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Gender Representation in Postcolonial Literature: Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*

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Dedication 1

To her

For Fayrouz, my exquisite mother

I will forever be grateful for your unconditional love, sacrifice, support and encouragement.

Miss. Mei

Dedication 2

Before anything, I thank Allah The Almighty for giving us the strength and patience to complete this work.

To my supportive, caring and generous parents Messaoud and Meriem.

To my dear sisters Hadjer, Mebrouka and my lovely little sister Rania.

To my beloved brothers Seddik, Mohammed Seghir, Aymen, Rabie and Haithem.

To the sun of my family AbdelmoghithLakhel.

To all those who support me and wish me all the best.

To my partners on this work Wissam and Mei.

Thank you all.

Miss. Aisha

Dedication 3

I thank Allah the Almighty for giving me the strength and patience to accomplish this work

I dedicate this humble work to my dearest parents

To my elderbrother Hicham and other my dear brothers and sisters

And I do not forget to my lovely fiancé, Hakim, who supported me until the end

To my partners in the work Aisha and Mei

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Abstract

The present study deals with the portrayal of gender in Postcolonial literature in the work of Salman Rushdie *Midnight's Children*. In his novel *Midnight's Children*, Salman Rushdie sheds the light on pre-independence and post-independence Indian society. Accordingly, he illustrates the status of gender in Indian society with regard to its beliefs, religions and customs. This presentation effects readers' and critics' perspectives and interpretations. The research under investigation aims at examining the gender presentation in postcolonial literature and the way Rushdie portrays contrasting images to men and women. We followed the descriptive approach to arrive at this embodiment depending on his physical, psychological, familial and supernatural characterizations. This study consists of two chapters. The first chapter theoretically addresses the gender issue in Postcolonial Literature; containing three sections. The first section deals with the historical and literary background of Postcolonialism and Postcolonial Literature. The second one presents the concept of sex and gender, gender stereotypes and its main role theories. It also treats the concept of gender in Literature, Postcolonial feminist studies and the way Postcolonial writers present the male and female elements in their literary works. The third one presents the actual gender status in India after independence and their intergenerational family relationships as well as their issue of violence. The second chapter is the practical one which examines gender portrayal, containing two sections. The first one views Rushdie's profile, the plot summary and the theme of gender. Whereas, the second one analyses the images he projected to his characters. Thereby, this portrayal through the eyes of Saleem Sinai mismatches the actual gender status in Postcolonial Literature and Indian society.

Keywords: Gender presentation, Post colonialism, Postcolonial Literature, *Midnight's Children*.

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General Introduction

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General Introduction

1. Background of the Study

In the mid twentieth century, the world was on date with one of the largest and bloodiest conflict in human history "The Second World War" which led to an end of the era of the great intellectuals and creative exuberance. People were depressed; they got directly to use poems and short stories as means of literary expression.

It was hardly a time for new beginning, but Post Second World War era is characterized by the emergence of a new movements and theories such as Postmodernism and Postcolonialism. Postcolonialism is a theory that flourished in late 1970s and early 1980. It studies life pre-colonialism, during colonialism and post-colonialism in which culture, language and literature play a part. The field of post colonialism is a very wide and controversial notion that is concerned mainly with postcolonial people who had suffered from the process of colonization and who felt homeless because of it and they were struggling to determine their position in society. In their writings, Postcolonial writers express their refusal of colonial domination and colonial legacies like language, religion and culture.

The themes of gender and gender representation are dominant in Postcolonial Literature, during the last half of the twentieth century in which writers were expressing their ideas and exploring identity. Salman Rushdie is one of the famous writers of this era. His second work "*Midnight's children*", which was named the Best of the Books, is shaped by the theme of gender, but the focus was primarily on the use of magic realism technique. The study under investigation will give an analysis of the presentation of gender in Postcolonial Literature, *Midnight's Children* as a case study.

2. Statement of the Problem:

Salman Rushdie's characters depiction in his novel *Midnight's children* influences readers'and critics'perspectives and interpretations.

3. Aim of the Study:

Through the eyes of the protagonist SaleemSinai, Rushdie presents many different characters with different images in pre-colonial and postcolonial period. The study aims to investigate males and females characterization in postcolonial India in Salman Rushdie *Midnight's Children* due to the great impact it has on the readers.

4. Significance of the Study:

Midnight's Children has been described by critiques as "a watershed in the post-independence development of the Indian English novel" due to its major themes and unique style. It is awarded several prizes such as the Booker of the Bookers and James Tait Black Memorial Prize. Hence, we came to the decision that it is of great importance to investigate the postcolonial work *Midnight's Children* by Salman Rushdie in terms of the presentation of both sexes.

5. Research Questions

How does the writer present gender in postcolonial Indian society in *Midnight's Children*?

Does this gender presentation match the actual life of Indian society?

6. Research Hypotheses

We hypothesises that the writer presents gender in Postcolonial Indian society through the characters' familial relationships, as well as their physical, psychological and moral descriptions.

Through the protagonist, the writer addresses all Indian social classes, alongside their customs, traditions and beliefs.

7. Research Methodology

The present study is descriptive one in which we analyze the images projected to males and females depending on their familial, physical, psychological, religious and emotional characterizations.

8. The Structure of the Dissertation

This present study is divided into two chapters. The first chapter contains three sections. The first section deals with Post colonialism theory background and postcolonial literature. The second one deals with the conception of gender and sex, its biological, structural-functional and cognitive development role theories, the project of Postcolonial Feminism and the place of daughter in Postcolonial house while the third one treats the status of gender in Postcolonial India. The second chapter is divided into two sections. It deals with the practical work of the study. The first section contains a biography of the writer Salman Rushdie, Rushdie's stance on Feminism, a plot summary of the novel and the theme of gender. Whereas the second section takes us to the analysis of male and female characters depending on their physical and psychological depictions.

Chapter one

Gender Issue in Postcolonial Literature

Section One: A Historical and Literary Overview of Postcolonialism

Introduction

Postcolonial literature has always been regarded as a historical document. Though the events have been seen and perceived from the point of view of the writer. Till now the pictures presented can be authenticated by circumstances and conditions all around us. Portion of fiction is much less in the mixture of the words used by the writers. In the substance of all postcolonial writings, there is a clear element for example postcolonial feminism growing from the same mainland called as colonized.

Without doubt, the best postcolonial literature ever is produced by Diasporic writers. Literature where every minority away from original home land is regarded as Diasporic, specifically with religious connotation. Diaspora is ethno national individuals who were living toughly in other countