulation. With the destruction of the symbolic system based on lived experience, the sign-dominated system acquired its own base, abstraction. The essence of abstraction is that it is supposed to be a purified form of the real, bearing no traces of any particular real. As the system is developing, abstraction is granted more significance than any lived experience, as it supposedly has no flaws such as localities, individualities, and is taken as a model which represents pure (or as Baudrillard calls it, hyper) real. Regarding the evolution of the image, Baudrillard distinguishes four stages:

- It is the reflection of a basic reality
 - It masks and perverts a basic reality
 - It masks the absence of a basic reality
 - It bears no relation to any reality whatever: it is its own pure simulacrum.
- (Baudrillard, 1983, p. 11)

In terms of the usage of an image in literature, the first stage that Baudrillard distinguishes coincides with the period of Realism and Romanticism in literature when a poetic sign as any sign in general was based on a strong bond between a signifier and signified. The second and third stages are associated with the relation between the sign and the reality in the period of modernism, while the last stage marks the emergence of postmodernism. It is in the fourth order of simulacrum where Baudrillard sees the reemergence of the symbolic meaning as a part of the concept of a sign. He suggests that

the virtual, technical systems of the fourth order actually 'pave the way' for symbolic reversal (...). Computers and artificial intelligence 'relieve' us of the need to think in a performative, operational way (...) we are actually left with

the space for poetic thought that is quite 'useless'. (Pawlett, 2007, p. 125)

Regarding the transformations that the concept of simulacra has undergone in arts, the last three stages will be discussed further in order to establish the relevance of the connection between the sign and the reality for arts in the Modern period. Firstly, Baudrillard's views regarding the place of the simulacrum in Modernism will be overviewed. Secondly, the tendencies that Baudrillard sees in Postmodernism regarding the relation between a sign and a basic reality will be investigated. Finally, the relevance of Baudrillard's theory of the simulacrum to literary criticism will be established.

Baudrillard points out that namely Modernism starts experimenting with the established relation between simulacra and a work of art as the aim of the whole avant-garde movement is to create the real rather than a copy of the real. What is more, the new real of the work of art is supposed to become more real than the reality itself, in other words, modernists' works create hyper-reality which is not representative of the real but is underlying the real. Jean Baudrillard defines the period of modernism in arts as orgy which "consisted in the heady destruction of the object and of representation." (Baudrillard, 2005, p. 25) He claims that different modernist experiments, especially Abstraction, dismembered the object and stripped it from figure and resemblance. Thus modernism "moved towards even more reality, towards an unveiling of the elementary structures of objectality, in other words, towards something more real than real." (ibid, p. 90)

Postmodernism attempts a further destruction of the traditional connection between art and the real. It elevates an everyday object to an object of art simply by an artistic act. According to Baudrillard, the ready-mades of Michel Duchamp and the pop-art represented by Andy Warhol mark the turn from modern to postmodern. Jean Baudrillard insists that Duchamp irreversibly alters the very object of art by turning a banal object, a urinal, into art simply by an artistic act. Thus, "all the banality of the world passes into aesthetics and inversely, all aesthetics becomes banal: a commutation takes place between the two fields of banality and aesthetics, one that truly brings aesthetics in the traditional sense to an end." (ibid, p. 52)

If Duchamp's act marks the end of modernist experimentation, Andy Warhol, according to Baudrillard, exemplifies the triumph as well as the end of one of key modernist myth - the myth of the machine. His principle: "I am a machine, I am nothing" desecrates an artistic act, going further than Duchamp. Baudrillard insists that "Warhol's images are not banal because they would reflect a banal world but because there is no attempt by a subject to interpret it - his images manage to raise the image to a state of pure figuration without the slightest transfiguration." (ibid, p. 125) Warhol's images mark the transformation of the sign that masks the basic reality into the sign that masks the absence of a basic reality, into a third-order simulacrum, as he multiplies the images that have no connection with real people or objects, but rather represent the images these people or companies producing the products present to the outside world; thus, producing the images of simulacra.

Baudrillard's position towards postmodern art is visionary. Regarding possible scenarios of its evolution, he offers two: an absolute commodification of art and revolutionizing the art. What concerns the first solution, Baudrillard makes references to Baudelaire who, in his view, offered the first radical way how arts could face the commodification of life:

since aesthetic value risks alienation from commodity instead of avoiding alienation, art had to go farther in alienation and fight commodity with its own weapon. Art had to follow the inescapable paths of commodity to make the work of art an absolute commodity. (ibid, p. 99)

According to Baudrillard, this way art would avoid the dangers of alienating itself from the society and becoming art for its own sake. What is more, by radicalizing its value it would escape becoming an object that could be exchanged and have a certain use. Although Baudrillard finds Baudelaire's vision attractive, he admits that the tendencies that one sees at present in the evolution of art do not follow the predicted pattern: "instead of the triumphant simulation envisaged by Baudelaire, we only have a depressing, repetitive simulation." (ibid, p. 106) Baudrillard distinguishes authentic and inauthentic simulation, the latter becoming dominant in postmodern art. To illustrate the difference, Baudrillard uses Andy Warhol's Soup Boxes. Painted in 1965, Soups were an example of an original simulation, when "in one stroke, the commodity-object, the commodity-sign were ironically

made sacred.” (ibid, p. 108) However, when Warhol produced the copy of Soup Boxes in 1986, according to Baudrillard, “he was no longer illuminating; he was in the stereotype of simulation.” (ibid, p. 108)

Another possibility that Baudrillard sees for postmodern art is individual attempts by artists to revolutionize the system. Modernism brought its revolution of liberalization to its end by liberating everything. Thus, postmodern art cannot continue in the same mode: “we can only simulate orgy and liberation now, pretending to continue in the same direction at greater speeds, but in reality we are accelerating in empty space.” (ibid, p. 104) Baudrillard implies that a radical solution might derive from individual attempts made by such artists as Alfred Jarry or Anonin Artaud. Baudrillard does not suggest that Jarry or Artaud’s individual actions could turn into a tendency as they are too much based on their personalities and are overly anarchistic for the followers to grasp the key idea and turn it into a tradition. Nevertheless, he believes in a possibility of breaking the norms of the system and reestablishing the symbolic level of the sign, for in his theory on simulacra he identifies virtual space as opening possibilities for a poetic thought to emerge.

Ihab Hassan proposes an alternative interpretation of the dematerialization of the sign to the one offered by J. Baudrillard. In *The Right Promethean Fire*, he positions his point of view as opposite to that of the French school of thought by stating that “the (post)structuralist metaphysics of absence and its ideology of fracture refuse holism almost fanatically. But I want to recover my metaphoric sense of wholes.” (Hassan, 1980, p. 56) The further discussion of Hassan’s propositions will aim at analyzing his interpretation of the postmodern sign with the view to the holistic approach to the sign.

It should be asserted that the point of view which I. Hassan proposes does not imply a return to the classical concept of a sign as a binary construct in which a signifier is bound to a signified. In contrast, the theorist maintains the proposition of the French philosopher Jacques Derrida to view a sign as a process rather than an entity. However, the perception of the process which Ihab Hassan suggests is significantly different from the one asserted by French poststructuralist, including Jean Baudrillard. Ihab Hassan defines the process in the following manner:

Imagination and Science, Myth and Technology, Earth and Sky, the Many and the One begin to converge in a 'new gnosticism' - by which I mean that tendency of mind to dematerialize reality, to gather more and more mind to itself, to turn nature into culture, culture into language, language into immediate consciousness. Can this tendency lead us finally to an enlarged conception of Imagination? (ibid, pp. 60-61)

The idea of the process of dematerialization as a creative process which leads to the development rather than destruction differentiates Hassan's position from other theorists of postmodernism.

The enlarged Imagination acquires a number of names in Hassan's works: the term *indeterminacy* characterizes the overall tendencies of the postmodern culture, while *poetry* is relatable to the changes within the realm of literature. Although the terms are different in terms of the spheres they refer to, a deeper analysis of the concepts underlying them might help to explicate the process in general.

Hassan defines *poetry* as "a permanent revolution in language" which incorporates the concepts of suffering and pleasure. (ibid, p. 98) These apparently two members of a dichotomy coexist within poetry due to its processual nature. The critic maintains that within the postmodern discourse the nature of opposites changes, for "dualisms are also dynamic, dialectical; they aspire to overcome themselves. The result, if not unity, is a continuous search for wholes." (ibid, p. 147) Consequently, the stability of a classical dichotomy is altered within the movement of the discourse, for its hierarchical structure is destroyed and its elements tend to unification rather than opposition.

In respect to *indeterminacy*, Ihab Hassan defines it in terms of unmaking which are unified by the power of the process. In *The Dismemberment of Orpheus*, he explicates the concept in the following way:

a complex referent which these diverse concepts help to delineate: ambiguity, discontinuity, heterodoxy, pluralism, randomness, revolt, perversion, deformation... Through all these signs moves a vast will to unmaking, affecting the body politic, the body cognitive, the erotic body, the individual psyche - the entire realm of discourse in the West. (Hassan, 1982, p. 269)

Although defined in the terms of unmaking, the concept of *indeterminacy* carries a creative impulse. The end-product of this process is not a classical masterpiece which could signify a final destination of the process, but the delivery of the process itself to the intended audience. As Hassan puts it, “the flow of communicable experience” becomes the focus of the process. (Hassan, 1980, p. 119)

In general, the communicable experience which is characterized through the interplay of the members of a classical dichotomy should be considered a key to the understanding of the postmodern sign, according to Ihab Hassan. In a list of elements which characterize a postmodern discourse, he himself puts an emphasis on this feature:

because both imagination and science are agents of change, crucibles of values, modes not only of representation, but also of transformation, then interplay may now be the vital performing principle in culture and consciousness- a key to posthumanism. (ibid, p. 196)

To sum up, the concepts of the postmodern sign presented by Jean Baudrillard and Ihab Hassan share a number of affinities in addition to noticeable differences. Both of them agree that the concept of the sign should be viewed within the overall changes that the postmodern discourse is undergoing. Similarly, both theorists emphasise the importance of the changes in the science which are seen as determining for the perception of the concept. Although Baudrillard asserts the importance of the process of unmaking for the perception of the sign, while Hassan maintains a holistic approach to the sign as a movement towards the wholeness, both of them view the sign as a process, remaining close to the ideas of the French philosopher Jacques Derrida. The elements of the unmaking and the process which are constantly emphasized in the definition of the sign retain the concept within the postmodern discourse.

These features have already been discussed in relation to other concepts which postmodernists employ. One of those is the concept of play, widely discussed in the works of Roland Barthes and Jacques Derrida. The concept of play is not invented by postmodernists; however, according to Ihab Hassan, in postmodern theories, it is juxtaposed with the concept of purpose and design. Derrida points out that from the structuralist

viewpoint, play is allowed within limitations of a certain structure while postmodernists argue that the play is infinite as it cannot be restricted within a structure, for it has no center.

Another concept which could be defined in the same terms is the absence of the center; in literary criticism, it underlies the concepts of the *death of the author* or the *open text* as well as the proposed strategies of reading and interpreting literary works. R. Barthes asserts that the absence of the center signifies the elimination of the authority that determines the dominant and the secondary, which results in the multiplicity of meanings within a particular text as well as the multiplicity of interpretations. However, it must be mentioned that the relation between purpose/design and play as indicated by Ihab Hassan does not presuppose the elimination of purpose/design. In *Empire of Signs*, Barthes admits that although the center is absent from the structure, its effect on the overall structure is felt as the composition of a structure is built around the center, though in its absence.

The further research will be done in order to investigate the indeterminacies underlying the concepts of sign and play in Salman Rushdie's literary works. The theoretical background of the postmodern concept of language and literature will be approached as the basis for the interpretation. The concepts of sign and play will be investigated in respect to their interpretation by the theorists of postmodernism such as Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida and Jean Baudrillard and Ihab Hassan.

PART II. Undermining the Traditional Usage of Synecdoche in Salman Rushdie's Novel *Midnight's Children*

This chapter is based on the analysis of the subversion of the traditional usage of synecdoche in S. Rushdie's novel *Midnight's Children*. Synecdoche is the central means of rhetoric used in the novel. The indeterminacy of the interpretations of the synecdoche can be explained by the postmodern nature of the novel where chance and instability are favoured over order and hierarchy. The very idea of a strict synecdoche, which is a figure of speech where a part stands for a whole, a whole for a part, an individual for a class or a material for the thing, implies a striving for order, hierarchy and subjugation. Postmodernism aims to subvert and undermine similar strong impositions of order. The analysis of the novel will be focused on the highlighting of how the principle symbols in the novel, such as those of the nose, voice and hair, acquire a variety of unusual connotations because of the subversion of their traditional meanings.

The analysis will be carried out with the view to the concept of play as a strategy of writing and reading of a text. Although the strategy is not a postmodern invention, Roland Barthes highlights a set of features that distinguish a postmodern form of play. Firstly, he points out that a postmodern text lacks a hierarchical structure, which enables the writer or the reader to construct/ interpret the text in an infinite variety of ways. Secondly, Barthes notes that although the postmodern text has no center, it still has a framework which holds the elements of the text together; a close reading of such a text reveals that the system is perceptible and comprehensible. (Barthes, 1982, pp.31-33)

Discussing the role of play in a postmodern text, Roland Barthes uses the term bricolage to identify the method which a postmodern writer uses to create a literary work. Bricolage is the term which Jacques Derrida introduces in the postmodern theory to describe the improvisation of a creator or a *bricoleur* who produces something new and unexpected using the means close at hand. (Derrida, 2007, p.360) The reader, while using the well-known traditional interpretations of the images prevalent in the novel, will have all his expectations subverted. The undermining of the connotations of the images which emerge

from different traditions, mainly European and Indian, creates a unique blend of new meanings that a particular image puts forward.

Since the system of images in the novel is highly complicated, the focus of the further research will be centred round the synecdoche of the nose, voice and hair. These usages of the synecdoche repeat in the novel, and they are attributed to its central characters. What is more, the synecdoches acquire a variety of connotations throughout the novel through their connections with other constituent parts of the text. However, the metonymies which comprise the system of the imagery in the novel are not limited to the ones mentioned above; therefore, a number of them will be mentioned alongside with the dominant images, which construe part and parcel of the overall figurative language of the novel. The images will be analysed in respect to the means which is used to compose them as well as to their multiple connotations prevalent in the novel.

2.1 The Sources of the Images

The world of the *Midnight's Children* varies in terms of the sources of the images Salman Rushdie employs: a variety of religions including Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and Hinduism, as well as the images proceeding from recent media myths. Although the images are instantly recognizable, it must be pointed out that their interpretations are not restricted to the established ones. Salman Rushdie plays with the conventional meanings of the images transforming and subverting them, thus creating his personal mythology. The aim of this chapter is to analyse the mythology of the novel in order to elicit the connotations of the key images and discuss them in relation to the meanings attributed to them in primary sources.

To begin with, the central figure of the mythic world in the novel is the elephant-headed god Ganesh. He is related to the protagonist of the novel Saleem Sinai through a combination of synecdoches: blue eyes and a nose, where the blue eyes stand for wisdom, a feature traditionally attributed to Ganesh, and the nose, a reference to Ganesh's trunk, serves as a link between the divine and the worldly. The latter function of the nose/trunk reminds

us of the functions attributed to sacred objects in pagan mythologies. A similar quality is attributed to the nose in the remark which the boatman Tai makes about Aadam Aziz's nose: "It's the place where the outside world meets the world inside you." (*Midnight's Children*, 2006, p.15)

In the novel, the synecdoches related to the image of Ganesh serve as horizontal and vertical connectors. In terms of horizontal links, Saleem is related to two other characters: Aadam Aziz and Aadam Sinai, who also possess the same distinctive features. Aadam Aziz introduces the connotations which are attributed to the nose and the blue eyes in terms of their mythological significance. Firstly, the description of his eyes contains an implication of their visionary nature:

Aadam's eyes are a clear blue, the astonishing blue of mountain sky, which has a habit of dripping into the pupils of Kashmiri men; they have not forgotten how to look. They see (...) the delicate tracery, the intricate crisscross of colourless lines, the cold waiting veins of future. (ibid, p.8)

Secondly, in a conversation between Aadam Aziz and the boatman Tai, a function of the nose as a mediator is indicated: "Tai tapped his left nostril. 'You know what this is nakkoo? It's the place where the outside world meets the world inside you. If they don't get on, you feel it here. (ibid, p.15) The connotations which are mentioned in relation to Aadam Aziz's features are maintained in the portrayal of Saleem and Aadam Sinai by emphasizing their common features: icy blue eyes and elephantine prominent parts: Saleem's enormous nose and the colossal ears of Aadam Sinai as well as their connection with the outside world. In terms of vertical connections, Aadam Aziz and Saleem Sinai establish a network of individual links which form a certain microcosm enlarged by its own mythology. Therefore, both the characters will be discussed separately in relation to the images constituting their own microcosms.

To start with, in Aadam Aziz's microcosm, the images of blue Jesus and Mian Abdullah acquire a significant weight. In relation to the image of Aadam Aziz, they provide further interpretations of the synecdoches attributed to him. First of all, the image of blue Jesus is characterized by the distinction of the synecdoche of the blue skin where the

emphasis is on the colour constituent of the synecdoche. The blue colour acquires a number of connotations linked to this image. The connotations are revealed in the following excerpt from the novel:

God is love; and the Hindu love-god, Krishna, is always depicted with blue skin. Tell them blue; it will be a sort of bridge between faiths; gently does it, you follow; and besides blue is a neutral sort of colour, avoids the usual colour problems, gets you away from black and white (...) (ibid, pp. 137-138)

The excerpt introduces two levels of the interpretations of the blue colour. Firstly, it is regarded as having a symbolic meaning in the sphere of religion. In Hinduism, blue is generally considered to represent the divine and it is related to the image of the blue god Krishna, one of the most popular gods in the Hindi pantheon of gods (*Oxford Dictionary of Buddhism*, 2004, p.75). Secondly, the excerpt introduces a social aspect of colour symbolism, relating the interpretation of the blue color to the worldly. The blue colour is contrasted with white and black, socially determinate colours, as a neutral one.

However, such a blending of connotations, which belong to different spheres, causes ambivalence, for it presupposes a fusion of the spheres which exist independently from each other: a sacred image which has a fixed symbolic meaning in a particular religion is altered with a view to adapting it to the worldly requirements. The contrast between the image and its function is well revealed in the justifications for such a transformation which are presented by a priest: " 'Skins have been dyed blue,' he stumbles. 'The Picts; the blue Arab nomads; with the benefits of education, my daughter, you would see (...)' (*Midnight's Children*, 2006 p.138) The arguments the priest presents do not belong to the sphere of religion where the image belongs; they are taken from the sphere of the worldly-science. Therefore, the listener to these justifications remains unconvinced: "What, Father? You are comparing Our Lord to *jungle* wild men? O Lord, I must catch my ears of shame!" (ibid, p.138)

The story of blue Jesus has historic grounds. Salman Rushdie obviously refers to the attempts of the Indians to modernize Hinduism following Christianity during the period of British colonization. With the view to modernizing Hinduism by transforming it into a

monotheistic religion, Krishna was chosen as an equivalent of Jesus Christ in Christianity (*India's Islamic Traditions, 711-1750*, 1994, p.231). Although certain aspects of the reform succeeded, for instance, in uniting different religious practices, which had existed in the territory of contemporary India, under the name of Hinduism, the concept of Hinduism as a monotheistic religion failed.

Although Salman Rushdie's interpretation of the story reverses the roles of the parties involved in it: in the novel, the Catholics attempt to adjust to and survive in the Indian society by recreating the image of Jesus Christ; similarly to the historic example, the experiment with a religious image does not reach its aim of convincing the people in the credibility of the newly constructed image.

Another character who is significant in terms of the connections which Aadam Aziz makes is Mian Abdullah or the Hummingbird. His image incorporates the elements of the media mythology as well as magic elements. A short description of Mian Abdullah reveals the main constituents of his image:

The optimism epidemic had been caused by one single human being, whose name, Mian Abdullah, was only used by newspapermen, To everyone else, he was the Hummingbird, a creature which would be impossible if it did not exist. 'Magician turned conjurer,' the newspapermen wrote, 'Mian Abdullah rose from the famous magicians' ghetto in Delhi to become the hope of India's hundred million Muslims.' The Hummingbird was the founder, chairman, unifier and moving spirit of the Free Islam Convocation (...) (*Midnight's Children*, 2006, pp. 46-47)

The description reveals a juxtaposition of the media and magic elements as representatives of different spheres: the public and the private as well as representatives of the two existing sides of the same character. The difference between the images is initially emphasized by introducing two names: Mian Abdullah for the public image and the Hummingbird for the private one. The public image of Mian Abdullah is created through the subversion of the facts related to the background of the character: the fact that he originates from the magicians' ghetto is presented as the one determining his political career.

The contrast between the public image and the private one is not restricted to the difference in names which are used, but it is further supported by a number of details which

emphasise the difference. Apparently, the Hummingbird is more of a reference to the personal features of the character, namely, a distinctive quality of his voice:

Mian Abdullah had the strange trait of humming without pause, humming in a strange way, neither musical nor unmusical, but somehow mechanical, the hum of an engine or dynamo (ibid, p.55)

The comparison of his voice with an engine or dynamo is a key to the perception of the private image of Mian Abdullah. However, the usage of both natural (a humming bird) and human-made (an engine/dynamo) images suggests a subversion of a traditional interpretation of the myth of the machine.

As a number of the interpretations of the myth exist, the parallels will be drawn with the interpretation of the image of the machine introduced by Andy Warhol. He related the feature of the machine to duplicate and repeat the same function again and again with the theme of death. He asserted that the repetition of the same function or image eliminated the effect it had been supposed to have on the reader or viewer. Consequently, the repetition of the image related to death lost its impact if it was over-used and was reduced to banality, trivia (Archer, 2006, pp.17-18).

The theme of death occurs in the novel in relation to the humming and the impact it has on Mian Abdullah himself and the people surrounding him. The humming is said to cause multiple erections to the people affected by it (“it was a hum that could fall low enough to give you toothache, and when it rose to its highest...it had the ability of inducing erections.” (*Midnight’s Children*, p.55)); in the case of its constant impact, Mian Abdullah’s secretary Nadir Khan becomes impotent.

Furthermore, another episode which relates the humming and death is the scene depicting Mian Abdullah’s death where the link between the humming and the natural world is emphasised:

Abdullah’s humming rose out of the range of our human ears, and was heard by the dogs of the town. In Agra there are maybe eight thousand four hundred and twenty pie-dog. On that night, it is certain that some were eating, others dying; there were some who fornicated and others who did not hear the call. Say about two thousand of these; that left six thousand four

hundred and twenty of the curs, and all of these turned and ran for the University (ibid, p. 58)

Despite the tragedy of the occasion, a detailed description of the random activities, which the dogs are engaged in, adds irony to the whole episode. The death of Mian Abdullah is incorporated into a series of trivial events and it becomes a part of them as banal as any other activity.

Saleem Sinai's microcosm includes other mythological figures, among whom multiple images of Saleem himself and the Widow stand out. To begin with, the image of Saleem is initially media-created. Born at the midnight hour, when the independence of India is declared, Saleem becomes a celebrity for fifteen minutes: his photos appear in India's newspapers, the country's Prime Minister sends him a greeting letter, et cetera. Although his story is forgotten by the public next day, this event leaves an imprint on his family's relation to him as well as on his self-awareness later: he is believed and believes himself to be destined to become a high-achiever. A song that his mother and nanny keep singing throughout his childhood: "Anything you want to be, you can be: / You can be just what-all you want." (ibid, p.173) becomes a refrain of the dominant approach of his family towards Saleem. The overall enthusiasm over a supposed success burdens Saleem, for he is afraid of not being able to meet the expectations.

In the portrayal of Saleem's early teens, the magic powers which are imposed on Saleem by the media blend with the natural magic he possesses: a unique quality of his nose to connect with the outside world. At this stage, the analogy which is drawn between the nose and the radio maintains the relevance to the fusion of the natural and the media-related to the image:

By sunrise I had discovered that the voices could be controlled- I was a radio receiver, and could turn the volume down or up; I could select individual voices; I could even, by an effort of will, switch off my newly-discovered inner ear. (ibid, p.226)

The approach Saleem adopts towards the discovered ability is generated by the media in terms of the goals which he sets for himself and the overall atmosphere in relations with the

people affected by his ability. Under the influence of his media-prophesied success, Saleem founds Midnight's Children Conference which is supposed to become a reflection of the media image of India. Explaining his vision of the conference to Shiva, Saleem makes use of media clichés to describe it: "that wasn't exactly my idea for the Conference; I had in mind something more like a, you know, sort of loose federation of equals, all points of view given free expression (...)" (ibid, p.305) However, the failure of Midnight's Children Conference to deliver its objectives, that is to produce an impact on the society reveals the vulnerability of the blending of the natural and media-created magic elements.

Saleem's story is partially echoed in the media-related Jamilia's singing career. Due to her popularity, Jamilia acquires the features which are not characteristic of her as a person but are imposed on her as a creature brought to the world and supported by the media:

[her] voice was on Voice-Of-Pakistan Radio constantly, so that in the villages of West and East Wings she came to seem like a superhuman being, incapable of being fatigued, an angel who sang to her people through all the days and nights (...) (ibid, p.436)

The image of a national heroine irreversibly transforms Jamilia's personality. Suppressing the features which used to be her second nature such as rebelliousness and sternness, she allows the qualities, attributed to her by public opinion, to dominate. Finally, she vanishes as a human being and continues existing as a mere voice representing the media position: "the voice of Jamilia Singer sang Pakistani troops to their deaths", "the voice of Jamilia Singer fought anonymous voices singing the lyrics of R. Tagore". Along with the elimination of her personality, the name is replaced: instead of the Brass Monkey she obtains a new name Jamilia Singer, which is retained throughout the rest of the novel.

The transformation which Jamilia undergoes might serve as an example of the formation of a simulacrum. The process reveals the stages which Jean Baudrillard presents while delineating his theory of simulacrum. (Baudrillard, 1983, p.11) The reflection of the basic reality is exemplified by the initial stage of Jamilia's singing career, when she retains her name and physical appearance, for she only sings for her family members. The second

stage which is characterized by masking and perversion of the basic reality coincides with the beginning of her career as a public performer when Jamilia is hidden under a burqa. The formation of her public image represents the third stage of the simulacra. Jamilia's image acquires the features which are not related to her personality (she is said to have been injured in a car accident, which has led to permanent injuries, and she has to cover her face, as a result), but they have a stronger impact on the audience than the facts of her life might. The final stage, when Jamilia's personality is dissolved in her public image, marks the final transformation of her image into a pure simulacrum which bears no resemblance to any reality.

Regarding religious mythology, the image of Saleem comprises the links to different religious images. As it has been mentioned earlier, Saleem is related to the image of Ganesh. In terms of vertical connections which Saleem establishes, Saleem-Ganesh is closely related to two more deities from the Hindi pantheon: Shiva and Parvati. (Hemenway, 2007, p.74) In contrast to the traditional interpretation, where Shiva as one of the Eternal Triad occupies the central position in respect to Ganesh and Parvati, in the novel, he is mentioned as a secondary character and a peer to Saleem.

Nevertheless, the features which are traditionally attributed to Shiva: violence and sexual potency are retained in the novel. In contrast, Parvati does not represent the lure of worldly attractions as she does in the traditional interpretation. Her intentions to become a mother and a wife as well as the means of fulfilling these intentions by the use of female sexuality are similar to those of a Hindu deity; however, the temporality of her achievements and incapability of preserving her gains reduce her significance. Thus, Rushdie reverses the roles of Hindu deities by promoting Ganesh to the central position and demoting Shiva and Parvati to secondary roles.

On the other hand, this alteration of a traditional hierarchy is recognized and justified in the novel. Shiva has a set of features which distinguish him as a potential protagonist of the story: in terms of the family saga, he is the real grandson of Aadam Aziz who has been denied his birthright by accident; in terms of his image, he develops his natural abilities: physical strength and distinctive sexual potency, remaining unaffected by the factor of

media; in terms of his goals, he is the achiever, for he turns out to be on the winning side. However, these features which characterize him as a natural protagonist eliminate him from becoming one, for in this particular novel accident and play are favoured over stability and predictability.

One more religious image that Saleem incorporates is the image of Buddha which comprises traditional features which is subverted in the novel. The traditional interpretation of the image of Buddha in Buddhism is that of a person who has been able to resist worldly cravings and has reached the enlightenment. Another important feature which characterizes Buddha is his role as a teacher for those willing to achieve enlightenment. (*Oxford Dictionary of Buddhism*, 2004, p.42)

Saleem undergoes a profound spiritual transformation which enables him to acquire the qualities which might be attributed to Buddha. However, he undergoes the transformation in Pakistan. The location is significant in this context, for the dominant religion in Pakistan is Islam, which has an effect on the people's attitude towards Saleem's transformation. The strange culture creates the atmosphere of ambiguity around the image of Saleem-Buddha. Firstly, in terms of the causes of the transformation, he achieves freedom from any human feelings due to the treason of his sister. Another factor which emphasises the ambiguity of his state is the attitude espoused by the people who surround him: although he is respected for his exceptional ability to smell all sorts of things, his isolation from the rest of the soldiers is considered to be a sign of his ill mental health. Ironically, he is indirectly linked to the Indian culture through the comparison of his state to that of a vegetable, while his fellow Pakistani soldiers use the same word to refer to their Indian enemies.

As far as teaching goes, Saleem-Buddha has three disciples: three young soldiers whose man-dog he is. The controversy which is inherent in the relations between Saleem and the soldiers is due to the cultural difference which prevents the soldiers from treating him as one of their own. However, a dramatic change of their mundane life as well as the beginning of the war alters their relations. In the battle, they become dependent on Saleem-Buddha's abilities to track, and they follow him blindly into the jungles.

The transitory period which includes the battles and the tracking of enemies before approaching the jungles can be viewed within the theme of simulacra, developed by Jean Baudrillard. The soldiers' perception of the world around them and the incompatibility of the image of the world with the activities which take place represent the fourth-order simulacra distinguished by Baudrillard. He defines it as bearing "no relation to any reality whatever; being its own pure simulacrum" (Baudrillard, 1983, p. 11) Thus, the understanding of the soldiers' how the battles should be fought bears no resemblance to what is happening around them in the battle:

Shaheed looked out of the windows and saw things that weren't-couldn't-have-been-true: soldiers entering women's hostels without knocking; women, dragged into the street, were also entered, and again nobody troubled to knock.
(*Midnight's Children*, 2006, p. 497)

The contrast between the inner state of the mind and the outer events is so overwhelming that the soldiers are not capable of accepting the difference. However, the escape to the jungles enables the soldiers to investigate what has happened.

Two central images for this period are the jungles and the ears. The forest is traditionally interpreted as an outer world which endangers the existence of the human world. (Biedermann, 2002, p.275) In the novel, the Sundarbans function as a key to the perception of the human-created reality, for the jungles introduce a distance between the soldiers and the outer world, which enables the soldiers to perceive what has happened to them during the battles. Lost in the jungles, the soldiers are subjected to the dreams which the jungles send on them:" each night it sent them new punishments, the accusing eyes of the wives of men they had tracked down and seized, the screaming and monkey-gibbering of children left fatherless by their work (...)"(ibid, p. 507) If the events have seemed dream-like and have not impacted the soldiers' consciousness in the midst of the war, the dreams inflicted upon them by the forest have a physical impact: on dreaming up a peasant that he shot, Ayooba wakes up to find out that he cannot move his arm which has triggered the shot.

The jungles shock the soldiers by impinging upon their faculties of hearing as well as dreams. Here a traditional interpretation of the ear as a memory vessel turns out to be most helpful (Biedermann, 2002, p.51). Having regained the sense of reality after freeing themselves from the dreams, the soldiers are unable to cope with their memories which keep attacking them in and through the jungles: “once again Ayooba Shaheed Farooq found their ears filled with the lamentations of families from whose bosom they had torn what once, centuries ago, they had termed ‘undesirable elements’(...)” (*Midnight’s Children*, p.510) The second encounter results in the loss of hearing, for the soldiers, unable to bear the burden of the guilt, stuck their ears with mud which makes them completely deaf. The escape from the jungles is temporary: having emptied their memories, the soldiers are unable to return to the state they have enjoyed before, and they die shortly after leaving the Sundarbans.

Another important image which is related to Saleem Sinai is that of the Widow. The image of the latter character comprises the elements proceeding from fairy tales, historical facts, media stories and pagan mythology. In the novel, she is first introduced as a witch from fairy tales: frightening, over-powerful and fascinating:

No colours except green and black the walls are green the sky is black (there is no roof) the stars are green the Widow is green but her hair is black as black. The Widow sits on a high high chair the chair is green the seat is black the Widow’s hair has a centre-parting it is green on the left and on the right black. High as the sky the chair is green the seat is black the Widow’s arm is long as death (...) (ibid, p. 288)

The repetitions which the excerpt abounds in remind us of a fairy tale; however, the text also contains references to certain details which later become central to the image of the Widow: firstly, it is the contrast of colours that is further linked to the synecdoche of the hair.

Contrasts dominate the image of the Widow throughout the novel. She is related to two colour combinations: black and white, black and green. The colours acquire a symbolic dimension in the portrayal of her character. The first combination of colours is related to her

public life where the white colour stands for the image which is created by the media and black is for the course of events which is hidden from the public eye.

The second set of colours is of major significance in the narrative as the green colour here stands for fertility and the black one for infertility. This combination is related to the name of this character, the Widow, too. In terms of the significance of colours, it is the black colour which increases her importance in the novel. As in her first description, the feeling of a threat accompanies her appearance. Later in the novel, the Widow exudes negative connotations: she is related to media stories of fraud and abuse of power; what is more, the Widow is involved in massive vasectomies

The duality of the Widow's image is well-reflected in the media-created elements which the image includes, especially her name. The real name of the Widow is introduced in the final part of the novel. The narrator briefly mentions her political success: "the celebrations of Indira Gandhi's New Congress Party, which had won a landslide victory - 350 out of a possible 515 seats in the Lok Sabha - in another recent election." (ibid, p.494) The key to her success partially lies in her manipulations of the name. Gandhi is the surname related to Mahatma Gandhi in politics; due to his achievements, the name bears a positive connotation and relates to a set of values appealing to the electorate: honesty, commitment and inclusion. Not being related to Mahatma Gandhi, Indira exploits the benefits the surname brings by using the surname of her husband, who, although is a Gandhi, has no connection to politics or Mahatma Gandhi. As a result, she tricks the electorate in believing that she is a direct successor to Mahatma Gandhi's politics while her goals are different. Her real political connections are hidden behind another famous name: she is a daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister of India who led the country to the partition and allowed his personal astrologers to take control over the process of political decision-making.

Both the names which the Widow acquires in the novel are meaningful. If Gandhi possesses the connotations imposed by the recent mythology of the media, the Widow displays more traditional meanings. In the beginning, the second name reveals its dark nature by displaying the features which have affinities with the image of a witch; at the end

of the novel, the image of the Widow gets closer to its cultural interpretation which is linked to infertility: the Widow initiates the campaign of sterilization. The magic powers which the Widow possesses to achieve her objectives are highlighted by using the hyperbole: despite their magic powers, Midnight's Children are unable to protect themselves as the Widow uses a trick prepared for everyone so that she could defeat them. What is more, she strengthens her position by locking the children in the Widows' Hostel. The hostel has a symbolic meaning of unmaking:

This place is a home for bereaved women now; they, understanding that their true lives ended with the death of their husbands, but no longer permitted to seek the release of sati, come to the holy city to pass their worthless days in heartfelt ululations. (ibid, p.605)

The place which accumulates pain and sorrow is inhabited by women who have no hope. The people who are held prisoners in the hostel are also deprived of hope: by performing vasectomies, the Widow's people turn the midnight's children into physical and spiritual impotents whose existence has lost any meaning and purpose.

Summarising, the mythology of the novel comprises a variety of references to different sources: religious, cultural, media. Each character is designed a special blend of constituents that distinguish him/her from others. The choice of elements is justified by supporting the means of rhetoric, prevailing synecdoche.

The portrayal of Aadam Aziz becomes central to the novel, for it incorporates the horizontal links which join him to the main protagonists Saleem Sinai and Aadam Sinai through the images of the blue eyes and the elephantine nose/ears. What is more, his portrayal introduces the horizontal links which form his own microcosm: the images of blue Jesus and the Hummingbird enrich the image of Aadam Aziz in terms of the sources of the images and the connotations which are derived from the sources. The latter images are built on contrast and subversion. The ambiguity of the image of blue Jesus is inherent in the blend of religious and worldly interpretations which it is subjected to; while the image of the Hummingbird incorporates the man-made as well as natural elements whose coexistence has negative outcomes: impotence and death.

Saleem Sinai's image is dominated by the elements of the media: newspaper and radio become dominant tools in the construction of his image. The interpretation of Saleem's image as well as of the related images based on Jean Baudrillard's theory of simulacra which focuses on the interpretation of media-created images reveals the detachment of the connotations of the images from the basic reality. The image of Jamilia Singer enables to trace the formation of the simulacrum from its first to the last stage where the image becomes its own simulacra bearing no connection to reality.

Similarly, the images which are related to religious mythologies are subjected to subversion. Through the depiction of Saleem, the reader is offered the presentations of a postmodern Buddha and Ganesh. These images undergo significant transformations in terms of their position and the qualities attributed: Ganesh gains the central position in respect to Shiva and Parvati, the other deities of the Hindi pantheon; while Buddha is misplaced in terms of culture and, consequently, misinterpreted. The image of the Widow incorporates a variety of elements from different sources such as history, media and folklore. The contrast which is introduced in this image serves as a simulacrum of the ambiguity, for although there are two contrasting images white/green and black, the positive image serves as a mask of the negative one. Thus, the image of the Widow is dominated by the black colour which symbolizes evil, fraud and infertility.

Finally, the use Salman Rushdie makes of the variety of sources serves the aim of the writer to create the meanings relevant in the fictional world of *Midnight's Children*, but not to reflect the world outside the text. For example, in the portrayal of the political figures of the novel, he plays with the sources by incorporating real historic facts about Indira Ghandi and purely fictional facts about the political career of Mian Abdullah and presenting them as equally credible, for the relevance of the information to the novel is of equal importance. What is more, the writer subverts the interpretations of the images as established in their primary sources, for instance, in the story of the blue Jesus. The roles of Krishna and Jesus Christ are subverted in comparison to the historic version of the story. Similarly, the myth of Ganesh is transformed in respect of the roles of the deities and their place in the hierarchy of the Hindu pantheon. Thus, Salman Rushdie creates a personal mythology of the novel

where the traditional connotations of the images as found in primary sources are undermined.

2.2 The Connotations of Sexuality

The synecdoche of the nose, which is central in the imagery of *Midnight's Children*, traditionally carries the meaning of sexuality. The aim of this part is to discuss the meanings it acquires in the novel with the view to the subversions the meanings undergo. This part will also explore how the connotations of the synecdoches of the hair and voice contributable to the interpretation of sexuality and the ways the above mentioned figures of speech supplement the connotations of the nose in the case of its absence.

Traditionally, the nose symbolizes a male sexual organ. (Biedermann, 2002, p. 288) The portrayal of Aadam Aziz contains references to two interpretations of sexuality: reproduction and pleasure. In terms of reproduction, Tai, the boatman, predicts: "That's a nose to start a family on, my princeling." (*Midnight's Children*, 2006, p.9) and his prediction comes true as Aadam Aziz becomes a father of five children. Moreover, a frequent reference to Aadam Aziz as a patriarch is also justified, for his influence on the family is not limited to mere reproduction: each child is affected by different qualities of the father. His rebellious nature is mirrored in Mumtaz's stance against an angry Muslim mob ready to tear apart a Hindu street-seller, in Emerald's fleeing to Major Zulfikar without her dupatta and consequently without any shame, in Hanif's realistic film scripts which ruin his career and end in his suicide, and a number of other instances.

Regarding physical pleasure, Aadam Aziz faces a failure as he is unable to convince his Muslim wife that sexual intercourse might be related to pleasure. She blames his views on the years of his education spent in Europe and flatly refuses to compromise her position. This clash, as the narrator points out,

set the tone for their marriage, which rapidly developed into a place of frequent and devastating warfare under whose depredations the young girl behind the sheet and the gauche young Doctor turned rapidly into different, stranger beings. (ibid, p.38)

The estrangement between the wife and the husband acquires multiple forms in the novel: starting with minor complaints concerning education, social activity, and finishing with battles which result in starvation periods, leading to exhaustion or months of silence.

Saleem Sinai is the character closest in his views and destiny to Aadam Aziz; he is also the character whose personality is dominated by the qualities attributed to the nose. In a way, he inherits Aadam Aziz's characteristics; however, his destiny to be raised in a family which is not his by birth right has an affect on Aadam Aziz's inheritance. The connotations which are introduced in his portrayal undergo major alterations if compared to those attributed to Aadam Aziz, although the key link to the concept of sexuality is retained.

However, the traditional connotation of the image is subverted in the portrayal of Saleem Sinai. In contrast to Aadam Aziz, Saleem is physically impotent. This fact is constantly emphasized in the novel. In the first book, Saleem contemplates his relationships with Padma and bitterly admits:

And Padma is a generous woman, because she stays by me in these last days, although I can't do much for her. That's right (...) I am unmanned. Despite Padma's many and varied gifts and ministrations (...) despite everything she tries, I cannot hit her spittoon. (ibid, p. 45)

Saleem's impotence threatens their relationships, and at some point Padma temporarily leaves the factory without any explanation. From Saleem's point of view, this might have been caused by her distress over "the futility of her midnight attempts at resuscitating my 'other pencil', the useless cucumber hidden in my pants (...)" (ibid, p. 165)

The reference which Saleem here makes to a 'pencil' is not accidental: having lost his sexual potency after castration, he replaces his lost sexual potency with writing. Therefore, another explanation he comes up with regarding Padma's fleeing is her jealousy of the book he is writing: "Is it possible to be jealous of written words? To resent nocturnal scribblings as though they were flesh and blood of a sexual rival?" (ibid, p. 165) The importance the writing has to Saleem seems to be as significant as family is to Aadam Aziz: overlooking any obstacles on his way to completing the story (deteriorating health, dramatic relations with Padma), Saleem is overcome by the desire to finish it before his death.

The period of Saleem's impotence coincides with his maturity. However, the description of his childhood years contains references to other significations related to sexuality: self-awareness, sin, and physicality. Saleem spends his teenager years in Karachi where his nasal qualities acquire the sharpness they have never displayed before. Estranging himself from his family, Saleem surrenders to the world of senses and his experiences form his personality:

So, from the earliest days of my Pakistani adolescence, I began to learn the secret aromas of the world, the heady but quick-fading perfume of new love, and also the deeper, longer-lasting pungency of hate (...) Having realized the crucial nature of morality, having sniffed out that smells could be sacred or profane, I invented, in the isolation of my scooter-trips, the science of nasal ethics. Sacred: purdah-veils, halal meat, muezzin's towers, prayer mats; profane: Western records, pig-meat, alcohol. (ibid, pp.427- 442)

The quest for self-awareness is completed when Saleem visits a whore. The name of the whore Tai Bibi refers to the name of the boatman Tai who prophesied the future of Aadam Aziz. Similarly to the boatman, the powers of Tai Bibi rest in the knowledge of the world and the people. Exploring the world through the smelling powers of his nose, Saleem is attracted to Tai Bibi because of her ability to reproduce any smell in the world:

my ancient prostitute possessed a mastery over her glands so total that she could alter her bodily odours to match those of anyone on earth. Ecrines and apocrines obeyed the instructions of her antiquated will (...) (ibid, p.443)

In addition to her knowledge of the world, Saleem is attracted by an opportunity to explore the secrets of his own sub consciousness that Tai Bibi is able to reveal through the manipulation with smells. When the initial embarrassment is conquered with the help of the whore, Saleem plunges into the world of the forbidden:

she succeeded in reproducing the body odours of his mother his aunts, oh you like that do you little sahibzada, go on, stick your nose as close as you like, you're a funny fellow for sure (...) until suddenly, by accident, yes, I swear I didn't make her do it, suddenly during trial-and-error the most unspeakable fragrance on earth wafts out (ibid, p. 444)

The climax of the visit is reached when Tai Bibi reproduces the smell which Saleem has not asked her for: the smell of her sister Jamilia and from his expression understands that it is the smell he has secretly been searching for. This discovery of love finalises his quest: having rushed from the whore's room in shame, Saleem never returns to explore the city again. However, the forbidden and shameful feeling is not forgotten, and another smell, a lusty smell of a hashashin wind, provides Saleem with an opportunity to confess his love to Jamilia.

The smell of shame and horror which Saleem's confession produces inflicts dramatic consequences: Jamilia takes revenge upon Saleem by signing him up for the army. Devoid of family and prospects of love, Saleem numbs: he is no longer able to communicate, remember or feel. The only sense he possesses in this period is smell which becomes so sharp that he turns into a man-dog. The sharpness of his smell at this stage coincides with the increase in sexual potency. The only female of the unit, a latrine cleaner, chooses him over other soldiers, explaining that despite his being numb or because of that, she likes having sex with him. In contrast, Saleem participates in the intercourse purely physically: he does not feel any emotions towards the girl.

Saleem recovers other senses only after months spent in the jungles and this transformation coincides with the complication of his sexual life. In love with Jamilia, he is not able to respond to Parvati's advances despite her devotion, magic and moral pressure. His pretended impotence turns into the real defect when a sterilization campaign gets started in the slums of Delhi. Saleem's castration inflicts a number of consequences: alongside with impotence, it starts the process of disintegration of his personality. Therefore, the narrator compares the procedure of vasectomy to the drainage of hope. If Saleem manages to supplement his lost sexual potency with writing, the lost hope is never replaced; therefore, the process of disintegration cannot be stopped.

Summing up, the nose is attributed a multitude of meanings related to sexuality. The carriers of big noses are two central characters of the novel: Aadam Aziz and Saleem Sinai. If the meanings related to Aadam Aziz are relatively stable: patriarchy/sexual potency and

physical pleasure, the significations attributed to Saleem Sinai undergo certain transformations, symbolising different periods of his life. The period of Saleem's adolescence is dominated by sensuality as a means of the increase of self-awareness and recognition of the outside world. Different experiences, guided by his hypersensitive nose, enrich him with the feelings of lust and sin. The height of his sexual potency coincides with the elimination of emotions. The recovery of memory and feelings some time later leads him to the complication of sexual relationships and finally to castration and impotence. Saleem partially supplements the absence of sexual potency with the process of writing. However, the supplementation is not complete, for the disintegration of his personality inflicted by castration appears to be irreversible.

Another synecdoche related to sexuality is that of the voice which is generally attributed the meaning of sexual attraction, especially when related to female characters. (*The Oxford Dictionary of Classical Myth and Religion*, 2004, p.514) The connotations of the image are revealed through the depiction of Mian Abdullah/ the Hummingbird, and the Brass Monkey/Jamilia Singer. Although the latter image is of secondary importance and does not offer a great variety of interpretations in respect to the concept of sexuality, the connotations of the voice continue and enrich some connotations which are related to the nose but are not developed to a greater extent.

A link between sexuality and the natural world is scarcely noted in the contexts related to the nose. However, in the episodes of Saleem turning into a man-dog who is devoid of human feelings and memories, the narrator emphasizes an increase in his sexual potency as well as sexual attraction, for the only female character selects him over other soldiers. Regarding the voice, the connection between sexuality and nature is of major significance.

Mian Abdullah is the first character to appear in the novel closely related to the image of voice. His nickname the Hummingbird is a double reference: firstly, to the unique qualities of his voice, secondly, to his connection to the natural world. The description of his voice highlights certain qualities of the voice which are elaborated on further in the novel:

it was a hum that could fall enough to give you toothache, and when it rose to its highest, most feverish pitch, it had the ability of inducing erections in anyone within its vicinity (...) Nadir Khan, as his secretary, was attacked constantly by his master's vibratory quirk, and his ears jaw penis were forever behaving according to the dictates of the Hummingbird. (ibid, p.55)

In addition to the physical effect the hum has on people, the extract highlights its longer lasting overall impact: the Hummingbird's secretary follows his wishes. Therefore, even after Mian Abdullah's death, having married Aadam Aziz's daughter Mumtaz, Nadir is incapable of having sexual relationships with her despite their mutual affection. In terms of the impact, the narrator often emphasizes the magic power which Mian Abdullah's voice has on anyone: his political supporters such as the Rani of Cooch Naheen who is unable to oppose his request to organize an assembly in Agra, although she knows that is the stronghold of Mian's opponents; other politicians otherwise fierce opponents unite into one organization under his request.

The connection between the power of Mian Abdullah's voice and the natural world is most effectively depicted in his death scene. Unable to fight the assassins, sent by his political opponents, with the power of his voice, the Hummingbird turns to the natural world for help:

Abdullah's humming rose out of the range of our human ears, and was heard by the dogs of the town. In Agra there are maybe eight thousand four hundred and twenty pie-dogs (...) all of these turned and ran for the University (...) They went noisily, like an army, and afterwards their trail was littered with bones and dung and bits of hair (...) afterwards the killers were so badly damaged that nobody could say who they were. (ibid, pp.58-59)

The battle between humans and animals inflicted by the power of the voice is mirrored in the Brass Monkey's story, too. In contrast to Mian Abdullah, the Brass Monkey is involved in the fight for animals whose lives are threatened by a draught and Evie Burns's gun. The portrayal of the fight in its power equals to that of the dogs' fight for Mian Abdullah's life:

like a blur the Monkey descended on Evie and a battle began which lasted for what seemed last like several hours (...) Shrouded in the dust of the circus ring they

rolled kicked scratched bit, small tufts of hair flew out of the dust cloud, and there were elbows and feet in dirtied white socks and knees and fragments of frock flying out of the cloud; grownups came running, servants couldn't pull them apart, (ibid, p.312)

The battle with Evie marks the part of the Brass Monkey's life when she is recognized for her superhuman powers of communication rather than her voice. The power of the latter is recognized in her teenager years; and then her nickname the Brass Monkey is replaced by that of the Bulbul of the Nation. Jamilia's voice possesses the power to put a spell over spell even to a greater extent than Mian Abdullah's. In her performances, no one can resist it and its power is constantly compared to that of a magician:

her voice wafted out through the window and silenced the traffic; the birds stopped chattering and, at the hamburger shop across the street, the radio was switched off, the street was full of stationary people, and my sister's voice washed over them (...) (ibid, p.435)

The sexual attraction of Jamilia's voice is irresistible; although her body is hidden from the public behind a silk chadar, she receives "one thousand and one firm proposal of marriage a week." (ibid, pp. 435-436) However, the sexual attraction which the voice possesses is opposed to the sternness of Jamilia's inner self, for she firmly rejects all marriage proposals. The conflict could be interpreted with the view to the theory of simulacra, for the fatal attraction of Jamilia's voice is due to the image which is created around her voice and is not related to her true self. Jamilia does not succumb to the influence of the image; however, the people around her including her family members appear to be under the influence of the image. The novel contains two stories which exemplify the impact the image has on people and the consequences it inflicts on them.

The first victim of Jamilia's voice is Mutasim the Handsom, the power of whose looks is compared to the power of Jamilia's voice. As the narrator points out that "he was so good-looking that, whenever he traveled around Kif, girls with silver nose-jewellery fainted in the heat of his beauty." (ibid, p.446) He falls in love with Jamilia at the first instance of

hearing her voice. However, his dramatic attempts to see Jamilia as well as his insistent marriage proposals fail; as a result, he volunteers to the army and dies as a martyr.

The second victim of the love for Jamilia is Saleem whose declaration of love leads to Jamilia's treason. She signs him up to the army when he falls ill, which results in Saleem's becoming numb: deprived of human emotions or memories and later on incapable of having sexual intercourse with anyone, similarly to Nadir Khan, Mian Abdullah's secretary. On the other hand, Jamilia herself is victimized by the powers her voice possesses. In the course of her increasing popularity, she loses all her connections with the people who are significant to her: her family is killed during bombing and Saleem is signed up for the army. Finally, what is left from her is her voice which replaces her personality.

In general terms, the image of the voice in *Midnight's Children* acquires two distinctive significations in terms of sexuality: power and the sub-conscious. Two main characters whose individualities are determined by the image of the voice are Mian Abdullah, the Hummingbird, and the Brass Monkey or Jamilia Singer. The portrayal of Mian Abdullah highlights the aspect of power in terms of control and purposefulness and the connection with the natural world. Jamilia's characteristics emphasise the aspect of the sub-conscious: in contrast to Mian Abdullah, she does not have any objectives which could be reached using the powers of her voice and she herself is partially victimized by its power: the voice starts to dominate her personality replacing her old self with the image which is imposed to her by the media. After her betrayal of Saleem which reminds of the Brass Monkey she has once been, the rest of the references to her are namely the references to her voice in relation to the functions which are attributed to it by media.

The final image, related to sexuality, is hair which is attributed the meanings of sexuality and fertility; these connotations are traditionally linked to female characters. (Ferber, 2007, pp. 91-92) The characters whose personalities are dominated by this image are Nadir Khan, Methwold and the Widow. The traditional significations of the hair such as sexual attraction, fertility and potency will be analysed in respect to this image.

Firstly, the portrayal of Nadir Khan subverts the concept of love. This character displays the qualities which are traditionally attributed to female characters: he is passive,

romantic and loyal in his amorous relationships with Mumtaz; a physical aspect is eliminated from his sexuality. His womanly nature is emphasized in the description of his hair:” he had long hair, poetically long, hanging lankily over his ears.” (*Midnight’s Children*, 2006, p.300) Although his factual impotence is due to the causes which do not depend on him, in the course of events, it becomes apparent that Nadir’s failure as a man is circumstanced by his character rather than a chance. This statement could be exemplified with the scene of the meeting of Mumtaz and Nadir at the Pioneer Café

What I saw at the end: my mother’s hands raising a half-empty glass of Lovely Lassi; my mother’s lips pressing gently, nostalgically against the mottled glass, my mother’s hands handling the glass to her Nadir-Quasim; who also applied to the opposite side of the glass, his own poetic mouth. So it was that life imitated bad art (...) (*ibid*, pp. 301-302)

The meeting in which any physical contact fails to be accomplished, the indirect kiss is the only simulacrum of a physical act which is completed. However, while the kiss causes a physical resentment when it is shown in the film, reproduced in the life outside the cinema, it symbolizes the failure of an image to become a legible replacement for a real act. It also marks the failure of Nadir Khan to comply with the implications which are attributed to his hair.

In contrast, Methwold, another male character whose hair plays an important role in defining his character, is purposeful and is capable of using the benefits which the hair offers. The attractiveness of his hair is emphasized in Methwold’s first description:

he had a head of thick black brilliantined hair, parted in the centre (...)whose ramrod precision made Methwold irresistible to women, who felt unable to prevent themselves wanting to rumple it up(...) It was one of those hairlines along which history and sexuality moved. (*ibid*, p.125)

The description reveals the active nature of Methwold in addition to the sexual attraction his hair possesses. In contrast to Nadir Khan’s lanky hair which reveals his passiveness, thickly brilliantined Methwold’s hair points out to his purposefulness and an ability to recognize potential opportunities and use them. Methwold’s purpose is to leave his trace in India

before emigration after the declaration of its independence. Before moving to Europe, he imposes his rules of behaviour on the purchasers of his estate; in addition, using the sexual attraction of his hair, he seduces a local Indian's wife and leaves her pregnant.

His physical potency is different from all the other significations of sexual attraction attributed to different images as all of them are related to impotence rather than potency. However, the novel provides an explanation for this contrast. On his last visit to the estate, Methwold reveals his secret:

white hand dangled above the brilliantined black hair; long tapering white fingers twitched towards centre-parting, and the second and final secret was revealed, because fingers curled and seized hair; drawing away from his head, they failed to release their prey; and in the moment after the disappearance of the sun Mr. Methwold stood in the afterglow of his Estate with his hairpiece in his hand.
(ibid, p.153)

The false hair appears to be more significant in terms of sexual attraction than the real hair of Nadir Khan. This play with the significations which are traditionally attributed to certain symbols is most clearly exposed in the portrayal of Methwold. It appears that it is not the hair but the personality of the man who wears the hair which is significant. The irresistible attraction of the hair appears to be caused by Methwold's understanding of the powers that hair displays and ability to manipulate his knowledge.

Purposefulness is a defining feature of one more character related to the image of hair, who is the Widow. A physical characteristic which Methwold and the Widow share is the centre-parting of their hair. Similarly to Methwold, the centre-parting is a noticeable characteristic of her hair, for it is highlighted by the difference in colour of each part: white or green on one side and black on the other. In terms of sexuality, the difference in colour hints of the traditional interpretation of the concept of a widow as eliminated from the process of reproduction by the death of her husband. A negative connotation of the concept is stressed when the Widow is compared to a witch from fairy-tales:

High as the sky the chair is green the seat is black the Widow's arm is long as death its skin is green the fingernails are long and sharp and black (...) And children torn in two in Widow hands which rolling rolling halves of children roll them into little

balls the balls are green the night is black. (ibid, p. 288)

In terms of sexuality, the excerpt relates the Widow to castration. In the process of castration Saleem and other midnight's children are robbed of potency: both sexual and creative. They are drained of the miraculous powers they were awarded at birth. However, although the process of castration is irreversible, a hope remains because Shiva, one of midnight's children, has given birth to numerous children before being castrated while Saleem supplements his lost sexual potency with the writing which is the book of the generation of midnight's children.

Summarising, the image of the hair reveals a number of meanings related to the concept of sexuality. Firstly, through the portrayal of Nadir Khan the aspect of the passive sexual attractiveness is revealed. When related to a male character, it acquires a negative connotation of weakness, incapability to reverse the fate. Secondly, Methwold introduces the aspect of active sexual attractiveness which is useful for a purposeful person. What is more, the aspect of consciousness in manipulating the power is characteristic to this character, too. Finally, the Widow, the only female character related to the image of hair, adds the signification of castration to the concept of sexuality in the novel.

In general terms, the analysis of the connotations which are attributed to the concept of sexuality reveals that Salman Rushdie employs a number of strategies to approach the traditional interpretations of the images of the nose, voice and hair. He portrays a number of characters, including Aadam Aziz and Jamilia Singer, who reveal the connotations of the images hinging on their traditional interpretations. On the other hand, in their portrayal the writer also introduces the elements which subvert the above mentioned interpretations: a cultural clash between Aadam Aziz and his wife or a media-determined personality of Jamilia can serve as the cases in point.

The novel also includes a number of protagonists who undermine the traditional interpretations, such as Saalem Sinai or the Widow, both of whom introduce the connotations of impotence and castration. Similarly, the portrayal of Methwold and Nadir Khan illustrates an ironic treatment of the traditional interpretation of the hair as an

instrument for attracting the opposite sex. Methwold's irresistible sexual attraction appears to be due to his baldness; whereas Nadir Khan's womanly hair signifies his impotence.

Frequent subversions of the expected traditional connotations form a clear mark of a postmodern text. The opposition to the inherited modes of thinking and traditional discourse as well as the opposition to the newly emerging postmodern world has been lately producing a new kind of writing, based on the paradoxes brought about by simulacra. *Midnight's Children* is one of the clearest and most provocative examples of this kind of writing.

PART III. The Indeterminacies of the Narrative in Salman Rushdie's Novel *Midnight's Children*

The concept of indeterminacy is frequently employed by the theorists of postmodernism to refer to the absence of any positive terms in postmodern culture. According to Ihab Hassan, the concept embraces the terms of unmaking such as decreation, disintegration, deconstruction, decenterment, displacement, difference, discontinuity, disjunction, disappearance, decomposition, de-definition, demystification, detotalisation, delegitimation and represents a will "to unmaking, affecting the body politic, the body cognitive, the erotic body, the individual psyche- the entire realm of discourse in the West." (Hassan, 1982, p. 269) Although the concept is not a postmodern invention, as Ihab Hassan points out in *The Dismemberment of Orpheus*, tracing its origins to the works of the Marquis de Sade; in the postmodern period, the concept acquires the significance it has not had before because of its impact on the perception of language.

The key condition to the increase in the importance of the concept of indeterminacy is the change in the cultural tendencies, or to employ Foucault's term, in the episteme of the Western culture. In *The Order of Things*, Michel Foucault suggests that the current episteme of the West is dominated by the concept of language which has replaced the concept of man in the center of the Western thought. The language is no longer considered a key to deciphering other phenomena. Alternatively, it has become an object of analysis itself, for both writers and critics focus their attention on discovering the primal forms of language and comprehending them rather than the phenomena outside language. What is more, language is perceived as a means of creating the reality outside the text; this view is dominant among the literary theories, considered to be neo-Marxist, for example, post-colonialism or feminism. The change is crucial in one aspect: before the emergence of the postmodern culture, the language has served as a means to discover the truth embodied in a particular concept characteristic of a specific period, or to use J. Derrida's term, the transcendental signified.

Thus, the question what change the elimination of the transcendental signified brings about arises. Jean-Francois Lyotard investigates the problem in *The Postmodern Condition*:

A Report on Knowledge and proposes the explanation of the language system. He suggests that the elimination of the transcendental signified leads to the delegitimation of grand narratives, for, according to Lyotard, “there is no possibility that language games can be unified or totalized in any metadiscourse.” (Lyotard, 2005, p.36) The impossibility lies in the very essence of language-based systems whose purpose is to produce the unknown rather than to verify the known. Lyotard provides an illustration to this proposition referring to the language of science:

Science is a model of an “open system”, in which a statement becomes relevant if it “generates ideas”, that is if it generates other statements and other game rules. Science possesses no general metalanguage in which all other languages can be transcribed and evaluated. (ibid, p.64)

Thus, the little narrative becomes the dominant form of the present discourse. A conclusion could be drawn from the excerpt on the language of science that one of the attributes of the little narrative is its independence from any unifying structures, for it does not possess one main concept which could serve as a link to another narrative. In addition, Lyotard emphasizes another quality typical of the little narrative - the structural dependency of its components. Describing the system of the little narrative, he points out: “a self does not amount to much, but no self is an island; each exists in a fabric of relations that is now more complex and mobile than before.” (ibid, p.15) In general, the postmodern culture could be seen as a multiplicity of little narratives which cannot be unified under one concept and any attempt to impose a structure gets subverted by the text.

Regarding the concept of indeterminacy, Ihab Hassan maintains that this concept represents the processes which occur within the system described by Lyotard. In *The Right Promethean Fire*, he defines indeterminacy as the integral force, for it “fills the space between the will to unmaking and its opposite, the integrative will.” (Hassan, 1980, p.109) In this chapter, Hassan’s idea of indeterminacy as a concept embracing unmaking and integrity will be taken as the basis of research. The concept of indeterminacy will be explored through the analysis of the imagery which composes the little narrative in Salman Rushdie’s novel *Midnight’s Children*.

3.1. The Image of the Void and Its Supplements in the Portrayal of Aadam Aziz

To start with, the images which constitute the little narrative of the novel can be divided into the ones used in the portrayal of the main characters, Aadam Aziz, Saleem Sinai and Aadam Sinai, and another group of images which relate these characters to the secondary ones. The concept which is repeatedly used in connection to the first group of images is the concept of the void which is represented in the images such as fragmentation, cracks, heat, hole, bruise, surgery, and desert. The second group of images includes the images of ghosts, dreams, narratives, food, poison, water; and is related to the main characters through their connections to the secondary characters of the novel.

The portrayal of Aadam Aziz introduces the tensions which are caused by the coexistence of the images of both groups in respect to one character. The problem emerges at the beginning of the novel:

My grandfather Aadam Aziz hit his nose against a frost-hardened tussock of earth while attempting to pray. Three drops of blood plopped out of his left nostril, hardened instantly (...) the tears which he had sprung to his eyes had solidified, too; and at the moment (...) he resolved never again to kiss earth for any god or man. This decision, however, made a hole in him. (*Midnight's Children*, 2006, p.4)

The excerpt establishes a connection between the image of blood and the image of the hole, revealing that the hardening of blood is linked with the appearance of the hole. The symbolic meaning which is attached to the image of bleeding is emphasized by the ritual significance of the occasion: Aadam Aziz attempts to pray, and the loss of blood in the process signifies the loss of faith.

The traditional connotation of blood spilled during a religious ritual is that of fertility and fortune, for it is supposed to establish a link between the divine and the human. (*Dictionary of Symbols*, p.100) However, the excerpt reveals the subversion of the traditional connotation: the hardening of blood signifies the loss of faith, which is related to the appearance of the hole. The solidification of tears develops the theme of loss. Conventionally, a teardrop is supposed to evaporate as the sign of the temporality of grief,

which it symbolizes. (ibid, p. 977) In contrast, Aadam Aziz's teardrops solidify as if ensuring a long lasting effect of the transformation he undergoes.

The loss of faith, portrayed in the excerpt, can serve as an illustration for the elimination of the transcendental signified from the postmodern discourse. By rejecting the concept of faith, Aadam Aziz opens up a void within his personality. Since this moment, his life is a quest for the supplement to fill the inner emptiness. The concept of the supplement is developed through numerous images which possess the quality of liquidity: a perforated sheet, a fragmented vision of Naseem and the image of the glued picture of Naseem. Further in the novel the story of love between Aadam Aziz and Naseem is mirrored in the story of an attempted love between their daughter Mumtaz and her second husband Ahmed Sinai.

The image of the perforated sheet is introduced in the episode of the first meeting of a young doctor and his female patient: "holding one corner of an enormous white bedsheet...in the very center of the sheet, a hole had been cut, a crude circle about seven inches in diameter." (*Midnight's Children*, p. 22) The connotation which is attributed to the image is indeterminate. Intended to serve as a means of protection, the sheet gradually acquires the function of communication. Although, formally, the doctor and the patient observe the rules of distancing, established by the girl's father, they find the way of using the sheet to their own benefit: the patient develops multiple ailments in different parts of the body, so the doctor gradually examines all of it.

The play with the rules is devised thoroughly in order to secure the continuity of the game: the girl keeps having health problems, but they never occur in the part of the body which has once been treated. Under the influence of the body being gradually uncovered in front of his eyes, the doctor is subjected to a dream in which he sees the glued image of the girl:

my grandfather had fallen in love, and had come to think of the perforated sheet as something sacred and magical, because through it he had seen the things which had filled up the hole inside him which had been created when he had been hit on the nose by a tussock and insulted by the boatman Tai. (ibid, p.28)

Thus, the vacancy left by the loss of blood is filled with the image of the girl and the void is temporarily supplemented.

The parts of the body which can be seen by the doctor are able to communicate the emotions overcoming the patient: the girl's bottom, exposed through a hole in the sheet, blushes. Namely, the incident with the blushing bottom results in the doctor's falling in love with the patient. The irony which is exposed through the choice of the part of the body, becoming the inspiration for love, extends to the further portrayal of the relationships between the doctor and his wife: the supposed hidden beauty gets transformed into an ugly tyrant who manages her family by the means of manipulation. Thus, the seemingly character from a fairy tale, hidden from the strangers' eyes by her envious father, turns out to be the monster. The play with the traditional images borrowed from fairy tales adds to the overall indeterminacy of the connotations attributed to images. The choice of the immediately recognizable images such as the beauty and the beast strengthens the impact of the subversion of their connotations.

The dream of the perforated sheet is preserved in the family and passed on to the second daughter Mumtaz. Under its spell, Mumtaz performs a subverted ritual: in her mind, she fragments her husband in order to fall in love with him:

She divided him, mentally, into every single one of his component parts, physical as well as behavioural, compartmentalizing him into lips and verbal tics and prejudices and likes (...). Each day she selected one fragment of Ahmed Sinai, and concentrated her entire being upon it until it became wholly familiar; until she felt fondness rising up within her and becoming affection and, finally, love.
(ibid, p.87)

Mumtaz's systematic attempts to compose love from the fragmented personality of her husband fails, for she appears to be unable to complete her vision of love as she cannot fall in love with one part of her husband's body; what is more, she does not possess the void which she could fill with the newly acquired vision of love. In contrast to Aadam Aziz, Mumtaz's personality is even overfilled with the dream of her first husband. The dream is said to have "clogged up" her mind, leaving no space for the newly-invented image of the love for Ahmed Sinai.

Mumtaz's relations with her first husband are depicted with the focus on the concepts of sexuality and impotence. The portrayal of her love for Nadir, the first husband, contains a number of images which seem to be referring to the concept of sexuality; however, they soon appear to be pure simulacra. The episode which describes the bedroom of the newlyweds could serve as an example of the use of such images:

Like Shah Jehan and his Mumtaz, Nadir and his dark lady lay side by side, and lapis lazuli inlay work was their companion because (...) Rani of Cooch Naheem had sent them, as a wedding gift, a wondrously-carved, lapis-inlaid, gemstone-cruled silver spittoon. In their comfortable lamplit seclusion, husband and wife played the old men's game. (ibid, p. 73)

The excerpt contains a number of sexuality-related implications: firstly, the mentioning of Shah Jehan and his Mumtaz is a reference to the story of the emperor who built the most beautiful palace, the famous Taj Mahal, for his beloved wife Mumtaz; secondly, the details describing the atmosphere of the room imply that the game of hit-the-spittoon played by the newlyweds lying side by side is supposed to be a love game. However, the images appear to be pure simulacra, for the husband turns out to be an impotent and his wife remains a virgin after the two years of marriage.

The narrative contains a reference to the change in relation to the significations of the images in the postmodern society. Introducing the image of Taj Mahal, the narrator observes the alterations in the perception of the image with the view to the consumer society:

When she died he built her that mausoleum which had been immortalised on postcards and chocolate boxes and whose outdoor corridors stink of urine and whose walls are covered in graffiti and whose echoes are tested for visitors by guides although there are signs in three languages pleading for silence. (ibid, p. 73)

The devaluation of the image through its extensive market-oriented use and the violation of the difference between high and low results in the transformation of the sign into a simulacrum. Therefore, the use of such an image in a different context implies the absence of the significations which might have been attributed to the image before this transformation.

The importance of the simulacrum in relation to Mumtaz and Nadir's love is reemphasized in the inclusion of the image of the indirect kiss in the episode of their meeting at the Pioneer Café. Similarly to the image of Taj Mahal, the image of the indirect kiss is a reference to sexuality and is borrowed from a famous Indian film, directed by Mumtaz's brother Hanif. In the film the kiss is supposed to demonstrate the sensuality of relationships, which is forbidden to refer to in Indian films; however, in the episode at the Pioneer Café, the imitation of the kiss acquires a different connotation:

What I saw at the very end: my mother's hands raising a half-empty glass of Lovely Lassi; my mother's lips pressing gently, nostalgically against the mottled glass; my mother's hands handling the glass to Nadir-Quasim; who also applied, to the opposite side of the glass, his own, poetic mouth. (ibid, pp. 301-302)

The indirect kiss at the café reemphasizes the impotence of the relationships between Mumtaz and Nadir through the transformation of the image into a simulacrum: the kiss refers to the image of the film but does not signify the forbidden eroticism; in contrast, it obtains the connotation of the impossibility of a physical contact and sexuality.

Although the connotations of the void and absence dominate the relationships between Mumtaz and Nadir, the impact simulacra appear to have on these relationships is durable. Neither the sexuality of her second husband, nor the presence of children can free Mumtaz from her love for Nadir; therefore, he is the man she remembers in her dreams up to the day of her death.

Summarising, the two love stories introduce the imagery which connects the members of one family through the stories whose images recurrently emerge in relation to other family members. The portrayal of Aadam Aziz's love introduces the tension between the powers of making and unmaking which results in a temporary substitution of the void, made by the disintegrating powers of loss, with a new creation, love. The hole which has formed as the result of the loss of faith is filled with the dream of the glued image of love which supplements the first loss. The indeterminacy of the supplement is emphasized through the further portrayal of the love story: the hidden beauty appears to be a monster.

The story of Mumtaz's love exemplifies a postmodern scenario which subverts the recurrence of the substitution: Mumtaz performs the ritual of the fragmentation, subverting it, for she mentally divides her husband's body in parts. However, in the case of Mumtaz, the void does not exist although she would like to believe the opposite. Consequently, her attempts to repeat the ritual fail. Both stories are based on the ironic interpretation of traditional connotations attributed to the images, which makes the meanings of the images indeterminate.

3.2. The Interpretation of the Image of the Void and Its Supplements in the Portrayal of Saleem Sinai

The images, introduced in the portrayal of Aadam Aziz, are related to other characters of the novel as well. The portrayal of Saleem Sinai, who is closely related to Aadam Aziz, incorporates a great number of these images, although the interpretation of the images is different. On the other hand, regarding minor characters, the number of recurrent images is smaller, each character or a group of characters is attributed one or two images whose connotations are developed throughout the novel. Despite the difference in the number of images and the variations of meanings the images are attributed, their connotations are interrelated, forming a fabric of connections which relate them to each other.

To start with, the imagery which is related to the protagonist Saleem Sinai will be discussed. The images related to the process of making appear in relation to Saleem before his birth. The first image of this kind is the prophecy of an Indian guru which fills the inner void of Saleem's mother: "Amina stuck to her guns, because Ramram's prediction had sunk deep into her heart." (ibid, p.132) The prophecy determines Mumtaz's relationship with her unborn son and appears to have an influence on their relationships long after his birth. In respect to Saleem, it becomes the first of the multiple narratives which fill him throughout his life; this particular story binds him to the inheritance from his mother.

The description of Saleem's first days reveals the significance of the images which possess the quality of liquidity. The relevance attached to the quality of the liquidity in the postmodern theory should not be undervalued. A famous theorist of postmodernism Jean Baudrillard points out the significance of the image in his work *The Illusion of the End*, claiming that postmodern culture has taken the form of a liquid in the West. He states that postmodern culture could be characterized by the following components: dissolution of meaning, which has formerly been stable, incorporation of opposites, which have initially been divided, dissemination of meaning, enabled by the fluidity of the liquid. This transformation from a stable entity into a fluid possesses certain dangers, such as the transformation of an object into an image, reflected by the surface of the liquid and a possibility of transmitting the vices of the culture more easily, for it is more difficult to locate them and differentiate within the other components of the liquid as all of them have taken the same form. (Baudrillard, 2003, pp.34-53)

The first description of Saleem contains numerous references to the image of liquidity. It portrays him as an empty vessel which needs to be filled; on the other hand, the description contains a reference to the absence of such an image in the context where it seems it has to be incorporated:

By mid-September I had drained my mother's not inconsiderable breasts of milk. A wet-nurse was briefly employed but she retreated, dried-out as a desert after only a fortnight (...)I moved on to the bottle and downed vast quantities of compound... Waste matter was evacuated copiously from the appropriate orifices; from my nose there flowed a shining cascade of goo (...) shedding rubbish from various apertures, I kept my eyes quite dry. (*Midnight's Children*, pp. 169-170)

Saleem is rapidly enlarging due to the extensive consumption of liquids. However, the process is portrayed through the extensive usage of hyperbole which adds irony to the description. Saleem's growth and consumption of food are comparable to Rabelais' Gargantuan feasts where food is consumed without any selection or purpose: the idea underlying the process of the enlargement is consumption rather than development or perfection.

The parallel between the enlargement of the baby and the growth of his native city Bombay could be drawn here. The city is compared to the mouth which is “always open, always hungry, swallowing food and talent everywhere else in India, producing nothing but films bush-shirts fish.” (ibid, p. 172) The comparison introduces an ironic interpretation of the image of the liquid which is consumed in large quantities without proper selection; it produces waste rather than valuable material. Similarly to Saleem whose ‘waste matter’ is evacuated through all orifices, the city produces worthless objects although it consumes a lot of valuable material alongside with rubbish.

On the other hand, the image of waste and rubbish cannot be attributed one connotation within the context of postmodernism. Jean Baudrillard points out to the obsessive tendency of the contemporary culture to recycle waste, which presumes that in spite of being worthless, waste is granted immortality by postmodernism (Baudrillard, 2003, p. 27) The theme of waste in respect to Saleem is of certain significance, for it emerges in the portrayal of his childhood and reemerges further in the novel to reveal his relationships with the world.

The contrast between the excessive waste and the dryness of the eyes hints at the significance of the image of tears in relation to the process of growth. Tears are generally interpreted as a symbol of the expression of the inner state of a person. (*Dictionary of Symbols*, p. 977) Thus, the lack of tears may signify the absence of an individual approach to the abundance of outside influences.

Saleem’s childhood is dominated by the images which symbolise the process of acquisition and growth, while the first incident which leads to the phase of loss occurs in his adolescence. It is portrayed in the episode of his nasal treatment which Saleem is forced to undergo:

Silence inside me. A connection broken (for ever). Can’t hear anything (nothing here to hear). Silence like a desert. And a clear, free nose (nasal passages full of air (...)) banishing me from the possibility of midnight children. (*Midnight’s Children*, p.423)

The episode brings the reader back to the loss of faith of Aadam Aziz whose religious feelings leak out of him in the form of blood during the period of praying. In both cases, the loss uncovers the inner void, which in the case of Saleem's operation is compared to a desert. Although the episodes have certain elements in common, the interpretation of the results they have on Aadam Aziz and Saleem are different. If Aadam Aziz accepts the change as an integral part of his life, preceded by his university years in Europe, and looks for a supplement; Saleem perceives the loss as the beginning of the process of disintegration which is uncontrollable and irreversible, for it is forced on the protagonist by outside influences. The operation eliminates any opportunity of the recovery of the lost part of his identity, as it is stated that the connection is destroyed "for ever."

The episode of the drainage re-introduces the theme of the waste which is brought about by the outside influences. Having been robbed of a significant bond with the midnight's children, Saleem is in search of the replacement which could fill the void. However, his quest for the recovery of the lost self fails: the multiple smells which pour into him during his teenage years in Karachi do not manage to substitute the inner emptiness. The lack of the connection with the outside world first revealed through the absence of tears is further explored in the period of Saleem's adolescence. However, the outcome of the alienation is depicted in more dramatic terms at this stage. The transformation into a man-dog as a result of the process of alienation becomes central in terms of the images representative of this stage.

The image of the man-dog is related to the concept of the void as the description of Saleem as a man-dog contains direct references to the images related to the concept: "this man with his nose like a cucumber and his head which rejected memories families histories, which contained absolutely nothing except smells... 'like a bad egg that somebody sucked dry'" (ibid, p.489) The excerpt establishes the differences between the influences the person is subjected to: the ones which are personalized through their connection to the family or individual experiences are supposed to compose the core of the individuality, while the ones which are a part of the discourses which are not directly related to the family background acquire minor significance in respect to an individual. Therefore, the absence of family-

related influences and the dominance of the smells, which represent the influences of the world unrelated to Saleem's family, result in Saleem's inability to function in the world. He reacts to the world at the level of instincts as he is able to eat, copulate, follow orders; however, there is nothing left in him at the level of his individuality: he does not have any emotions, opinions or memories.

The recovery of the lost self is accompanied by the images which are attributed the quality of liquidity. In contrast to the culture related images which Saleem is subjected to in Karachi, this episode is dominated by natural imagery: forest, water, dreams and snake poison. The image of the river appears at the initial stage of the process. It carries Saleem together with his fellow soldiers to the jungles; it is considered to be "Her, the mother-water, goddess Ganga streaming down to earth through Shiva's hair." (ibid, p.500) The traditional interpretation of the river Ganga as a symbol is a way to cleansing and liberation. (*Dictionary of Symbols*, p.809) The theme of cleansing is significant in this episode as the soldiers are escaping the reality of the civil war, in particular, the guilt for the war crimes they have committed. On the other hand, the experiences the soldiers are subjected to during this quest are not portrayed in positive terms only; therefore, the theme of cleansing, although present, is not attributed the positive connotations the image traditionally is supposed to possess.

The image of the river is used at the initial stage of the quest, in relation to Saleem; the development of the theme is dominated by the image of the snake. The contrast between the dominant images in respect to Saleem and his fellow soldiers should be mentioned here, as in relation to the soldiers, the image of the dream gains importance, while in respect to Saleem, the image of the snake is more relevant. The importance of the image of the snake is due to the individual connection between the image and the theme of self-recovery which Saleem relates to his childhood experiences. The theme of recovery is attributed to the image of the snake in Saleem's childhood when he was treated with snake poison because no other medicine could help. The outcome of the treatment was not determinate, for the snake poison might have killed or cured him. Luckily, Saleem recovered from the illness.

Another image from Saleem's childhood incorporating the snake is the game of snakes and ladders which Saleem uses as a metaphor of his life throughout the novel. The symbolic meanings which are attached to the images of ladders and snakes imply the opposing nature of the two elements. The ladder symbolizes the ascent to the ideal and is related to the concept of hierarchy. (*Dictionary of Symbols*, p. 580) In contrast, snakes are traditionally perceived as the embodiment of lower psyche and instincts as opposite to reason. (ibid, p. 844) The rules of the game in snakes and ladders follow the traditional interpretation of the images, for ladders signify fortune while snakes mean a failure to the player. However, the portrayal of Saleem's experience illustrates the subversion of the traditional connotations: he is cured with snake poison twice. Once in his childhood, Saleem is given snake poison by Dr Schaapsteker and is cured from a lethal disease; the second time he is cured from amnesia by a bite of a poisonous snake. Used as a metaphor of Saleem's life, the game acquires the feature of unpredictability:

The game of snakes and ladders captures (...) the eternal truth that for every ladder you climb, a snake is waiting just around the corner; and for every snake, a ladder will compensate(...) it is also possible to slither down a ladder and climb to triumph on the venom of a snake. (*Midnight's Children*, p.194)

Although the second interpretation of the game which is provided by the narrator clashes with the traditional one, it appears to be relevant in respect to Saleem, for he twice uses the snake venom to triumph over the influence of the negativity of life.

In general, the abundance of connotations attributed to the symbol of a snake in different cultures does not allow interpreting the image one-sidedly; however, the connotation of the snake as a giver of life and inspiration can be related to the connotation of the image employed in the novel. (*Dictionary of Symbols*, p.850) The unpredictable nature of the snake venom which can both kill and cure complements the indeterminacy of the imagery of the novel.

In addition to the indeterminacy of the connotations attributed to the image of the snake venom, the contents of Saleem's regained past are also constituted of the stories which are true to the extent they are related to Saleem's individual or family experiences.

To quote Jacques Derrida, “What are the man’s truths after all? They are the man’s irrefutable errors.” (Derrida, 1997, p. xxviii) Therefore, to the soldiers, the stories sound as fairy tales which are spell binding but not true, for the soldiers do not share Saleem’s experience. However, their relevance to the protagonist of the novel is more significant than the importance of the influences he is subjected to from the world outside his family.

The last episode of the novel, significant in terms of the process of disintegration, is the final drainage of Saleem’s self in the Widows’ Hostel. Its beginning, caused by the drainage, is preceded by the episode of being filled with where the image of a leaking narrative plays an important part. The image of the narrative possessing the quality of liquidity is introduced early in the novel. First, it is the prophecy of the guru which fills the emptiness of Mumtaz’s inner self; secondly, it is an indirect kiss which leaks from the film screen into the reality of Mumtaz and Nadir’s love; another example of a leaking narrative is Ahmed’s invented family curse. A distinctive quality of all these leaking narratives is their relation to family members and their stories. For instance, the indirect kiss is first shown on screen in Mumtaz’s brother’s film; the family curse appears under the influence of Saleem’s biological father whose arrogance prompts Ahmed Sinai to make up a legend about the family connection to Mughal emperors.

The influence the narratives have on family members is indeterminate as well as the impact of one or another family story. The indirect kiss, created by Uncle Hanif, brings him fame and fortune, while in relation to Mumtaz and Nadir, it serves a symbol of their impotent love. Similarly, the appropriation of the family curse by Saleem has a number of effects on his personality:

I, quietly, shamefully, said: ‘I can’t marry anyone, Pictureji, I can’t have children.’
(...)And I, wishing upon myself the curse of Nadir Khan, which was also the curse of my uncle Hanif Aziz, and, during the freeze and its aftermath, of my father Ahmed Sinai, was goaded into lying (...).(ibid, pp. 563-564)

First, the narrative seeps into Saleem and becomes an integral part of his inner self, for he becomes impotent soon after announcing the connection to this family story; secondly, it reunites Saleem with his family by making his story an integral part of the family history,

for it starts to follow the pattern of events characteristic of the stories of other members of the family. Thus, Saleem recovers the broken connection with the family which has been damaged by his awareness of his status in the family as an adopted son.

The process of drainage follows shortly after the curse of impotence is made public. Similarly to the first drainage, the second one is related to a medical treatment: Saleem is subjected to vasectomy. Another similarity appears to be a side effect of the operation: Saleem is drained of hope which inflicts more serious consequences than the surgery itself:

She devised the operation of our annihilation, and now we were nothing, who were we, a mere 0.00007 per cent, nor fishes could be multiplied nor base metals transmuted; gone forever, the possibilities of flight and lycanthropy and the originally-one-thousand-and-one marvelous promises of a luminous midnight. (...) Who were we? Broken promises; made to be broken. (ibid, p.614)

Being reduced to normal stops the process of growth and development, for after the surgery, Saleem declines any attempt from the outside to contribute to his personality. The loss of the magic powers signifies the destruction of the entire little narrative of the midnight's children: the shared ability has become the bond holding them together despite their differences. Lyotard's assumption that the connection which holds the members of the small narrative is stronger than any other bond is taken into extreme in this example: the children are doomed once the connection holding the members of the little narrative is broken.

What is more, the magic powers of the midnight's children represent their life-substance which is essential despite its illusionary nature. The parallel drawn between the magic and the promise enhances the connotation of the illusionary attributed to the image of the magic, for the gift the children are given at their birth appears to be indeterminate in terms of its value. None of the children is capable of taking advantage of the magic powers she/he is granted: Parvati is unable to charm Saleem into loving her, Saleem is not capable of uniting the children, Shiva does not reach the public status he has dreamt of at the start of his military career. However, namely the illusionary appears to be the most valuable: the failures do not break the children when they are faced with misfortunes, but the drainage of the promise brings about the complete destruction of their personalities. Further in the novel, the image of the dream acquires a similar connotation to that of the magic powers.

In general, the portrayal of Saleem Sinai is dominated by the image of the void and the attempts to supplement it. In contrast to Aadam Aziz who undergoes moderate transformations and is capable of finding temporary supplements for his void, the images associated with Saleem are attributed the quality of excess: Saleem's life is dominated by either excessive influences he is subjected to or excessive dryness which cannot be compensated. His attempts to achieve the balance between the two forces finally fail, and the forces of unmaking begin to dominate. Thus, the portrayal of the protagonists both relates and contrasts them through the usage of the contrasting images of moderation and excess as well as the similarities between the patterns of behaviour and joining their narratives in the depiction of Aadam Sinai, whose name, borrowed from both characters, serves as a link between them.

3.3. The Role of the Imagery of Liquidity within the Little Narrative of the Novel

The problem of the void and attempts to compensate it distinguish and, consequently, establish a certain link among Aadam Aziz, Saleem Sinai and Aadam Sinai in contrast to other characters of the novel. The latter are predominantly related to the imagery which possesses the quality of liquidity. What is more, a certain network of direct and indirect connections is established both within the group and with the protagonists of the novel regarding the connotations which are attributed to these images. The further discussion of the imagery will aim at revealing the connections which relate them to different characters.

3.3.1. The Image of a Leaking Narrative

The image of a leaking narrative, which occurs in relation to different members of the family, is extensively revealed through the portrayal of Aadam Aziz's mother, his wife Naseem and their daughter Mumtaz. Naseem is attributed the qualities of liquidity when she is portrayed in relation to her husband: her image, glued from the fragments which the

doctor sees through the perforated sheet, seeps into her future husband, filling the void left after his loss of faith.

However, after her husband's death, Naseem loses her ability to complement other people and acquires the ability to absorb outside influences. The subversion of the role Naseem is entitled to perform after the husband's death is revealed through the use of liquid-related images: a gasoline and oil business which she starts to run, the stories of strangers which keep pouring into her, the physical appearance which reminds the reader of a sponge:

The pump rapidly became famous in those parts, drivers began to go out of their way to use it-often on two consecutive days, so that they could both feast their eyes on my divine aunt and tell their woes to my eternally patient grandmother, who had developed the absorbent properties of a sponge (...) she grew with alarming rapidity, wider and wider; until builders were summoned to expand her glassed-in box. (ibid, p. 456)

The passage reveals the significance of the transformation Naseem undergoes at this stage: initially interested only in her family matters, Naseem plunges into the world of strangers, predominantly men, and absorbs the narratives which are unrelated to her personal life. At the same time, she loses any interest in family issues. A traditional connotation attributed to the image of growth is that of a development and improvement. However, in the portrayal of Naseem's growth, the connotation is undermined: the process of Naseem's opening to the influences of the world outside her family leads to her alienation from the family and the strengthening of the feeling of indifference.

In addition, having spent most of her life hidden in her house and veiling her face to hide it from strangers, Naseem turns to exposing herself to the world: she both unveils herself and chooses a glass box to sit in. The glass box becomes a part of Naseem's new personality, a substitute for her skin, as in the process of her physical enlargement, the glass walls are expanded to suit her changing shape. In addition to the feature of the box to expose in contrast to covering, the transparency of the glass could be mentioned in respect to the image of the glassed-in box. Jean Baudrillard points out that the object which has become transparent loses its inherent qualities:

they [things] lose their image, their mirror, their reflection, their shadow, when they no longer offer any substance, distance or resistance, when they become both immanent and elusive from an excess of liquidity and luminosity. (Baudrillard, 2003, p. 40)

Thus, by absorbing the stories of strangers, Naseem turns into a mere reflection of the process of absorption which is exposed through the transparent glass walls of the box. She loses her connection with the family as she gives up the control of her family affairs and gradually loses any interest in her children's lives, which results in her alienation from them. Paradoxically, the loss of individuality is accompanied by the enlargement of her physical shape, which seems to have acquired the qualities of a liquid.

Naseem's story is both influenced by and influencing other female characters of the novel. Parallels could be drawn between her and Adam Aziz's mother who has to run a family business. However, the liquidity of gas and oil which are the core elements of Naseem's business is replaced by the dryness of gemstones in the case of the doctor's mother. On the other hand, the portrayal of Aadam Aziz introduces the connotation of a gemstone as a hardened form of an inner liquid: blood or tears, which has lost the quality of a liquid to enter the individual or fill the void. What is more, gemstones possess the quality to reflect an image of an object.

The pain that the transformation into a visual image causes is revealed through the portrayal of the doctor's mother's sufferings brought about by her unveiling. The gemstone business forces the doctor's mother to uncover her hidden identity by becoming a public figure: she has to appear barefaced in front of her clients, for it is necessary to win their trust. The stress the change causes affects her physical health, which becomes apparent from her complaints to her doctor-son: "feel these rashes, these blotchy bits, understand that my head aches morning noon and night." (*Midnight's Children*, p. 16) What is more, she does not come to terms with the change she has undergone, in contrast to Naseem Aziz who plunges herself into the transformation, alienating herself from her former self. Consequently, in the situation where Naseem seems to flourish, the doctor's mother keeps developing ailments and sufferings.

Naseem's sponge-like ability to absorb outside narratives is inherited by her daughter Mumtaz. Throughout the novel, she is filled with numerous stories such as the prophecy of the guru, the forbidden love for Nadir Khan, the envy of her elder sister Ali and others. Under the influence of the stories, she undergoes significant physical transformations, ballooning in size and developing serious ailments, thus, relating to both her mother and grandmother. The final transformation she undergoes appears to be monstrous and irreversible:

The weight of her four decades grew daily, crushing her beneath her age. In her second month, her hair went white. By the third, her face had shriveled like a rotting mango. In her fourth month she was already an old woman, lined and thick, plagued by verrucas once again, with the inevitability of hair sprouting all over her face (...) (ibid, p. 461)

Similarly to her mother, Mumtaz is only relieved from her burden by an exploding bomb; there are no other means to resist the dominance of the influences she is subjected to.

To sum up, the image of the leaking narrative acquires different significations in the novel. Naseem Aziz estranges herself from the family under the influence of abundant outside narratives. However, her reaction to the transformation is depicted in less dramatic terms as it is in the case of Saleem. She plunges into the realm of public life by exposing herself and rejecting her family-self; as a result, she undergoes significant physical transformation. Although her reinvented self is more like a reflection of the narratives than compose her at that stage, Naseem does not seem to suffer from this change.

In contrast, her mother-in-law develops a deeply negative reaction to a similar exposure, which manifests itself in numerous ailments. The influence of the family-related narratives is revealed through the portrayal of Mumtaz. She inherits the ways of dealing with the stress caused by overexposure from both her mother and her grandmother. In the course of events, Mumtaz enlarges and is subjected to physical pain. However, the cause of the changes in her case is the influence of family narratives in contrast to the examples of the senior women. Thus, in the portrayal of Mumtaz, the dissemination of the connotations can be observed, for it incorporates the contrastive inheritances which produce a new meaning.

3.3.2. The Image of Food

The image of food is another liquidity-related image. Naseem, her elder daughter Alia and the family nanny Mary Pereira are capable of preparing food which transfers the emotions of the cook to the people consuming the food. The function of the food as a mediator between people is revealed in a passage about Mumtaz being transformed in the process of the consumption of food:

Amina began to feel the emotions of other people's food seeping into her- because Reverend Mother doled out the curries and meatballs of intransigence, dishes imbued with the personality of their creator; Amina ate the fish salans of stubbornness and the birianis of determination. And although Mary's pickles had a partially counter-active effect (...) they had the power of making those who ate them subject to nameless uncertainties and dreams of accusing fingers...(ibid, pp.190-191)

The role of the food as a mediator enriches the variety of methods of making connections within the little narrative of the family. The indeterminacy of the effect the food has is circumstanced by the complexity of influences it represents. As it can be seen from the extract, Amina is subjected to two contrastive forces at the time of the consumption of food: the determination of her mother and the uncertainties of Mary Pereira. Both of the influences combine to produce a mixed effect on Amina, which results in a particular course of actions influenced but not determined by any of the influences. Thus, Amina begins to gamble in horse-races in order to save the family from bankruptcy; however, the success in gambling brings her a severe sense of guilt which plagues her in spite of the joy of achievement.

The tradition of preparing food filled with emotions is transferred to Saleem. The skills he learns from Mary Pereira are applied to making pickles and his book.

To pickle is to give immortality, after all: fish, vegetables, fruit hang embalmed in spice-and-vinegar, a slight intensification of taste, is a small matter, surely? The art is to change the flavour in degree, but not in kind; and above all(...) to give it shape and form-that is to say, meaning. (ibid, p. 644)

The description contains a parallel between the processes of pickling and writing, drawing on the quality both processes share: the role of an accident, brought about by inspiration, unpredictable and capable of shaping the essence of the final product, which is identified as “meaning” in the excerpt. However, the reference to the necessity of art for the process of creation brings us back to the idea of postmodern theorists such as U. Eco and R. Barthes about the postmodern text as an open text which requires a participation of the reader who should be capable of discovering the multitudinous meanings of the text. Although Salman Rushdie chooses a seemingly trivial process of preparing food for the comparison with writing, he does not reduce the process of composing the text to a mundane activity, alternatively, the emphasis is put on the artistry, required to approach the text.

Summarising, the image of food incorporates the connotations of dissemination and indeterminacy. The quality of fluidity which is attributed to the image of food enables it to dissolve and mix with other substances producing an indeterminate effect on its consumer. The parallel between the preparation of food and writing develops the connotations further by asserting the importance of a chance and play in the creative process as well as the artistry of the participants of the process of creating new meanings.

3.3.3. The Image of the Ghost

The image of the ghost, which is introduced in respect to Mary Pereira as a reminder about her crime of switching babies, is repeatedly used in the novel to reveal the dependency of the characters on their past. Among the characters of the novel in relation to whom the image of the ghost acquires different connotations, Mumtaz, Saleem and Mary Pereira will be discussed in more detail.

Mumtaz is one of the characters who encounter ghosts from the past. Burdened with the guilt and shame for bearing a child, she withdraws into herself and is “visited by Lila Sabarmati’s pianola, or the ghost of her brother Hanif, or a pair of hands which danced, moths-around-a-flame, around and around her own.” (ibid, p. 469) The ghosts Mumtaz encounters include both animated and unanimated objects which metaphorically refer to the

experiences she has lived through. The ghosts are not attributed any divine qualities; however, the metaphoric nature of some of the objects serve as a reference to the turn to abstraction and alienation from the family Mumtaz feels at that period.

Another female character to encounter the ghost is Mary Pereira. The ghost of her former lover Joe D'Costa appears to remind Mary of her crime. The transformations the image of the ghost undergoes throughout the novel are due to its dissemination into the family discourse. Initially, the ghost is attributed a fixed meaning within a particular discourse: Mary is the only person to see the ghost, the ghost has recognizable appearance (it resembles her former lover), and the image of the ghost is related to a particular crime Mary has committed.

However, the change in the discourse when Mary is forced to leave the family house and the ghost there to be on its own leads to its dissemination within the family discourse, bringing about a variety of connotations attributed to it in the process of dissemination. According to Jacques Derrida, "the signifier and the signified are interchangeable; one is the difference of the other; the concept of the sign itself is no more than a legible yet effaced, unavoidable tool. Repetition leads to a simulacrum, not to the same." (Derrida, 1997, p.lxv)

The transformation of the image into its simulacrum is initially manifested in the physical changes in the ghost's appearance: "it had begun to decay, so that now bits of it were missing: an ear, several toes on each foot, most of its teeth; and there was a hole in its stomach larger than an egg." (*Midnight's Children*, p. 350) The dissemination of its physical appearance leads to its further dissemination in respect to the connotations attributed to it.

Aadam Aziz is the first family member alongside with Mary to encounter the ghost:

at midnight, my grandfather awoke in his darkened room. Someone else present—someone who was not his wife (...) Someone with shining dust on him, lit by the setting moon (...) and my grandfather looking and seeing, yes, there are holes in hands, perforations in the feet as there once were in a (...) But he is rubbing his eyes, shaking his head, saying: 'Who? What did you say?' And the apparition, startling-startled, 'God! God!' And, after a pause, 'I didn't think you could see me.' (ibid, p. 383)

Aadam Aziz interprets the image of Joe D'Costa's ghost as the apparition of God who has appeared to him after his son's death. He considers the indeterminacy of the speaker as well as the signs he relates to the image of Jesus Christ to be proofs of his assumption. Ironically, the image of the ghost acquires the connotation of the godly figure as a result of its physical transformation.

Mary has a different interpretation of the vision Aadam Aziz has seen:

Mary Pereira left with her face pale as bedsheets; Mary knew whom Aadam Aziz had seen- who, decayed by his responsibility for her crime, had holes in hands and feet; whose heel had been penetrated by a snake; who died in a nearby clocktower, and had been mistaken for God. (ibid, p. 384)

The disseminated image of the ghost acquires the features of a simulacrum at this stage. The signs of the image are taken for the image and are interpreted according to the situation each character faces.

The impact the simulacrum has on both Mary and Aadam is overwhelming. Aadam Aziz is drawn to craziness by his hatred for God who has taken his son, while Mary begins to confuse the image of the ghost she has once known so well with all the vague figures she cannot instantly recognize. Therefore, she confuses the ghost with the figure of an old servant and confesses the fact of switching babies to family members.

The summary of the effect the dissemination of the ghost has brought about highlights the indeterminacy of the situation:

someone was called God who was not God; someone else was else was taken for a ghost, and was not a ghost; and a third person discovered that although his name was Saleem Sinai, he was not his parents' son. (ibid, p. 390)

Although the final episode reveals the absence of the reality masked under its multiple signs, the transformation into a simulacrum is irreversible: Saleem Sinai is not returned to his biological parents, Shiva does not take his place as a biological son of Ahmed and Mumtaz Sinai. However, the uncertainty which is left as the outcome of the acknowledgement of the simulacrum begins to dominate the life of family members.

The male character who is associated with the image of the ghost is Saleem. The ghosts he sees have affinities with the ones discussed above. The ghost of his beloved Jamilia appears when he is about to commit the crime of making love to Parvati without loving her. The physical appearance of the ghost displays affinities with the ghost of Joe D'Costa:

The ghostly features of Jamilia Singer replaced those of the witch girl; (...) she had undergone a dark transformation. She had begun to rot, the dreadful pustules and cankers of forbidden love were spreading across her face. (ibid, p.553)

The ghosts of Jamilia and Joe D'Costa have both similarities and differences. Both of them possess the appearance which is physical: the descriptions of both ghosts contain a lot of details concerning their appearance. However, if the ghost of Joe D'Costa is characterized through the use of comic as well as dramatic elements, the ghost of Jamilia possesses exceptionally dramatic features. The difference might reflect the difference between the people seeing the ghosts. When Mary sees the ghost of Joe D'Costa for the first time, she is already a mature person. In contrast, Saleem sees the ghost of Jamilia in his adolescence when the emotions are at their height and the loss of the first love is seen as the end of the world.

The second encounter with the ghost links Saleem to his mother Mumtaz. Before the Widow's attack, he is visited by the ghost of Nadir Khan, Mumtaz's first love. The ghost of Nadir Khan differs from the ghost of Jamilia as it appears in an abstract form of a dream specter. Thus, it relates to Mumtaz's experience regarding the ghosts whom she saw as metaphoric expressions of her past experiences, embodying her alienation from the outside world.

In general, the image of the ghost acquires a number of functions in the novel. First, it serves as a link within the little narrative of the novel, joining the present and the past of the characters. Secondly, it emphasizes the indeterminacy of the connections holding different constituents of the little narrative, for the relationships between the ghosts and the people are influenced by the family connections they are grounded on, but are not determined or directly transferred from one person's experience to another's.

3.3.4. The Image of the Dream

The image of the dream often appears as a pastiche of the elements of different narratives related to history, politics, economy or culture. It is introduced in relation to the doctor Narlikar and Ahmed Sinai who share the dream of tetra pods:

Why did my father agree to dream a gynaecologist's entrepreneurial dream? Why, little by little, did the vision of full-sized concrete tetrapods marching over sea walls, four-legged conquerors triumphing over the sea, capture him as surely as it had the gleaming doctor? Why, in the following years, did Ahmed dedicate himself to the fantasy of every island-dweller-the myth of conquering the waves? (ibid, p. 184)

The dream of tetra pods is located within a varied network of discourses, relating it to the history of marine conquests as well as the myth of the machine, favoured by modernists. On the other hand, Ahmed Sinai attempts to achieve a personal goal through the realization of the dream. As it is mentioned, he is "trying to restore his position in the world." (ibid, p. 184) Thus, a direct link between the image of the dream and the world of the novel is established, for the fulfillment of the dream is perceived as a means to establish oneself in the world.

However, the connection between the dream and the world of the novel appears to be more complicated than expected by the doctor and Ahmed Sinai. The vision of the technology conquering the wilderness of the sea is confronted by the city with its multicultural background which tends to incorporate everything into the existing discourse:

A group of beggar women had clustered around the tetrapod and were performing the rite of puja. They had lighted oil-lamps at the base of the object; one of them had painted the OM-symbol on its upraised tip; they were chanting prayers as they gave the tetrapod a thorough and worshipful wash. Technological miracle had been transformed into Shiva-lingam; Doctor Narlikar, the opponent of fertility, was driven wild at this vision, in which it seemed to him that all the dark priapic forces of ancient, procreative India had been unleashed upon the beauty of sterile twentieth-century concrete (...) (ibid, p. 244)

The clash between the doctor and the women reveals that the world of the novel consists of multiple dreams which sometimes appear to be incompatible with each other. The dream of Narlikar is the dream of modernism which incorporates the myth of the machine, the fascination with the abstraction and the division into high and low. This dream is confronted with the vision of the world of the beggar women which contains the elements of the pre-industrial culture whose ancient rituals serve to worship fertility and procreation. The attempts of the women to appropriate the “technological miracle” by performing certain rituals and assigning it a specific role in their world contrast with the willingness of Narlikar to prevent the process of appropriation and ensure the sterility of his dream. However, the postmodern world of the novel favours the indeterminacy of the combination of the components from different narratives over the stability of the meaning in an isolated narrative. Consequently, Narlikar’s attempts to secure the isolation of his dream fail, for he is crushed to death under the weight of his creation.

Another person, involved in the tetra pod dream, Ahmed Sinai fails to receive any gains from the realization of the dream; what is more, he starts to undergo a significant physical transformation:

It was after Narlikar’s death and the arrival of the women that he began, literally, to fade (...)gradually his skin paled, his hair lost its colour, until within a few months he had become entirely white except for the darkness of his eyes. (ibid, p. 457)

The loss of pigmentation is mentioned a few times regarding the image of dreams. In the episode in the jungles, Saleem and his fellow soldiers are subjected to the final series of the forest-sent dreams, which results in their loss of pigmentation:

they were becoming transparent, that it was possible to see through their bodies, not clearly as yet, but cloudily, like staring through mango-juice. In their alarm they understood that was the last and worst of the jungle’s tricks, that by giving them their heart’s desire it was fooling them into using up their dreams, so as their dream-life seeped out of them they became as hollow and translucent as glass. (ibid, p. 512)

In both cases, the loss of pigmentation coincides with the failure of the dream. The transparency which appears to be the outcome of the failure indicates the loss of the human substance, as in the case of Naseem's decision to unveil and sit in a glassed-in box. The people subjected to such a transformation become mere reflections of other than their own dreams. The excerpt about the soldiers in the jungles emphasizes this fact by comparing dream to life: the loss of their dreams empties the soldiers from the substance of life.

Another dream, Saleem's dream of Kashmir, originates from the family history, making Saleem a part of it; it also blends into the realm of the dream-world of the novel by becoming a part of a political discourse:

I began to dream repeatedly of Kashmir; although I had never walked in Shalimar-bagh, I did so at night; I floated in shikaras and climbed Sankara Acharya's hill as my grandfather had; I saw lotus-roots and mountains like angry jaws (...) It would not be long before the dream of Kashmir spilled over into the minds of the rest of the population of Pakistan (...) (ibid, p. 457)

In terms of family connections, the description of the dream relates it to the family Kashmir experiences rather than an abstract place. Saleem is conscious of the objects which compose his dream and the degree to which they are related to the past of the family. The reference to the dream becoming a shared dream of the country highlights the liquid nature of the image, for the dream about Kashmir is said to spill over the minds of the people.

The process of the dissemination of the dream has similar consequences to those of the dream of tetra pods: Saleem's family is killed during the bombings at the beginning of the war while he suffers amnesia. Similarly, the dreamers of tetra pods are punished in the course of the dissemination of their dream: Narlikar dies defending the purity of his dream from the outside influences, while Ahmed Sinai suffers from the fundamental changes the loss of the dream has caused to his personality.

The most complex part of the narrative involving the imagery of dreams is the episode in the jungles. The period Saleem and his fellow soldiers spend in the jungles is related to the image of the dream as the means of the cognition of life which requires isolation and alienation to be perceived by the soldiers. The soldiers undergo a few stages in the process: firstly, they are subjected to the dreams recording their recent war experiences;

the second stage takes them to a more distant past of their childhood, while the final third series of dreams relates to the mythological roots of their world perception. The process of cognition includes the description of the process of contemplation as well as its ironic assessment, thus, suggesting that the connotations which can be attributed to the image of the dream are not decisive, for the image itself is attributed the quality of liquidity which is also the image related to the concept of indeterminacy.

The first series of dreams the soldiers are subjected to involve two stages: the preparation for the perception of the dream and the dreaming itself. The stages are built on contrast, for the preparatory stage is dominated by ironic and even comic elements, while the stage of dreaming includes a more dramatic description. At the moment of their appearance in the jungles, the soldiers are involved in the process of exchange with the forest:

they found their bodies covered in three-inch-long leeches which were almost entirely colourless owing to the absence of direct sunlight, but which had now turned bright red because they were full of blood, and which, one by one, exploded on the bodies of the four human beings, being too greedy to stop sucking when they were full, blood trickled down legs and on to the forest floor: the jungle sucked it in, and knew what they were like. (ibid, p, 505)

The excerpt indicates the initial stage of the exchange of liquids between the forest and the soldiers. Although the liquid involved at this stage is human blood, the description of the process lacks drama; what is more, the inclusion of the leeches as mediators between the forest and the soldiers adds a comic element to the process. The image of the leeches also reintroduces the theme of transparency: they are said to be colourless and, therefore, are able to reflect what they have absorbed. Thus, in addition to the substance that the leeches disseminate to the jungles, the soldiers also expose their personalities through the reflection of the image through the skin of the leeches.

The exchange of the liquids is conducted both ways, for the soldiers consume the rainwater of the forest in a form of a compensation for the blood they have been drained of:

rainwater poured off leaves all around them, and they turned their mouths up to the

roof of the jungle and drank; but because the water came to them by way of sundri leaves and mangrove branches and nipa fronds, it acquired on its journey something of the insanity of the jungle, so as they drank they fell deeper and deeper into the thralldom of that livid green world (ibid, p.505)

Thus, in return for their liquids the forest has absorbed, the soldiers are given the liquid of the forest which disseminates the essence of the forest within the soldiers. The liquid obtains a feature to dissolve within itself and transmit the substances which function as viruses by entering the vacancies they gain access to and dissolving in them. The allusion to the disease disseminated by the liquid is further explored in the episode of cleansing the soldiers are subjected to as a result of the consumption of the substance of the jungle. The food they consume in the forest is said to have caused “a diarrhea so violent that they forced them selves to examine the excrement in case their intestines had fallen out in the mess.” (ibid, p. 505)

In general, the beginning of the process of cognition is portrayed through the use of negative terms: the concepts such as insanity, disease, blood dominate the imagery at this stage. The narrative contains a postmodern mixture of elements representing high and low: comic elements are introduced within a dramatic context. On the other hand, the connotations attributed to the images vary: an image of the leech acquires a comic connotation along with the philosophical function of a mediator between the two worlds.

The first series of dreams the soldiers are sent by the jungles contain the references to their recent past; however, the images that comprise the dreams are attributed the qualities of transparency and liquidity

one night Ayooba awoke in the dark to find the translucent figure of a peasant with a bullet-hole in his heart and a scythe in his hand staring mournfully down at him (...) the peasant leaked a colourless fluid which flowed out of the hole in his heart and on to Ayooba's gun arm. The next morning Ayooba's right arm refused to move. (ibid, p. 506)

The image of the peasant Ayooba sees in his dream is not an abstraction meant to symbolise the war crimes the soldier has committed. It includes the elements which refer to a particular accident: the scythe and the bullet-hole relate the jungle-sent dream to Ayooba's

personal experience. On the other hand, the translucency and liquidity are the features that the experience obtains having been transformed into the image of the experience. The impact that the image has on Ayooba appears to be more powerful than that of the incident itself. Having acquired the viral quality of a liquid, the image infects the person from within. The motif of a disease reoccurs in this episode, for Ayooba is physically disabled by the impact of the disseminated image.

The impact the dream-images have on the soldiers is not determinate. In contrast to the destructive effect of the first series of dreams, the second one provides the soldiers with the background for personal development and maturity. It refers to a more distant past, namely, to the soldiers' childhood. The paradox, inherent in this stage of self-cognition, lies in the incorporation of contrastive elements into the process: the soldiers regress to infancy to become more mature.

However, the concept of maturity is not granted a positive connotation in terms of self-awareness. Alternatively, it leads to despair by providing a possibility of a deeper perception of the world of the dreams. The third series of dreams returns to the subject of the war memories; however, at this stage, the soldiers appear to be unable to withstand the pain the memories cause and stick their ears with mud:

the mud of the dream-forest, which no doubt also contained the concealed translucency of jungle-insects and the devilry of bright orange bird-droppings, infected the ears of the three boy-soldiers made them all as deaf as posts (...) They seemed, however, to prefer their diseased deafness to the unpalatable secrets which the sundry leaves had whispered in their ears. (ibid, p. 510)

The themes of translucency and liquidity repeatedly occur in relation to the image of dreams. Although the liquidity of the dreams does not seem to manifest itself in the form of images, its function of infecting its victims is retained. Thus, by protecting themselves from the impact of the dream-sent images, the soldiers surrender to their side-effect: a diseased deafness.

The final series of dreams refer to the past more distant than childhood. Traveling further into the jungles, the soldiers approach a sanctuary of the goddess Kali, the deity of

destruction and dissolution in the Hindi pantheon of gods. (Hemenway, 2007, p. 81) In the sanctuary, the soldiers are subjected to the last series of dreams:

they awoke simultaneously to find themselves being smiled upon by four young girls of a beauty which was beyond speech (...) but the houris looked real enough, and their saris, under which they wore nothing at all, were torn and stained by the jungle. (*Midnight's Children*, p. 511)

The final dream-image is different from the previous ones in one crucial aspect- the physicality of the image. In contrast to the translucent figures which possess the quality of liquidity from the previous dreams, the image of the girls does not remind the reader of dream-creatures: their clothes are dirty; their caresses leave marks on the soldiers' bodies. However, the sense of reality is deceptive, for the soldiers appear to have become a part of the dream-world of the jungles themselves:

the day came when they looked at each other and realized they were becoming transparent, that it was possible to see through their bodies not as clearly as yet, but cloudily, like staring through mango-juice. (ibid, p. 512)

The merger with the dream-like reality of the forest appears to be at the cost of becoming a part of that reality by acquiring the qualities of the images, constituting the dreams. The images of transparency and juice applied to the characterization of the alterations the soldiers undergo indicate the beginning of the loss of substance and the transformation into a disseminated image, a simulacrum of the old self. Consequently, the quest for cognition appears to be leading to a complete destruction of the material self and transformation into its disseminated image.

To sum up, the image of the dream is extensively used in the novel and provides a deep insight into the postmodern discourse, for it refers to its central concepts such as inclusion, dissemination, simulacra and indeterminacy. The dream of tetra pods could be seen as a contemplation of the issue of the elimination of the transcendental signifier and along with it an established meaning of a discourse. An attempt of doctor Narlikar to protect the meaning of his dream from the influence of others fails alongside with a number of other individual dreams such as Saleem's dream of Kashmir. By becoming a part of the existing

discourse, the dreams acquire new significations and a new destructive force. The authenticity is not approached as a value within a discourse rather it is valuable to the extent it can be appropriated. The jungle dreams of the soldiers further explore the problem of the author and the dissemination of the text in a wider discourse. Under the conditions of the discourse, the dissemination is inevitable; however, the position of the author is not as determinate. Subjected to the influence of the disseminated images, the author has to manipulate the images to retain his self to resist being disseminated into the anonymity of the discourse.

3.4. The Indeterminacy of the Ending(s) of the Novel

The last manifestation of the indeterminacies of the narrative can be observed in the ending(s) of the novel. The proposed endings reflect the connections which hold the novel within the tradition of European literature as well as the doubts about the possibility of continuing this tradition. As Ihab Hassan rightly notices, the problem of being a part of and continuing the tradition is inherent in the very term of postmodernism. The prefix post-indicates the link between the preceding culture of the Western world, modernism, and postmodernism as its later form; on the other hand, the theorists of postmodernism as well as the artists deny the possibility of the continuity of the tradition and declare the break from it. (Hassan, 1982, pp. 262-264)

The problem of continuity is central to the ending(s) of *Midnight's Children*. The first proposed ending relates the novel to the tradition of the Victorian novel which celebrates the established values of the society by putting an emphasis on them at the end of the novel. Similarly, the narrator of the novel assumes that there might be a possibility of such an ending by asking:

how to end? Happily, with Mary in her teak rocking-chair and a son who has begun to speak? Amid recipes and thirty jars with chapter- headings for name? In melancholy, drowning in memories of Jamilia and Parvati and even of Evie Burns? Or with the magic children (...) (*Midnight's Children*, pp.644-645)

The ending incorporates the elements of the novel, which have contributed to the creation of the indeterminacy of the text, transforming them to the requirements of the realistic novel. They obtain the roles which are traditionally supposed for them: Mary Pereira becomes a grandmother whose only care is to look after the grandchild; the protagonist becomes a family man and finds a peace of mind in his work and family life; the people who have once caused drama and restlessness are reduced to mere memories.

However, the form the ending acquires is not an assertion; it is interrogation, which presumes a possibility of an alternative:

Or with questions: now that I can, I swear, see the cracks on the backs of my hands, cracks along my hairline and between my toes, why do I not bleed? Am I already so emptied desiccated pickled? Am I already the mummy of myself? (ibid, p. 645)

The analogy between the processes of pickling and writing is transferred to the contemplation about the role of an individual in the process of self-creation. The question if there is the right time to decide that the life has already acquired a meaning and there is time to stop the process of creation is left unanswered. Still, the fact of asking oneself such a question reveals a doubt about making a final resolution, which would presume a possibility of a determinate meaning.

The second ending relates the novel to the tradition of symbolism, for it contains the references significant for the symbolist work of art: the image of the dream, the connection between the living and the dead through the image of the ghost:

Or dreams: because last night the ghost of Reverend Mother appeared to me staring down through the hole in a perforated sheet, waiting for my death so that she could weep a monsoon for forty days (...) and I, floating outside my body, looked down on the foreshortened image of myself, and saw a grey-haired dwarf who once, in a mirror, looked relieved. (ibid, p. 645)

The images of a perforated sheet, the hole, the ghost and the dwarf could be recognized as the private symbols of the writer for they are exploited throughout the novel and attributed numerous connotations. Nevertheless, the structural binarity of the symbol which

distinguishes between the high and the low, the good and the bad is not accepted as the final possibility of an ending of the novel.

The third ending incorporates a great number of elements which reassert the connotation of the images used in the novel and reemphasizes the indeterminacy of their interpretations. It indicates the significance of the little narrative of Saleem Sinai, which incorporates the elements, acquired throughout the life of Saleem and obtaining connotations in relation to his personal experience. In terms of time, Saleem finalises his quest on the day of his birth: “outside the window there will be fireworks and crowds, because it will be Independence Day and the many-headed multitudes will be in the streets.” (ibid, p. 645) Although the contrast between the individual and the crowd is emphasized in the final ending, the crowd is composed of the people who have been a part of Saleem’s life:

I am alone in the vastness of the numbers, the numbers marching one two three, I am being buffeted right and left while rip tear crunch reaches its climax (...) now I see familiar faces in the crowd, they are all here, my grandfather Aadam and his wife Naseem, and Alia and Mustapha and Hanif and Emerald, and Amina who was Mumtaz, and Nadir who became Quasim, and Pia (...) the terrifying figure of a war hero with lethal knees (...) the crowd which is now wholly composed of familiar faces (...) (ibid, p. 646)

It is the pressure of the connections of the small narrative Saleem belongs to that causes the disintegration of the protagonist and the narrative itself. As the narrator exclaims, it is the crowd that brings about his death: “watch me explode, bones splitting breaking beneath the awful pressure of the crowd.” (ibid, p. 647)

However, the indeterminacy of the origins of the protagonist, which also is the indeterminacy of the postmodern text which denies the continuity of the tradition but still incorporates its elements, ensures a possibility of the continuity. In terms of Saleem Sinai, the image of the son reveals the possibility: “all in good time, they will trample my son who is not my son, and his son who will not be his, and his who will not be his, until the thousand and first generation (...) (ibid, p. 647)

Thus, the problem of inheritance which is explored through the image of the son being switched and transferred to an alien environment opens a possibility of continuity

namely due to the fact of the change. Similarly, despite its breach from the linear tradition of the Western culture, the postmodern text ensures its existence through its multitudinous inspirations from different traditions, incorporated into its small narrative, for the diversity guarantees an infinite number of alternatives which can compose the postmodern narrative.

PART IV. The Play of Simulacra in Salman Rushdie's Novel *Shame*

Jean Baudrillard, one of the leading theorists of postmodernism, calls the period of postmodernism “the age of simulation and simulacrum”. (Baudrillard, 1983, p.12) The aims of this chapter are to provide the theoretical background for the concept of simulacrum within the postmodern discourse with the view to the works of Jean Baudrillard and Jacques Derrida; and present the interpretation of Salman Rushdie's novel *Shame* within the theoretical framework of the concept.

The theory of simulacrum is rooted in the perception of the sign and the transformations it undergoes throughout the history of Western metaphysics. In his work *Simulations*, Jean Baudrillard distinguishes four phases the image undergoes to become a simulacrum:

- it is the reflection of a basic reality
- it masks and perverts a basic reality
- it masks the absence of a basic reality
- it bears no relation to any reality whatsoever: it is its own pure simulacrum (Baudrillard, 1983, p. 11)

According to Baudrillard, the simulacrum is both an entity and a movement; and explicates the dynamic nature of the simulacrum, defining the process of simulation as “this irresistible unfolding, this sequencing of things as though they had a meaning when they are governed only by artificial montage and non-meaning.” (Baudrillard, 2003, p.15) The theorist attributes the transformation of the sign into the simulacrum to the elimination of the transcendental signified from the postmodern discourse and claims that the condition for the becoming of the simulacrum is that “there is no longer any God to recognize his own, nor any last judgment to separate true from false, the real from its artificial resurrection, since everything is already dead and risen in advance.” (Baudrillard, 1983, p. 12)

The elimination of the transcendental signified results in the permanent alteration of the concept of the sign, for this condition presumes the detachment of the signifier from the signified, thus destroying the binary structure of the sign. Baudrillard maintains that “simulation starts from the utopia of the principle of equivalence, from the radical negation

of the sign as value, from the sign as reversion and death sentence of any reference.”(ibid, p. 11) Thus, he assumes that the signified which has been a stable part of the structure of the sign is considered to be replaceable with its equivalents in the age of simulation. The theme of the equivalent (or the supplement to use Jacques Derrida’s term) becomes central in the discussion of the postmodern perception of the sign.

In order to establish the concept of simulacrum within the postmodern discourse, Jacques Derrida’s ideas about the sign and the postmodern perception of play will be overviewed further. Although Derrida does not employ the term of simulacra in his works about the postmodern concept of the sign, his assumptions regarding the nature of the concept provide further insights into the theory of simulacrum, elaborated by Jean Baudrillard, alongside with the concept of play.

Jacques Derrida uses the term ‘trace’ to refer to the transformed concept of the sign in postmodernism. He refers to the understanding of the symbol pronounced by Charles Sanders Peirce about the symbol to explain his own perception of the newly-coined convergence of the terms:” so it is only out of symbols that a new symbol can grow. *Omne symbolum de symbolo.*” (quoted in Derrida, 1997, p. 48) The parallel which is drawn between the symbol and the sign is made on the grounds of the process of their becoming rather than their content. According to Derrida, the sign is always a derived entity, rooted in the system of signs rather than the reality outside this system.

The interpretation of a sign as a derivative of other signs presumes that a sign does not refer to a thing, for it is always a reference to a combination of different signs. What is more, the sign acquires its significations in the process of becoming a sign. Derrida puts an emphasis on the concept of play in respect to the becoming of a sign:

the genetic root-system refers from sign to sign. No ground of non- signification- understood as insignificance or an intuition of a present truth- stretches out to give it foundation under the play and the coming into being of signs. (ibid, p. 48)

The play the sign is subjected to in the process of becoming does not resemble the play before the elimination of the transcendental signified. Jacques Derrida draws the distinction between the postmodern mode of play and the one preceding it, based on the connection

between the sign and the world: “this play, thought as absence of the transcendental signified, is not a play in the world, as it has always been defined, for the purposes of containing it.” (ibid, p. 50) In contrast, the postmodern play is directed to “the becoming-unmotivated of the symbol.” (ibid, p. 50) Consequently, the postmodern sign, or the simulacrum to use Baudrillard’s term, derives from numerous significations in order to continuously negate all of them in the process of play.

Derrida uses the term ‘trace’ to refer to the sign in the broadest sense while Baudrillard’s term ‘simulacrum’ is usually used to refer to images. In the interpretation of Salman Rushdie’s novel *Shame*, the latter term will be used to narrow the scope of analysis and focus on the interpretation of the play of images.

4.1. The Manipulation of Simulacra to Create a Public Image

The novel *Shame* is largely a political satire where a lot of attention is focused on the creation and the use of political images. The portrayal of Iskander Harappa and Raza Hyder reveals the process of employing the play of simulacra to create public images. The further analysis will aim at exploring the mechanism of the creation of the public image as well as the effect it produces on the intended audience and the person whose image is created.

To begin with, the creation of the public image of Iskander Harappa will be analysed with the view to the transformations it undergoes throughout the novel. The portrayal of Iskander Harappa gains significance in the novel at the period of its transformation from a private to public figure. His intention to become a politician is followed by numerous changes whose detailed description is provided in the novel:

he gave up stud poker, chemin de fer private roulette evenings, horse-race fixing, French food, opium and sleeping pills; when he broke his habit of seeking out beneath silver-heavy banqueting tables the excited ankles and compliant knees of society beauties, and when he stopped visiting the whores whom he had been fond of photographing with an eight millimeter Paillard Bolex movie camera while they performed (...) It was the beginning of that legendary political career (...) (*Shame*, 1995, p. 124)

A detailed list of changes attracts the reader's attention to the images which Iskander Harappa manipulates to present himself to the society. Formerly recognised as a playboy and a debaucher, Iskander eliminates the qualities which have been the most characteristic of his former image such as gambling, sex and drugs for the purpose of creating his new public image. The attention to detail in the process of change hints at the artificiality of the image. Jean Baudrillard calls this phenomenon hyperreality, which is created through the excess of meaning due to the hyperbolic focus on detail. (Baudrillard, 1983, p. 50)

The implosion of meaning is another strategy used to create Iskander Harappa's image. Baudrillard defines an implosion to be "an absorption of the radiating model of causality, of the differential mode of determination, with its positive and negative electricity." (ibid, p. 57) The excerpt reveals that the image of Iskander Harappa as a playboy embraces contradictory self-exclusive concepts: French food is paired with opium and sleeping pills, society beauties- with whores. None of them appear to be superior: when the image is relevant, they coexist within the same discourse; when the image loses its significance, all of its constituents are eliminated. However, namely the process of unmasking the image exposes the fact that there is nothing behind the image: it is its own simulacrum.

The artificiality of the new image is exposed further in the novel by Iskander's wife Rani Harappa. She produces shawls to reveal the private image of her husband which is hidden from the public eye during his political career. One of the shawls depicts Iskander's love affairs outside the city:

the badminton shawl, on which, against a lime-green background and within a delicate border of overlapping racquets and shuttle- cocks and frilly underpants, the great man lay unclothed, while all about him the pink-skinned concubines cavorted, their sporting outfits falling lightly from their bodies (*Shame*, pp. 191-192)

Ironically, the apparent difference between the two images of the man, repeatedly emphasized through the reference to Iskander Harappa as "legendary" and "great" in the context of his inappropriate behaviour, does not have any destructive effect on either of the images. Both of them coexist in spite of their contrastive natures. Jacques Derrida

emphasizes this quality of a postmodern sign to acquire a signification with the view to the environment it functions in. Discussing the concept of trace, he maintains: "If words and concepts receive meaning only in sequences of differences, one can justify one's language, and one's choice of terms, only within a topic [an orientation in space] and a historical strategy." (Derrida, 1997, p. 70)

In respect to Iskander Harappa, the orientation in space and its role in determining the choice of means are evident in the creation of his multiple images. In addition to the play with the image of his (a)sexuality, the choice determining his language could be mentioned. The language is considered to be an important part of the images Iskander creates for himself:

He expunged from his public, urban vocabulary his encyclopaedic repertoire of foul green village oaths, imprecations which could detach brim-full cut-glass tumblers from men's hands and shatter them before they reached the floor. (But when campaigning in the villages he allowed the air to turn green with obscenity once again, understanding the vote-getting powers of the filth.) He stifled for ever the high-pitched giggle of his unreliable playboy self and substituted a rich, full-throated, statesmanlike guffaw. (*Shame*, p.125)

The description of the alterations Iskander's language undergoes in the process of the creation of a new image reflects the reduction of one, private, image to a secondary one which continues to exist on the margins of the personality. In respect to the concept of sexuality, the description of the two existing images is physically distanced in the text: the description of the private image of Iskander's sexuality appears at the end of the novel, almost a hundred pages away from the description of the new image. The two images related to his language appear in the same description; however, the usage of brackets to punctuate the information about Iskander's private language emphasises the reduction of its importance from public to private. The question of space acquires significance in terms of the two images: in both cases the urban environment is related to the newly-created public image, while the rural area is related to the private image. Even if the village is mentioned in relation to Iskander's political career (as it is in the description of the language), the contrastive nature of the images is retained.

The attention to detail in the process of the creation of the image is well-revealed in the portrayal of Iskander Harappa's political career. The transition from a debaucher to a politician is just a starting point in the formation of his image as a politician. The excerpt describing his image as a supporter of the Chinese communists contain a variety of detail with respect to the colours he chooses and to the pictures hanging on the wall of his office:

Iskander Harappa had taken to dressing in green outfits styled by Pierre Cardin to resemble the uniforms of the Chinese Red Guards, because as the Foreign Minister in the government of President A. he had become famous as the architect of a friendship treaty with Chairman Mao. A photograph of Isky embracing the great Zedong hung on the wall of the room. (*Shame*, p. 150)

The attention to the visualization of the simulacrum strikes the reader in the excerpt. The choice of the means to create the desirable effect on the target audience enhances the feeling of artificiality of the image: Iskander chooses a suit which is a perfected copy of the outfit it is supposed to resemble. The reference to Pierre Cardin is not accidental in this context as well; the significance that the consumer society attaches to brand names is not overlooked in respect of the creation of an image. The designer's name is repeatedly mentioned in regard to the impact the image has on the ones subjected to it: "such was the power of his tongue, or perhaps of the sartorial talents of Monsieur Cardin, that nobody seemed to recall Isky's own status." (*ibid*, p. 151) The importance of the two elements in the description of a simulacrum: a combination of language and visual images is repeatedly emphasised in the latter quotation as well. The merger of the simulacrum with the image it intends to portray serves as the means of proving the existence of the object it simulates.

Discussing the choice of the images Iskander Harappa incorporates into the simulacra which represent him, the images borrowed from films should be mentioned. Facing a critical situation, he uses a powerful image from a famous Hollywood film to influence public opinion:

Iskander Harappa tore off his shirt and ripped it in half; he bared his hairless breast to the cheering, weeping crowd. (The young Richard Burton once did the same thing in the film *Alexander the Great*. The soldiers loved Alexander because he showed them his battle scars.) (*ibid*, p. 180)

The comparison between the episode of the film and the scene enacted on the political stage reveals the transformation an image has undergone through time. The act which is performed by Richard Burton serves as a reference to the memory of a basic reality: a historic fact of soldiers' love and respect for Alexander the Great due to his military experience, which is referred to through the image of scars. In contrast, the scene Iskander Harappa enacts in front of his supporters only imitates the gesture but reveals the lack of content to ground it: he bares his "hairless breast" to expose the lack of connection with the military crisis in the face of which he delivers his speech.

Both images are postmodern in their origin. The episode of the film records a historic fact thus turning it into a sign. The threat which the recording of the memory imposes on the object resides in the loss of the connection between the memory turned into a sign and life. Jacques Derrida maintains that the memory which cannot be identified as living transforms into a simulacrum: "letting itself get stoned by its own signs, its own guardians, by the types committed to the keeping and surveillance of knowledge, it will sink down into lethe, overcome by non-knowledge and forgetfulness." (Derrida, 2004, p. 108) The memory of this kind acquires its value within the process of play of simulacra. Consequently, the subversion of the image by Iskander Harappa serves as a supplement within the order of the play. The supplement proves to be inadequate in terms of the accuracy of the produced image, for a supplement is not capable of becoming an equivalent for the image it substitutes. However, namely this feature reveals the void behind the image, the lack of meaning.

In terms of the content of the simulacrum, the portrayal of Iskander Harappa's political career includes a war episode which displays the features characteristic of a simulacrum:

The catastrophe: throughout the war, hourly radio bulletins described the glorious triumphs of the Western regiments in the East. On the last day, at eleven a.m., the radio announced the last and most spectacular of these feats of arms; at noon, it curtly informed its audience of the impossible: unconditional surrender, humiliation, defeat. (ibid, pp. 179-180)

Two features typical of a simulacrum could be distinguished in the excerpt: the discourse of the catastrophe and the implosion of meaning. According to Jean Baudrillard, the formation of a simulacrum requires an illusion of the real to be complete. The discourses which are used to supplement the lack of reality are two: the discourses of crisis and desire. (Baudrillard, 1983, p. 42) In this episode, the discourse of a crisis is employed to complete the simulacrum. Iskander Harappa initiates the war, but he is capable of using the failure to strengthen the impact of his public image. He is the first to react to the news: he conducts the arrest of the President, and the action puts him in the leading position in the country.

The excerpt also illustrates the ability of the discourse of a simulacrum to incorporate contrastive elements as integral parts of a single discourse. Jean Baudrillard calls it an implosion of meaning and provides a following definition of the term: “an implosion- an absorption of the radiating model of causality, of the differential mode of determination, with its positive and negative electricity.” (ibid, p. 57) In the war episode, the outcome of the war does not have any impact on the effect the simulacrum has on its target: either way the creator of the simulacrum benefits from the situation.

Summarising, the portrayal of Iskander Harappa in the novel *Shame* reveals the principles of the constitution of the simulacra as well as the ways of using it to someone’s benefit. The public image which Iskander creates incorporates a multitude of signs referring to different spheres of life, including fashion and film-making. In contrast to the images the signs refer to, they lack meaning, as they relate only to the signs but not the concepts they are supposed to represent. The indeterminacy of the simulacra is revealed through the implosion of meaning, which allows opposing significations coexist within the same sign, and a possibility of the coexistence of a few contrastive images representing the same individual simultaneously.

If the portrayal of Iskander Harappa reveals a possibility of the coexistence of two contrastive images to represent an individual, Raza Hyder’s case illustrates the process of the creation of a public image on the basis of the existing personal one. The concept of the supplement will be central in the discussion of the development the simulacra undergoes in this case. Therefore, a short introduction into this concept will be provided.

Jacques Derrida maintains that the concept of the supplement is double in its nature, incorporating both positive and negative influences on the object it supplements. Firstly, the supplement signifies plenitude, for it “adds itself, it is a surplus, a plenitude enriching another plenitude, the fullest measure of presence.” (Derrida, 1997, p. 144) Secondly, it marks the absence, for “it adds only to replace. It intervenes or insinuates itself in-the-place-of; if it fills, it is as if one fills a void.” (ibid, p. 145) This idea of the supplement is echoed in Jean Baudrillard’s work on simulacra as well. Although he does not use the term of the supplement, the definition of the term hyperreal he provides coincides with the one of the supplement. Baudrillard points out that hyperreal is created by the excess of meaning, which results in the creation of non-meaning. (Baudrillard, 1983, p. 50) The depiction of Raza Hyder’s public image reveals the impact of a supplement on the signified: the public and self-perception of Raza Hyder.

The first introduction of Raza Hyder’s public image as a politician resembles the public image of Iskander Harappa in terms of the complexity of details and the methods of presenting them to the public:

on the morning after the coup Raza Hyder appeared on national television. He was kneeling on a prayer-mat, holding his ears and reciting Quaranic verses; then he rose from his devotions to address the nation. This was the speech in which the famous term ‘Operation Umpire’ was first heard by the people. ‘Understand,’ Raza said briskly, ‘the Army seeks to be no more than an honest ref or ump.’ (...) The television camera traveled down from his gatta- bruised face, down along his right arm, until the nation saw where his right hand rested: on the Holy Book. (*Shame*, p. 223)

The image which Raza presents is complicated in its structure: religious elements are incorporated alongside references to sport, thus, mixing the elements of high and low styles. The mix meets the requirements of the medium selected for the introduction of the image: it appeals to the masses through the references to sport, but retains the difference between the authority which Raza aims at representing and an average person watching TV.

The image of the authority is expressed through the connection with religion through the use of multiple references such as a prayer-mat, the act of reciting Quaranic verses, a gatta-bruised face and, finally, the Holy Book. A link between the authority and religion is

a classical one, and Raza Hyder makes it central to his image not only through an extensive use of religious elements but also through the technique of framing his image with these elements, placing them at the most important segments of the discourse. The reference to himself as a referee adds to the enhancement of the message of power and authority, which seems to dominate the whole image.

In contrast to Iskander Harappa who does not identify himself with the public image he has created, Raza Hyder's choice of religion as the central theme of his public image relates his private and public images, for he is a religious person. This choice leads him to the confusion of the private and the public which is initially reflected in the appearance of two points of view within him:

the voice of Iskander Harappa became so loud in his ears that he could hardly hear anything else (...) Raza rushed back to his other home, where he could relax, because there Maulana Dawood's voice in his right ear was louder than Isky's in his left (...) the effect of the ceaseless monologue of Iskander Harappa was to drive Raza into the ectoplasmic arms of his old crony Maulana Dawood (...) and the more Iskander whispered, the more Raza felt that God was his only hope. (ibid, p. 24)

The excerpt marks the turning point which results in the final confusion between the private and the public. Iskander Harappa's voice appears in the situations related to Raza Hyder's political career, for instance, in conferences and meetings. Maulana Dawood is a holy man, befriended by Raza during his military trips. His voice represents the religious values which Raza cherishes within his household; therefore, his voice appears within Raza's private domain. However, once religion is chosen as the central theme of Raza's public image, the confusion between the two spheres becomes inevitable: "Raza felt that God was his only hope." Consequently, Raza's private image begins to interfere with his public actions, supplementing his public self.

The description of Raza's political career which is conducted under the influence of his personal beliefs reflects what J. Derrida calls "the fullest measure of presence":

what Raza did: he banned booze. He closed down the famous old brewery of Bagheera so that Panther Lager became a fond memory instead of a refreshing drink. He altered the television schedule so drastically that people began

summoning repair men to fix their sets, because they could not understand why the TVs were suddenly refusing to show them anything except theological lectures. (ibid, p. 247)

The initially diverse public image which Raza has presented on TV and which has incorporated elements of high and low styles to appeal to the masses is replaced by a one-sided creation dominated by one theme and one style.

According to Jacques Derrida, the replacement signifies the appearance of a void as “somewhere, something can be filled up of itself, can accomplish itself, only by allowing itself to be filled through sign and proxy.” (Derrida, 1997, p. 145) The void which is masked by the abundance of religious elements is exposed through the private domain from which the supplement has derived. The excerpt describing Raza Hyder’s obsession with religion contains an image which further becomes relevant in terms of the revelation of the void: it is the image of a panther.

In terms of the confusion between public and private domains, the image of a panther is symbolic because it unites both spheres of Raza’s life. It is first introduced as an image related to the public sphere, for it stands for the restrictions which Raza imposes on the public. Panther Lager is introduced as an image referring to tradition and memory; therefore, the ban which Raza places on it is also a violation of tradition. The impact that such an act has on the people and an individual as its integral part is demonstrated through the transference of the image from the public to private domain. When Raza’s intoxicated daughter Sufiya escapes from the family house, she reappears to haunt her father as a white panther.

The significance Raza Hyder attaches to the image of the white panther reveals a deeper connection between the image and Raza himself than a link between his public and private lives:

he was aghast at this latest proof of his helplessness to resist his daughter. It seemed to him once again that the years of his greatness and of the construction of the great edifice of national stability had been no more than self-delusory lies, that this nemesis had been stalking him all along, (...) his own flesh had turned against him, and no man has a defense against such treason. (*Shame*, p. 257)

The contemplation about the appearance of the white panther and its role in his destiny appears to be deeply personal at this stage. The panther does not represent the missing daughter or the anger of the people; through the reference to “his own flesh”, Raza identifies this image with a part of his old self suppressed throughout the years of his political reign. The violence the suppression causes is revealed through the use of military terms to describe the situation Raza faces: he has no *defense* to protect himself from this *treason*. The excerpt also exposes the indeterminacy of the opposition which has served as a basis for the created image: the creation of “the national stability” appears to be “self-delusory lies”, thus acquiring a negative connotation in the context of change; while the suppressed evil seems to be one’s “flesh”.

The perception of the indeterminacy of the significations attached to the signs constituting the image Raza has produced for himself does not imply the recovery of his former self. In contrast, the moment of crisis uncovers the void which has been supplemented by a simulacrum, and the image of the void dominates the final transformation of Raza Hyder:

The living wear shrouds as well as the dead. Bilquis Hyder simply, ‘Put these on.’ Shakil seizes, rushes into his womanly disguise; Bilquis pulls the black fabric over her husband’s unresisting head. ‘Your son became a daughter,’ she tells him, ‘so now you must change shape also. I knew I was sewing these for a reason.’ The President is passive, allows himself to be led (...) Now Raza Hyder fell: in improbability; in chaos; in women’s clothing; in black. (ibid, p. 262)

Negative terms dominate the episode of Raza’s defeat: he is dressed in burial garment, compared to his dead son, passive and unresisting. However, the episode does not contain the implications to the destruction of the simulacrum; in contrast, the simulation of death implied in the statement “the living wear shrouds as well as the dead” is supposed to be as covering as any other feature of a simulacrum. According to Jean Baudrillard, “every form of power, every situation speaks of itself by denial, in order to escape, by simulation of death, its real agony.” (Baudrillard, 1983, p. 37)

To sum up, the portrayal of Raza Hyder reveals the theme of violence underlying the concept of a simulacrum. The merger of the public and private domains in the construction

of a simulacrum results in the suppression of the difference to the advantage of the impact of the newly created image. However, the suppression causes the violence which is capable of revealing the void created and supplemented by the simulacrum. The death which is caused by the violence should be related to the concept of the simulacra rather than the concept of the void, for it displays the signs of simulation but not the agony, experienced by an individual.

4.2. Omar Khayyam's Search for the Supplement

The concept of the supplement is determining in respect to the perception of a simulacrum, according to Jacques Derrida. He maintains that the supplement possesses the significations necessary for a representative image to exist: it both adds to and replaces the thing itself thus ensuring an infinite play of meanings within an image. (Derrida, 1997, pp. 144-145) The aim of this subchapter is to explore the sequence of supplements, attributed to the protagonist of the novel Omar Khayyam, with the view to the play of significations attached to the supplements.

The theme of the supplement is introduced in the novel before the beginning of the events, in the excerpt introducing the origins of the protagonist's name. The significance attached to the choice of the name is due to the historical and traditional meanings which are attached to the name. According to Derrida, a proper name, similarly to the signified, functions only within the system of differences that a language is:

the proper names are already no longer proper names, because their production is their obliteration, because the erasure and the imposition of the letter are originary, (...) because the proper name was never possible except through its functioning within a classification and therefore within a system of differences, within a word retaining the traces of difference (...) (ibid, p. 109)

The functioning within the system of differences subjects the proper name to the play of significations which both draws on the origins of the sign and produces new significations in the process of the play, transgressing from the supposed original background.

In respect to the protagonist of the novel, his proper name Omar Khayyam is a reference to the name of a famous Persian poet; however, it is not a theme of art but that of a translation which acquires the significance in the novel:

Omar Khayyam's position as a poet is curious. He was never very popular in his native Persia; and he exists in the West in a translation that is really a complete reworking of his verses, in many cases very different from the spirit (to say nothing of the content) of the original. I, too, am a translated man. I have been *borne across*. It is generally believed that something is always lost in translation; I cling to the notion- and use, in evidence, the success of Fitzgerald-Khayyam- that something can also be gained. (*Shame*, p. 29)

The concept of translation as introduced in the excerpt could be interpreted as an equivalent of a supplement. Similarly, it is also dual in its nature, for its effect of the signified it is supposed to represent is indeterminate. Translation subjects an original text to major alterations, for it is pointed in the excerpt that Fitzgerald's translation of Omar Kahayyam's poetry has changed its content as well as its spirit. On the other hand, translation also adds surplus value to the already existing work, which could appear to be a gain for the work which is translated. In respect to Fitzgerald's translation, the fact of surplus value is asserted a few times: firstly, the position of Omar Khayyam as a poet in his native Persia is mentioned; secondly, the success of the translation is repeatedly asserted. Despite its advantages, the value of the translation is not overestimated in the excerpt. The fact of being born across implies the instability and dangers of the significations attached to the concept of translation.

The theme of the supplement, introduced in the excerpt about the name, is echoed in the episode marking the end of the novel, the scene where Omar Khayyam defines his own role in his life:

'I am a peripheral man, 'Omar Khayyam answered.' Other persons have been the principle actors in my life-story. Hyder and Harappa, my leading men. Immigrant and native, Godly and profane, military and civilian. And several leading ladies. I watched from the wings, not knowing how to act. (*Shame*, p.283)

The role of the play of differences in the production of significations is emphasised in Omar's final speech. Multiple oppositions: men/women, leading/peripheral, immigrant/native, Godly/profane, military/civilian coexist within the process of the play, supplementing each other in a sequence of elements. The life of Omar Khayyam serves as an equivalent of translation, for it is subjected to the same play of differences without having a stable signified to focus on. "Not knowing how to act" signifies the absence which is supplemented with different elements, none of which substitutes for the lack, for all of them appear to be supplements able despite their opposing natures. The definition of himself as "a peripheral man" echoes the concept of the "translated man" which appears in the excerpt on the origins of the name. Both names seem to have confused origins, incorporating both negative and positive implications which are reflected in the oppositions constituting their definitions.

The two episodes frame the novel highlighting the importance of the concept of the supplement for the portrayal of the protagonist Omar Khayyam. The further analysis will focus on the development of the concept throughout the novel and the incorporation of different images to represent the supplement and add different significations to it.

In his work *Of Grammatology*, Jacques Derrida maintains that the appearance of the supplement is triggered by the presence of a need, which acquires different names in his theory: cancellation, catastrophe, lack or economy. In the novel, the need manifests itself for the first time due to the feeling of inversion that Omar experiences in his mothers' house:

Omar Khayyam Shakil was afflicted, from his earliest days, by a sense of inversion, of a world turned upside-down. And by something worse: the fear that he was living at the edge of the world, so close that he might fall off at any moment. (ibid, p.21)

The sense of inversion is caused by the isolation Omar is subjected to in his mothers' house. Unable to reach the reality outside the house but being subjected to it through the stories of the three mothers, he leads a secluded life which could be paralleled with the position of a postmodern sign whose signifier is detached from the signified. The problem of the void brought about in the course of isolation is exposed through the use of numerous images including mountains, sleep, void, cloud, desert, frontier and gates.

In the discussion of the images representing the loss of referentiality, it is important to establish the difference between the images related to consciousness and sub-consciousness. In the description of Omar's childhood in the family house, the difference is emphasised through the temporal division of the images. The image of the mountains is encountered in the daytime, when Omar surveys the surrounding area through a telescope. While in the nighttime, the area of nothingness beyond the mountains is encountered:

Omar Khayyam surveyed the emptiness of the landscape around Q., which convinced him that he must be near the very Rim of Things, and that beyond the Impossible Mountains on the horizon must lie the great nothing into which, in his nightmares, he had begun to tumble with monotonous regularity. The most alarming aspect of these dreams was the sleep-sense that he plunges into the void (...) (ibid, p. 22)

The image of the mountains serves as a signpost on the borders between the consciousness and sub-consciousness as well as between the sign and the void which it covers. The double reference to the mountains as the Rim of Things and The Impossible Mountains enhances the feeling of indeterminacy which defines the image, for it is both a thing and the impossibility of a thing. The image of the dream serves as a transition between the consciousness and sub-consciousness, for the feeling of the barrier reinforced by the mountains is retained in the dream. What is more, the dream enables Omar to cross the barrier and face the void which has been implied through the image of the mountains. The horror at the encounter of the void results in Omar's decision to choose the indeterminacy of the mountains over the void; therefore, he makes a resolution to reduce his sleeping time drastically.

The supplementation of the sleep with the waking brings about the side-effect of the indeterminacy of the supplement despite the determination of Omar's decision. He appears to be unable to control the process under the changing circumstances of his life. The first signs of the changing situation are encountered at Eduardo Rodrigues' house. The role of Eduardo Rodrigues is to supplement the need of a father which Omar feels due to the fact that he is born in the family of three mothers and no father. His lifelong quest for a

supplement for a father starts with Rodrigues; however, the impossibility of finding an equivalent to replace the absence is manifested through the description of Rodrigues' house:

On his walls he hung a crucifix, and also glued up a number of cheap pictures (...) [Omar and Farah] saw no signs of anything more personal; it seemed as if Eduardo were hiding his past from the fierce rays of the desert sun, to prevent it from fading. Such was the blinding emptiness of the teacher's quarters (...) (ibid, p. 47)

The living place of Eduardo Rodrigues is characterized by the absence of things which reminds us of the void of Omar's dreams. The lack of things is supplemented with the images; however, the images do not contain any personal references, for they are media-generated. Although the visit to Eduardo Rodrigues' house does not have a deeper impact on Omar in terms of his perception of the void, it prepares the grounds for his second encounter with the void.

Omar is repeatedly subjected to the feeling of the void outside his family house during his visit to Farah's house. The set of images which is included in the description of the trip reminds us of the episode in Omar's family house:

'...and fainted, though both his feet had been on solid ground.' We have already been told something of what transpired at the frontier: how a cloud descended, and Omar Khayyam, mistaking it for his childhood nightmare of the void at the end of the earth, passed out. (ibid, p. 50)

The images of the frontier and the cloud serve as the substitutes for the images of the mountains and the sleep; their significations are similar as well. That is why the parallel between the episode and Omar's childhood memories is drawn in the excerpt. The mountains indicate the frontier between the world of things and the void, existing beyond it, is explored in this episode. If in his childhood observations Omar is only able to imagine the mountains to be the Rim of Things, on his trip he is given a possibility of a glimpse into the world of the void. Although the situation is different, the ritual he has to perform to enter this world reminds him of his childhood: instead of falling asleep, Omar plunges into the cloud and becomes unconscious. The image of the cloud supplements the image of the sleep in this episode.

The description of the frontier provides a deeper insight into the world of the void. It is dominated by the element of absence:” no wall, no police, no barbed wire or floodlights, no red-and-white striped barriers, nothing but a row of concrete bollards.” (ibid, p. 51) The absence of things is supplemented with the presence of images, reflected in the mirrors tied to the bollards. The effect of transparency the mirrors produce enhances the feeling of alienation, which is further emphasised in the portrayal of Farah:

as Farah approaches each fragment she sees shards of herself reflected in the glass, and smiles her private smile. Omar Khayyam Shakil understands that his beloved is a being too self-contained to succumb (ibid, p. 52)

Farah’s fascination with her own images contrasts with her indifference to the world on the other side of the frontier, being nicknamed ‘the ice block’ by the villagers. Her loss of the connection with the world outside the void is complete and final. Surrounded by the nothingness of the place beyond the frontier and charmed by her own image, she reminds us of Narcissus who is bound to enjoy his own reflection eternally. The theme of transparency is explored by Jean Baudrillard. In his work *The Illusion of the End*, he maintains that transparency is the result of the loss of substance and the image as a reference to basic reality. (Baudrillard, 2003, p. 40)

The feeling of a need to confront the situation by finding a supplement to replace the lack created by Farah’s indifference results in the appearance of a new supplement, hypnosis. The latter is close to the waking in terms of the connection between consciousness and sub-consciousness; however, there is also a key difference between the two, for hypnosis is directed towards the outside and is used as a means of altering the outside to suit the needs of the protagonist. The appearance of hypnosis as a supplement starts a sequence of supplements. Jacques Derrida maintains that

through the sequence of supplements a necessity is announced: that of an infinite chain, ineluctably multiplying the supplementary mediations that produce the sense of the very thing they defer: the mirage of the thing itself, of immediate presence, of originary perception. (Derrida, 1997, p. 157)

The role which hypnosis is assigned to is to serve as a supplement for the lack of love Omar feels. However, the first applications of hypnosis in the mothers' house prove the effect of hypnosis to be indeterminate. The secrets of love which Omar discovers applying hypnosis to the inhabitants of the house deepen the clash between his feeling of loneliness and the affections among the other dwellers of the house:

The contented three-way love of the male servants provided a curious balance for the equal, but wholly platonic, love of the three sisters for one another. (But Omar Khayyam continued to grow bitter, despite being surrounded by so many intimacies and affections.) (*Shame*, p. 34)

The distance between the ones who are affected by love and intimacy and Omar who appears to be a mere viewer is emphasised in the excerpt through the stress of contrast: love among the servants and the sisters is opposed to the bitterness and loneliness of Omar; the feeling of marginalization is reemphasized through the use of brackets to punctuate the information about Omar's state of mind.

Despite the failure of hypnosis to meet his expectations at the initial stage of its application, Omar employs this means repeatedly to deal with Farah's indifference. The comment which Omar provides for his second attempt to use hypnosis enhances the indeterminacy of the supplement:

Omar Khayyam tried, futilely, to find consolation in the fact that, as every hypnotist knows, one of the first reassurances in the hypnotic process, a formula which is repeated many times, runs as follows:

'You will do anything that I ask you to do, but I will ask you to do nothing that you will be unwilling to do.'

'She was willing, 'he told himself.' Then where's the blame?' (ibid, p. 52)

The indeterminacy of hypnosis as a supplement triggers the appearance of a sequence of other supplements: love is supplemented by a sexual intercourse under hypnosis, Omar as the baby's father is supplemented by Eduardo Rodriguez, whose behaviour displays all the signs of guilt in spite of his being innocent. The outcome which the supplement produces is as indeterminate as the supplement itself, for although it produces signs of real, it appears to be a simulacrum.

The role of hypnosis is not exhausted at the initial stages of the novel. With the development of the novel, hypnosis acquires the features of Derrida's pharmakon: it functions both as medicine and poison, retaining the indeterminacy of the effect it has on those subjected to it. The relationships between Omar Khayyam and Sufiya Zinobia provide the framework for the further development of the image of hypnosis in terms of the significations attributed to it. The episode which precedes the latter development of the image of hypnosis refers to the issue of the void whose supplement hypnosis appears to be in the novel:

I shall not describe the scene at the gate of the Harappa town house that took place when the doctor finally turned up in a taxi- cab (...) suffice to say that under the cold weight of Iskander's rejection, Omar Khayyam suffered an attack of vertigo so severe that he was sick in the back of the taxi. (ibid, p. 133)

The image of the gates acquires the function of the barrier similar to that of the mountains in the years of Omar's childhood, while the image of the vertigo obtains the function of the sleep and the cloud, the function of transition beyond the world of things into the emptiness of the void.

However, the use of hypnosis to deal with the feeling of the void at this stage contrasts with its first use. Initially used as the means of manipulation, hypnosis gains the function of medicine at this point. What is more, the circumstances of its use change as well, for the hypnotic powers of Omar are confronted with the powers of self-induction of Sufiya Zinobia: "Sufiya Zinobia had to be brought out of her self-induced trance by the exercise of more hypnotic skill than Omar has ever required to display." (ibid, p. 171) By curing Sufiya, Omar is cured from the feeling of the void, too, for he falls in love with his female patient.

The dangers that the course of events hides lie in maintaining the sequence of supplements despite the change of one element's function. Jacques Derrida asserts that "the supplement is incomplete, unequal to the task, it lacks something in order for the lack to be filled, it participates in the evil that it should repair." (Derrida, 1997, p. 226) The inability of

the permanent change to be achieved through the means of hypnosis is manifested in a sequence of supplements that it triggers.

By becoming a member of Hyder family, Omar acquires a new role of a family man which is reflected in the change of his lifestyle:

The new, northern version of Omar Khayyam Shakil lived simply and worked hard (...) He returned to C-in-C's residence only to eat and to sleep, but in spite of all the evidence of reformation, abstinence and dedication, Shahbanou continued to watch him like a hawk. (*Shame*, p. 211)

Having married Sufiya, Omar creates a new image of himself: a proper family man who is represented through a set of recognizable signs: hardworking, decent, and dedicated. However, the abundance of signs masks the absence of the marriage: Sufiya and Omar's marriage is dysfunctional, for they are not allowed to live together despite living under the same roof.

The absence of a married life results in the emergence of the supplements to compensate the lack of proper marital relationships. In order to protect Sufiya, Shahbanou replaces her in Omar's bed, becoming his supplementary wife. The course of events which is meant to protect Sufiya causes the latter's indeterminacy about her role as a wife:

There is a thing that women do at night with husbands. She does not do it, Shahbanou does it for her. *I hate fish*. Her husband does not come to her at night. Here are two things she does not like: that he does not come, that's one, and the thing itself makes two (...) The horrible thing and the horrible not-doing-the-thing (...) There is no ocean but there is a feeling of sinking (*Shame*, p. 215)

The supplement which is intended to protect Sufiya uncovers the void instead of replacing it. Consequently, another supplement is searched for. Similarly to Omar, Sufiya finds her supplementary husbands to replace the lack:

Down she lies; and what Shahbanou took upon herself is finally done to Sufiya. Four husbands come and go. Four of them in and out, and then her hands reach for the first boy's neck. (*ibid*, p. 219)

The hypnosis which has cured Sufiyya from violence and Omar from the feeling of the void displays its inability to provide an equivalent for the lack it masks. Having got formally married, both Omar and Sufiyya are obliged to look for supplements to compensate their dysfunctional relationship, which results in the deepening of the void, manifested in the images of the ocean and violence in the portrayal of Sufiyya. In relation to Omar, the scenario of his youth repeats itself: another woman becomes pregnant and another baby is left without a father as the consequence of a hypnosis-induced sequence of supplements.

Omar's lifelong quest for a supplement to replace the void ends in his defeat. The transition from the world of consciousness into the sub-consciousness, which he has been trying to resist through his struggle against sleep and the manipulation with his hypnotic skills, is complete through his final transformation into the cloud:

last of all the cloud, which rises and spreads and hangs over the nothingness of the scene (...) the silent cloud, in the shape of a giant grey and headless man, a figure of dreams, a phantom with one arm lifted in a gesture of farewell. (ibid, p. 286)

Omar does not disappear in the emptiness of the void despite his fear to achieve it. Just as a postmodern sign which is constantly in movement, he transforms into the cloud which represents the transition from the reality of things into the sphere of nothingness. The signification of the movement is reemphasized through the use of the image of the dream, for the dreams of Omar's childhood incorporate the connotation of transition as well.

The details of the portrayal of Omar's appearance put emphasis on the absence of any individual features through the inclusion of such as elements as grey and headless in the description. The transformation Omar undergoes could be paralleled to the alteration of a sign under the impact of arch-writing, described by Jacques Derrida. He maintains that

such is the gesture of the arch-writing: arch-violence, loss of the proper, of absolute proximity, of self-presence, in truth the loss of what has never taken place, of a self-presence which has never been given but only dreamed of and always already split, repeated, incapable of appearing to itself except in its own disappearance (Derrida, 1997, p 112)

The violence Omar is subjected to at this final stage is the arch-violence because it appears outside the realm of reason, outside the realm of consciousness. Sufiya's hypnotic powers represent the unconscious in contrast to the learned hypnotic skills of Omar. Therefore, the ritual of the beheading of her victims could be paralleled with a ritual split performed by arch-writing. The head as a symbol of self-presence (or a signified) is removed in order to ensure an infinite play of significations in the process of a movement.

4.3. Reality Preceded by Simulacra

The reality of the postmodern society is to a great extent different from the reality before the evolution of the simulacrum. Having served as the basis for the perception of a sign, the reality of postmodernism is considered to be a product of a sign instead. Jean Baudrillard claims that the reality is now perceived as a process rather than an entity as it is produced from the elements constituting a simulacrum, to quote the theorist, "the real is produced from miniaturized units, from matrices, memory banks and command models-and with these it can be reproduced an indefinite number of times." (Baudrillard, 1983, p.3)

He uses a different term to refer to this form of reality- the hyperreal. The excess of meaning which is characteristic of hyperreality, according to Jean Baudrillard, originates from the multiplicity and variety of models coexisting within one discourse. The meaning is produced within the discourse and is, consequently, affected by an infinite number of models, which "allows for all possible interpretations, even the most contradictory- all true." (ibid, p. 32) The aim of this subchapter is to analyse the phenomenon of the precession of simulacra, focusing on the portrayal of Bilquis Hyder and her daughters Sufiya and Naveed.

The image of the queen dominates the initial stages of the portrayal of Bilquis Hyder. The indeterminacy of the connotations attributed to the image is emphasized through an extensive use of irony to describe the contrast between the perception of the elements constituting the image by Bilquis, her father and the people outside the family.

The first reference to the image of the queen is related to Bilquis' father who calls himself "the chief administrative officer of a glorious Empire" referring to his daughter as a princess in this context. (*Shame*, p. 59) The comment about the Empire soon follows, defining the Empire Talkies which Bilquis' father owns as "a fleapit of a picture theatre in the old quarter of the town." (ibid, p. 60) The contrast is further developed in the description of Bilquis' image of herself as a queen. Under the influence of her father's emperor dreams as well as the images of the films which displayed "the giant, shimmering illusions of princesses", Bilquis reinvents herself starting to behave "with the grandeur befitting a dream-empress." (ibid, p. 61) However, her image is ridiculed by the neighbours who call her "queen of coughs, that is to say of expelled air, of sickness and hot wind." (ibid, p.61)

Bilquis' image of a queen is entirely created from the images surrounding her: her father's emperor aspirations reflected in the name of the cinema, his image of himself as an emperor and the form of addressing his daughter as a princess. It is further enhanced by the images of the films portraying the grandeur of princesses and their knights. The contrast between her image of herself and her image which is perceived by others is immense. However, at this stage the two interpretations of the image coexist peacefully without an intersection.

An accident alters the balance of the situation. The role of a crisis or a catastrophe in the postmodern discourse is stressed by different theorists. Jean Baudrillard maintains that the simulacrum uses the discourse of crisis to prove its own existence by incorporating the signs of reality. (Baudrillard, 1983, p. 42) On the other hand, Jacques Derrida asserts that "the catastrophe opens the play of the supplements because it inscribes local difference." (Derrida, 1997, p. 260)

The image of the wind which incorporates the connotation of crisis into the portrayal of Bilquis Hyder could be viewed in respect of both of these assumptions. Firstly, the image functions as a part of an already-existing discourse, for it is mentioned in respect to Bilquis' queenly image as it is perceived by her neighbours. Outside the discourse of the crisis, it is of minor importance; however, at the height of the crisis, its significance increases:

The walls of her father's Empire puffed outwards like a hot puri while that wind like

the cough of a sick giant burned away her eyebrows (which never grew again), and tore the clothes off her body until she stood infant-naked in the street but she failed to notice her nudity because the universe was ending, and in the echoing alienness of the deadly wind her burning eyes saw everything come flying out (*Shame*, p. 63)

The excerpt reveals the change of a dominant interpretation of the queenly image: the abundance of royal references is replaced with the variety of negative images: puri, wind, cough of a sick giant, which have already been mentioned are enriched through the use of new related elements: nudity, alienness, infant-naked, deadly wind, ending. The process of the play of supplements is dynamic, for it is presented through multiple action verbs such as puff off, burn away, tear off, fly out. The description of the process reveals the nothingness underlying the system of supplements, for the wind is said to leave no things on its way: not a thing remains of her father's empire; Bilquis herself is absolutely denuded through the loss of her clothes and the eyebrows.

The nudity caused by the wind is supplemented with the abundance of things after the crisis ends which marks the return of Bilquis' private queenly image. The period of Raza Hyder's courtship is marked with the supplementation of the loss induced by the wind:

During their days in the fort, the pouch-eyed Captain visited Bilquis regularly, always bringing with him some item of clothing or beautification: blouses, saris, sandals, eyebrow pencils with which to replace the lost hairs, brassieres, lipsticks were showered on her. (ibid, p. 66)

The supplementation of things revives the recovery of the old self which is manifested in Bilquis' behaviour as well as the marginalization of a negative attitude towards her changed self. The contrast is emphasised through the reappearance of the queenly references to herself in Bilquis' language ("Captain who outfits strange ladies like queens", "the old dream of queenlines" (ibid, pp. 66-67)) as well as the comments of the other with the references to Bilquis as a "scavenger, harlot, whore." (ibid, p.67) The negative comments are marginalized through the means of isolation from her fellow refugees inside the territory Raza Hyder creates for her.

Although the revival of the initial image takes place, the certainty, which has distinguished it at the period of Bilquis' life in the father's house, disappears; it is replaced

with indeterminacy which is manifested in the portrayal of Bilquis as well as her two daughters. The depiction of Bilquis' fear of the wind reveals the sense of instability of her recreated image of herself and the environment surrounding her:

as she grew older the wind awakened strange terrors in Bilquis (...) She developed a horror of movement, and placed an embargo on the relocation of even the most trivial of household items. Chairs, ashtrays, flowerpots took root, rendered immobile by the force of her fearful will. (ibid, p.68)

The presence of things which has once served as a warrant of stability acquires the connotation of absence, for they have proved to be vulnerable to the impact of the wind. Therefore, the things themselves do not ensure the durability of the world which they compose. Bilquis demonstrates the faith in the power of will to substitute the indeterminacy of things.

The theme of will as a means of creating a stable image is developed in the portrayal of Bilquis' younger daughter Naveed. Naveed employs her will to create an image of herself as an astounding beauty. The indeterminacy of the image is revealed through the difference of opinions that her image calls for. Arjumand Harappa expresses her viewpoint in negative terms, claiming that Naveed is "plain as a plate...and not so fair-skinned at all." (ibid, pp. 154-155) In contrast, Haroun considers her to be "the loveliest bride on earth." (ibid, p. 155)

Naveed's determination to be beautiful is retained throughout her attempts to get married. The play with the contrasts brings forth the sense of indeterminacy in the portrayal of her image. The final episode which illustrates the coexistence of the two images is the scene of her wedding: the guests arrive "in their oldest, most tattered clothes" are contrasted to the bride Naveed Hyder "oiled hennaed bejeweled." (ibid, p. 169)

The crisis which Naveed faces after her wedding is due to her loss of the control over her life. Similarly to her mother whose image of herself has been shattered by the wind, Naveed is overwhelmed by the increasing number of children she is forced to give birth to. Having been transformed into a reproduction tool, she is unable to curtail the process of production which she is entitled to perform.

The connotation of movement which is attributed to the image of birth-giving relates it to the image of the wind: the process of birth giving is compared to “the endless stream of humanity flowing out between her thighs.” (ibid, p. 207) Naveed’s failure to stabilize the movement ends in the emergence of her marginalized image:

No more attempts to sit on her hair: the absolute determination to be beautiful (...) faded from her features, and she stood revealed as the plain, unremarkable matron she had always really been. (ibid, p. 207)

Similarly to her mother, denuded by the wind, Naveed displays the image which has been carefully disguised with the means of beautification. Although it has never been eliminated, at the peak of crisis it emerges to dominate Naveed’s image.

The episode of Naveed’s death illustrates the agony underlying the concept of the simulacra and draws parallels with other episodes of her life.

That night Begum Talvar Ulhaq, the former Good News Hyder, was found in her bedroom at the Hyder residence, hanged by the neck, dead (...) There was jasmine in her hair and she filled the room with the fragrance of Joy by Jean Patou, the most expensive perfume in the world, imported from France to cover up the smell of her bowels opening in death. (ibid, p. 228)

The celebration of death through the resurrection of a simulacrum is chosen over the dominance of the void, the nothingness of the movement which disables the functioning of a simulacrum in favour of the play of simulacra. The episode stresses the indeterminacy of the simulacra through the exposure of the inappropriateness of the constituting elements of the image: the fragrance of joy and the blossom of a jasmine clash with the tragedy of the episode strengthening the impact of the scene. The episode is reminiscent of Naveed’s wedding scene where the tattered clothes of the guests contrasted with the festive looks of the bride and the groom, serving as an implication of the indeterminacy of the significations attributed to the scene.

If the story of Naveed continues and develops the issues introduced in the portrayal of Bilquis, the depiction of Sufiya reveals the aspects of the play of simulacra which are barely mentioned in respect to Naveed. Sufiya is initially perceived as a supplement for her

brother. The image of her unborn brother has been planned to such an extent that it survives his death:

being stone dead was a handicap which the boy managed, with commendable gallantry, to surmount. Within a matter of months, or was it only weeks, the tragically cadaverous infant had 'topped' in school and at college, had fought bravely in war, had married the wealthiest beauty in town and risen to a high position in the government. He was dashing, popular, handsome, and the fact of his being a corpse now seemed of no more consequence than would a slight limp (...) (ibid, p. 83)

The simulacrum which the parents have created as a model for their first child is saturated with detail, whose number and exactness create the feeling of indeterminacy supported by irony and hyperbole. The certainty which is attributed to the image is not destroyed in the lethal course of events, for the parents turn to finding a supplement which is supposed to substitute for the absence of the son. Their certitude about the possibility of a supplement is depicted with the help of effective sarcasm:

[they] convinced themselves that a second pregnancy would be an act of replacement that God had consented to send them a free substitute for the damaged goods they had received in the first delivery, as though He were the manager of a reputable mail-order firm. (ibid, p. 83)

The parallel which is drawn between business and family reveals the indeterminacy in terms of models which dominate a certain discourse. The use of sarcasm in the comparison of God with a manager and a dead child with damaged goods strengthens the feeling of impropriety caused by the merger of the models from different spheres of life. The supplement which is born on the basis of such a confusion of discourses acquires the features of a postmodern supplement whose meaning is indeterminate. The expected son turns out to be a daughter; therefore, the supplement deepens the void of the loss instead of filling it.

The portrayal of Sufiya Zinobia, the wrong miracle of Hyders family, reveals the processes within the supplement. Sufiya develops a peculiar way of communicating with the world through the system of physical reactions rather than speaking:

She also blushed. You recall she blushed at birth. Ten years later, her parents were

Still perplexed by these reddenings, these blushes like petrol fires (...) To speak plainly: Sufiya Zinobia Hyder blushed uncontrollably whenever her presence in the world was noticed by others. But she also, I believe, blushed for the world. (ibid, pp. 121-122)

The language of blushing which Sufiya employs instead of speaking could be paralleled with the unclassified Japanese cities of Roland Barthes' *Empire of Signs*. Roland Barthes asserts that

the rational is merely one system among others. For there to be a mastery of the real (in this case, the reality of addresses), it suffices that there be a system, even if this system is apparently illogical, uselessly complicated, curiously disparate (...) (Barthes, 1982, p. 33)

Although Sufiya's blushing as a means of communication with the world is condemned as abnormal by her family, it conveys its communicative function effectively, employing the degree of intensity of the blushes to express the intended message. Her personal language is even capable of a metaphoric expression: "Sufiya Zinobia - by blushing furiously each time her mother looked sidelong at her father- revealed to watching family eyes that something was piling between those two." (*Shame*, p. 123)

The theme of violence which is attributed to the concept of the supplement is exposed through the development of Sufiya's communication system. The extreme reddening leads to the loss of consciousness and the manifestation of violence. The effect of violence on Sufiya is twofold: it is directed towards the outside as well as the inside. In the first case of the manifestation of violence, Sufiya slaughters two hundred and eighteen turkeys and, as a result, falls ill with a devastating illness.

The violence marks the stage of the development of the supplement at which the boundaries between the void and the supplement get blurred. Sufiya attempts to manipulate the images for the sake of the recovery of the supplement, protecting herself from the violence inherent in the void. The episode of her playing with toys illustrates the fragility of the supplement in respect to the void:

She likes it now that she is sometimes left alone and the things can happen in her head, the favourite things she keeps in there, locked up; when people are present

she never dares to take the things out and play with them in case they get taken away or broken by mistake. (ibid, p. 213)

The excerpt highlights the significance of the play in relation to the concept of the simulacrum. The play is secret because its objects are vulnerable to outer influences. The images acquire the quality of a thing, for they can be broken or stolen; they can also be manipulated for the sake of the play. The nature of the things is both real and imaginary. Sufiya differentiates between the two kinds of things she plays with: “sometimes they only happen once and you have to be quick and grab them and stuff them away in your secret place. Sometimes they never happen at all.” (ibid, p. 213) The qualities of things depend on their origin, for the ones which belong to the realm of the imaginary are more fragile. The simulacra which do not have any connection to the outside world are related to the desirable, for example skipping with the mother. The images are also differentiated on the grounds of their emotional charge: the ones carrying a positive connotation are repeatedly used for the play, while the negative ones are suppressed, for they are relatable to the concept of the void.

The play of simulacra aims at the differentiation between the void and the supplement. The void which is represented through the image of the Beast is pacified through the ensured continuity of the play. The image of the Beast is closely related to the image of the sea in relation to Sufiya: “there is an ocean. She feels its tide. And, somewhere in its depth, a Beast, stirring.” (ibid, p. 215) The fluidity of the ocean is confronted with the thingness of the images, which preserves the boundary between the supplement and the void.

The instability of the supplement is eventually displayed in Sufiya’s transformation into the Beast where the quality of the liquid overtakes her personality. The change is gradual, as the certitude of the thingness is replaced with the fluidity. Sufiya is observed to become blurred: “the edges of Sufiya Zinobia were beginning to become uncertain.” (ibid, p. 235) The final transformation into the Beast, however, appears to be artificially induced by medicine rather than as a result of natural development.

The role of medicine acquires the quality of Derrida's pharmakon in relation to Sufiya. When Omar Khayyam halts her transformation into the Beast by injecting her with medicine, he makes her unconscious. However, in the state of unconsciousness, the play of simulacra becomes impossible and the void begins to dominate, destroying all the signs of the supplement:

Yellow fire behind her closed eyelids, fire under her finger- nails and beneath the roots of her hair. Yes, she was dead, all right, I'm sure of it, no more Sufiya-Zinobia-ness, everything burned up in that Hell. Throw a body on a funeral pyre and it will jerk, genuflect, sit up, dance, smile; the fire pulls the nerve-strings of the corpse, which becomes the fire's puppet, conveying a ghastly illusion of life (...) (ibid, p. 243)

Thus, the transformation of Sufiya Zinobia into the manifestation of the void is not concluded with her death which eliminates the quality of thingness. The death only precedes violence which is the true nature of the void.

Summarising, the portrayal of Hyder women reveals the concept of the simulacrum from the point of view of its reliance on thingness for existence. The depiction of Bilquis demonstrates the significance of things to verify the existence of simulacra. Having originated in the dream, which bears no relation to the reality surrounding her; Bilquis' queenly fantasy feeds on random things which she chooses as proofs for the existence of her dream. The indeterminacy of the simulacrum is revealed through the repeated occurrence of the image of the wind which signifies the threat of violence underlying the simulacrum.

The portrayal of Bilquis' daughter Naveed reveals the role of will in the formation of the simulacrum. Determined to create an image of herself as a beauty, Naveed pursues a goal of gaining power. However, despite the success of her attempts, the result she achieves is opposite to her expectations: having married the man of her dreams, she is turned into a child-producing machine. The moment of her death marks the failure of the simulacrum she has created in terms of the objectives; however, it is also the moment of the celebration of the simulacrum, for it is relieved from any references to the outside reality.

The portrait of Sufiya could be interpreted as an embodiment of a postmodern sign, which is also a simulacrum. She employs a new means of self-expression through the

language of physical reactions rather than oral expression. Through her portrayal the conflict between the image (the supplement) and the void is revealed. The concept of the supplement is explored from different perspectives in relation to her. Sufiya herself is seen as a supplement for her dead brother; in the role of the supplement she displays the features characteristic of a supplement. She cannot become an equivalent for her dead brother because of her gender; therefore, her birth is considered to be a surplus, something that has appeared instead of the absence, but by appearing has deepened the lack instead of substituting it.

What is more, Sufiya herself is also a simulacrum, torn between the image and the attraction of the void underlying the image. The development of Sufiya's story brings the perception of the concept of the simulacrum further than the portrayal of Bilquis and Naveed. Her portrayal reveals the danger inherent in the concept of the simulacra which is due to the violence underlying it. The death appears to be the final manifestation of the simulacra which precedes the exposure of the void and the violence dominating it.

CONCLUSION

The postmodern discourse can be defined in terms of decentering; the concepts such as indeterminacy, the death of the author, the elimination of the transcendental signified, supplement and simulacrum, which have emerged in the works of the theorists of postmodernism Jacques Derrida, Roland Barthes, Jean Baudrillard and Ihab Hassan, have become keys to the perception of postmodernism. This dissertation overviews the concept of decentering within the theoretical framework of postmodernism and provides the analysis of Salman Rushdie's novels *Midnight's Children* and *Shame* with the view to the ideas underlying the concept of decentering.

The discussion of the theoretical background starts with the analysis of the decentering of language in postmodernism, based on the works by Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida. The focus of the debate lies within the tradition of European metaphysics. In *The Order of Things*, Foucault argues that the current change in the perception of language could be viewed as an integral part of Western philosophical thought. Alternatively, Derrida questions the credibility of Foucault's methodology of research, attributing it to the tradition of Classical episteme, whose influence is denied by postmodernism, as Ihab Hassan states in his work *The Dismemberment of Orpheus*.

Despite the difference of opinions, both the theorists agree on the features which distinguish the postmodern concept of language from the concepts of language which have existed throughout the history of Western metaphysics. Firstly, they maintain that language has replaced man in the centre of attention in the period of postmodernism. Jacques Derrida explains that the change is due to the elimination of the transcendental signified which has traditionally occupied the centre of discourse. Secondly, the increase in the role of language has resulted in its becoming the object of investigation in contrast to its previous role as a tool of research. At present, language is perceived as an autonomous entity that cannot be fully understood or explained. The postmodern methods of analysis of linguistic material do not aim at revealing a true nature of a text but attempt to uncover the multiplicity of meanings that is hidden within a particular text.

The further discussion of the theory concerns the impact the changing perception of language has had on postmodern literature in terms of the role of the reader, the writer and the text itself. The contributions of Roland Barthes, Umberto Eco and Paul Ricoeur are mainly referred to in this part of the dissertation.

In 1977, Barthes announced the death of the author in his famous essay under the same name. The author of the concept asserts the supremacy of the reader over the writer in the literary discourse. The concept explains the change in the perception of the literary work which is now seen as an open text with no centre or a hierarchical structure. The reader of such a text has to face a different task in comparison to that of a reader of a classical text, for a postmodern text is open to limitless interpretations and requires an active participation of the reader.

Roland Barthes' propositions regarding the postmodern text are both supported and confronted by different theorists of postmodernism. Umberto Eco argues that an open text imposes certain restrictions upon its readers due to the structure created by the writer. He also maintains that the role of the writer should not be overlooked completely as the writer creates a text which, otherwise, would be a collection of random elements. On the other hand, Paul Ricoeur, whose works contribute to the perception of an open text, emphasizes the importance of the concept of play in the perception of a literary text. He maintains that the playful world of a literary text is inward-directed, for it exceeds the boundaries of the social. According to Ricoeur, the role of the reader is central in the process of the comprehension of a literary work, for he produces the meanings in the process of reading/playing with the text. Alternatively, the role of the writer is not considered to be a source of authority over the text and the reader, the writer is perceived as one of the readers whose interpretation of the text is not seen as supreme dominant in comparison with the interpretations of other readers.

The discussion of the theoretical background finishes with the analysis of the concept of a sign as presented in the works by Jean Baudrillard and Ihab Hassan. The concept of a sign is important in respect to literature because a sign is the main constituent of a text. Both Baudrillard and Hassan agree that a postmodern sign should be perceived as an ongoing

process rather than a stable entity. Nevertheless, they propose different points of view regarding the interpretation of the process.

Jean Baudrillard uses the term *simulacrum* to refer to the postmodern sign. He claims that a simulacrum is a sign which is unrelated to basic reality. According to the theorist, the transformation of a sign into a simulacrum starts with the experiments of modernism which have led to the isolation of a sign from lived experience. Postmodernism has brought this transformation into the extreme: the sign has completely dematerialized and presently only exists in the hyperreality, created by the media.

In contrast, Ihab Hassan maintains a holistic attitude towards the processual nature of the sign. He claims that the process of the dematerialisation of the sign leads to the enlargement of Imagination, in other words, to the increase in creativity. The theorist uses the term *indeterminacy* to name the process of dematerialization and claims that the term embraces the overall tendencies of unmaking which dominate the postmodern discourse. Despite the negative implications which the explanation of the term arouses, Ihab Hassan believes that the term *indeterminacy* carries a creative impulse which aims at producing a flow of communicable experience, characterized through the interplay of the members of a classical dichotomy.

The practical part of the dissertation starts with the analysis of the ways of the undermining of the traditional usage of synecdoche in Salman Rushdie's novel *Midnight's Children*. The research deals with the problem of the sources of the images as well as the connotations, attributed to them, focusing on the significations of the concept sexuality.

Salman Rushdie draws on numerous sources in terms of the imagery of the novel, including religions such as Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and Hinduism; postmodern media, politics and history. The writer employs the images which are easily recognisable to produce a stronger impact by subverting the connotations which are traditionally attributed to them. The subversion produces the effect of confusion and ambiguity on the reader.

The significations which are attributed to the blue colour present an example of a postmodern mixture of high and low cultures. In the same context, the colour is introduced as representing the divine, which is a traditional connotation of the colour in Hinduism, and

the worldly, being presented as a socially neutral colour in contrast to the emotionally and socially charged white and black colours. The confusion of the connotations creates the indeterminacy in the interpretation of the image the colour is supposed to introduce.

The role of contemporary media in the perception of images is emphasized through frequent references to media-related elements to describe different images, for example, the nose and the voice. The function of the mediator between the outer world and the inner world of the characters, which is attributed to the images, is relatable to the connotations of a classical image of a siren and a religious image of the Hindi god Ganesh. However, the subversion of the connotations through the reference to a mass medium, the radio, brings about the connotations of artificiality, trivia and death.

The novel includes a number of religious and historic figures such as Shiva, Buddha and Indira Gandhi, whose significations are subverted and undermined. Shiva who is traditionally regarded as an embodiment of power and supremacy over other Hindi deities is assigned a secondary role in the novel where indeterminacy and instability are favoured over dominance and determination. The traditional role of a teacher which is assigned to Buddha is undermined through the change of the cultural context in which the Buddha of the novel appears. The Buddhist culture is replaced with the Islamic one which results in the undermining of Buddha's role. The image of Indira Gandhi is borrowed from the contemporary political discourse. The subversion which the connotations of the image undergo in the novel could be interpreted as due to the problem of the proper name in postmodernism, discussed in Jacques Derrida's works. The proper name is supposed to refer to a person; however, it refers to a certain public image which appears to be vulnerable to subversion and undermining.

The connotations of sexuality are analysed with the view to the synecdoches of the nose, the hair and the voice. The synecdoche of the nose is related to the main characters of the novel Aadam Aziz and Saleem Sinai. The significations attributed to the synecdoche undergo gradual subversion in respect to these characters. The portrayal of Aadam Aziz incorporates the connotations which are partially undermined in respect to their traditional variations. The nose of Aadam Aziz is associated with sexual potency, for he becomes a

patriarch of a big family. Despite the potency, Aadam Aziz is incapable of reaching the harmony in his sexual and family life.

In contrast, Saleem Sinai is portrayed as sexually impotent in spite of the possession of a huge nose. Even though in his adolescence, he is guided by his nose through the process of his self-awareness, Saleem's maturity is related to the undermined connotation of the nose. An impossible love transforms Saleem into an impotent, although it is supposed to have been complemented with sexuality. The supplement for the lost sexual potency, writing, appears to be incapable of substituting the loss; instead, it leads to Saleem's final disintegration.

The synecdoche of the voice incorporates the connotations of sexuality and impotence as well. The two characters of the novel, Mian Abdullah and Jamilia, who are related to the image of the voice, are capable of inducing love and sexual attraction to the people affected by their voices. However, the impact of the image is related to impotence as much as potency: the long-lasting erections caused by Mian's voice inflict impotence, while Jamilia's inability to respond to the affections of her admirers results in their deaths or impotence.

The last synecdoche, related to the concept of sexuality, is the hair. The connotations, attributed to this synecdoche, vary from impotence and castration to sexual potency. The subversion of the traditional connotation of the image lies in the contrast between real and false hair. Methwold, a bald owner of a wig, appears to be sexually potent, while Nadir Khan and the Widow who possess real hair appear to be related to the connotations of impotence and castration.

The third chapter of the dissertation deals with the indeterminacy of the narrative in Salman Rushdie's novel *Midnight's Children*. The concepts of the void and the supplement could be considered central in the analysis.

The imagery related to the concept of the void is introduced in the portrayal of Aadam Aziz. It is represented in a number of images such as the bruise, the hole, fragmentation, and etcetera. The connection between the loss and the emergence of the void is initially established in the episode of the loss of faith during the prayer. The parallel could

be drawn between the emergence of the void and the elimination of the transcendental signified, for God is perceived as one of the names the transcendental signified has acquired throughout the history of Western metaphysics.

The emergence of the void triggers the appearance of a chain of supplements, which acquire liquid-like qualities in the novel. The inadequacy of the supplement to become an equivalent for the loss results in its substitution with another supplement and the deepening of the void. The chain of supplements is infinite, for it is continuously transformed and extended onto other members of the family.

The fragmentation of the beloved could serve as an example of such a transformation: the fragmented image of Naseem acquires liquid-like qualities and fill Aadam Aziz's inner void; similarly, their daughter Mumtaz divides her husband into fragments in order to fall in love with him. The indeterminacy of the supplement is revealed through the subversion of the effect the fragmentation produces: Aadam Aziz falls in love with his fragmented bride; however, Mumtaz is unable to accomplish the task she has set for herself.

The copy of the supplement displays the features of a simulacrum: the signs which are produced are unrelated to the reality of the person who produces them. The artificiality of the image is emphasized through the commodification of the signs which constitute it. Thus, Taj Mahal which symbolizes Mumtaz and Nadir Khan's impotent love appears to be an image from a poster or a chocolate bar rather than an image related to the story of love.

If the story of Aadam Aziz provides a moderate interpretation of the effect of the void, in the portrayal of Saleem Sinai, the imagery reaches extremities. The images of the bruise or the hole are substituted with the images of the desert and numbness. The connection which is established between the appearance of the void and a medical operation signals the increase in the importance of the artificiality as well as the deepening of the feeling of inevitability.

The role of the supplement is becoming more indeterminate under the strengthening of the effect of the void. On the one hand, the impact of the supplement is extremely intensive; the use of hyperbole emphasizes the level of its intensity. On the other hand, the

supplements appear to be fragile and vulnerable to any manifestation of the void. Saleem's transformation into a man-dog as well as his ultimate disintegration is the outcome of the medical operations he undergoes.

The concept of the supplement is revealed through a complex system of images which form a little narrative, to use Jean-Francois Lyotard's term. The importance of the little narrative is exposed through the portrayal of the influences which the characters of the novel are subjected to. Saleem's transformation into a man-dog could exemplify the significance of the influences which are derived from his little narrative over the other ones. Having been isolated from his family, Saleem loses the ability to accept the supplements of the void; thus, the void starts to dominate his personality. However, when the connection with the family is reestablished, a possibility to supplement the void reappears.

There are a few dominant images which relate Saleem to his family experience and serve as supplements for the void: the leaking narrative, the food, the ghost and the dream. The image of the leaking narrative is related to family women. They possess an ability to absorb the narratives from the outside which result in their alienation from the family and physical ailments. The ability is characteristic of the women who belong to a particular family and is inherited by other family members. The image of the leaking narrative reveals the difference between the stories which belong to the little narrative of the family and the ones coming from outside. The first group of stories unites family members and supplements the void, while the second one causes the deepening of the void and alienation.

The image of the food acquires a similar connotation of a family bond in the novel. The food which is prepared by family members contributes to the personalities of those who consume it. The connotations of the image are extended to the image of writing, for writing is paralleled with the process of pickling as both of them grant immortality to the objects subjected to their influence and add the aspect of subjectivity while adding to what has been lost in the course of processing.

The image of the ghost reveals the indeterminacy of the connotations attributed to the supplement which tends to transform and disseminate due to its liquid nature. Thus, the

ghost of Mary Pereira's beloved disseminates into the little narrative of Saleem's family and loses its fixed meaning.

The image of the dream could be considered to be an overall symbol of the supplement. It has no determinate meaning, for it incorporates references to different narrative, including political, historic, cultural, religious and personal, which receive contextual meanings vulnerable to change and interpretation. The problem of isolation and purification is constantly stressed in relation to the image of the dream; however, no determinate interpretation could be offered. In the episode of doctor Narlikar's death, the dissemination of a dream within the existent discourse seems to be celebrated. Nevertheless, the episode of the jungles reveals the dangers underlying the process of dissemination as potentially deadly. The function of the dream as a life-substance is continuously subverted, undermined and recovered in an infinite chain of transformations the image undergoes.

The multiple endings of the novel emphasise the priority which is given to instability in the postmodern discourse. It indicates the possibility of multiple interpretations, and the reader is free to give preference to the ending of his choice. The possible endings which belong to the literary tradition of the West are rejected in favour of the indeterminacy of the postmodern one. However, the possibility of such endings points to the tradition which the postmodern novel subverts but not destroys, thus ensuring its continuity.

The fourth chapter of the dissertation provides the analysis of Salman Rushdie's novel *Shame* with the view to the concept of simulacra. The issue of the manipulation of simulacra is investigated in the analysis of the portrayal of Iskander Harappa and Raza Hyder.

The depiction of Iskander Harappa uncovers the process of the becoming of the simulacrum. There are a few constituents which could be elicited as dominant in the process of becoming: the excess of the signs of the real, the inclusion of self-contradictory concepts and the importance of the discourse of crisis, which ensures the credibility of the simulacrum.

The portrayal of the manipulation highlights the importance of the environment the simulacrum functions in. Iskander Harappa employs two images of himself which are

carefully distanced in terms of the environments they operate in. The process of distancing is reflected in the appearance of the images in different segments of the narrative and the use of punctuation to separate the images.

In respect to the process of the creation of the simulacrum, the relevance of linguistic and visual elements should be mentioned. Both types of elements are blended to produce a stronger impact on the targeted audience. The images which constitute the simulacrum are borrowed from contemporary media; thus, it might be noted that the connection between the simulacrum and the basic reality is destroyed at the level of the constituents of the simulacrum.

The portrayal of Raza Hyder exemplifies a different scenario of the manipulation of the image. In contrast to Iskander Harappa, Raza Hyder blends his private and public images and, as the result, confuses the environments they operate in. Although the process of the becoming of a simulacrum follows the same principles in Raza Hyder's case, the impact it produces is different. The discourse of the crisis which is necessary to prove the existence of the simulacrum targets the author of the simulacrum rather than the intended audience. Raza Hyder is forced to confront the violence underlying the simulacrum, which leads to his destruction.

The analysis of the portrayal of Omar Khayyam explores the issue of the supplement. The nature of the supplement is revealed at the initial stage of the description, in the episode explaining the origins of Omar's name. The concept of translation, which is related to the name, is an equivalent of a supplement, for it both adds surplus value and covers the absence of the original.

Omar's relation with the outer world allows us to draw a parallel between him and a postmodern concept of a sign. His life is dominated by the sense of instability and inversion due to his lost connection with the basic reality. The definition of a postmodern sign reminds us of Omar's position, because due to the elimination of the transcendental signified, the signifier has lost a fixed connection with the basic reality and is entangled in an infinite process of becoming.

The problem of the signifier and the void underlying it is reflected in Omar's attempts to control his sub-consciousness. The imagery related to this issue is varied and indeterminate in terms of the connotations attributed to the images. The images of the mountains, the gates and the frontier signify the boundary between the conscious and the sub-conscious; the images of the cloud, the dream and hypnosis are related to the process of crossing the boundary.

The image of hypnosis stands out among the ones mentioned in terms of the meanings attributed to it. Hypnosis is relatable to Jacques Derrida's *pharmakon* which is both the means to kill and to cure. Similarly, hypnosis serves as the means to destroy, as in the episode of Omar's love for Farah; however, in the episode of Sufiya's illness, it acquires the meaning of a cure. The indeterminacy of the connotations lies not only in the contrastive connotations attributed to the same image, but also in the instability of these meanings. For instance, in the initial episode of medical treatment, hypnosis cures Sufiya, but in another episode of her intoxication, hypnosis strengthens the effect of her illness.

The portrayal of Omar Khayyam explicitly reveals the concept of the void. In the episode in the desert, the void is characterized in terms of absence and nothingness. The image which dominates the landscape of the void is the mirror which has no substance, for it is transparent and is only capable of producing images. The room of Omar's teacher presents another representation of the void which can only be described in the terms of the absence of things and the dominance of images.

The interpretation of the portrayal of Bilquis Hyder and her daughters is based on J. Baudrillard's proposition that in postmodernism simulacra precede the images constituting the hyperreality. The story of Bilquis Hyder reveals the supremacy of a simulacrum over the previously existent image. The royal dream of herself first marginalizes and eventually substitutes other images of Bilquis. The discourse of a crisis uncovers the nothingness beyond the simulacrum, completely denuding Bilquis and thus triggering the chain of supplements.

The image of the wind represents the dynamic nature of the postmodern image which signifies instability due to the lack of connection with the basic reality. The wind shatters

the illusion about the stability which things can guarantee. The supplement Bilquis finds for the lost faith in things is the power of will which is supposed to serve as the means to control the instability of the simulacrum.

The image of the will is dominant in the portrayal of Bilquis' younger daughter Naveed. She creates the image of herself which is entirely a product of her imagination and will; and imposes this image on others. The contrast between the simulacrum and the basic reality highlights the artificiality of the simulacrum. In relation to Naveed, the discourse of crisis is revealed through the image of birth giving. The image retains the features of a postmodern sign: it is dynamic, uncontrollable and ongoing; it also uncovers nothingness beyond the simulacrum. The resurrection of the simulacrum to celebrate the suicide uncovers the agony of the victim of the simulacrum.

Bilquis' elder daughter Sufiya is depicted as an inadequate supplement whose destiny is predetermined by the failure of the simulacrum she is supposed to substitute. The boundary between the image and the void is fragile in the case of Sufiya; therefore, she encounters frequent lapses into the sub consciousness. The image of the play acquires the connotation of the means to ensure the existence of the supplement. However, the connotation is indeterminate due to the vulnerability of the supplement. This quality is well revealed in the episode of Sufiya's toys which appear to be easily breakable and need to be protected from outside influences. The play appears to be the foundation of Sufiya's world as well as of the world of Salman Rushdie's novels in general, for it is the condition which guarantees the continuation of the creative process, underlying the world of the novels.

Summarising, the world of Salman Rushdie's novels could be described in terms of indeterminacy. The process of play and change dominate over stability and fixed meanings there. The postmodern strategies of simulation, supplementation and dissemination are employed to create the world of the novels.

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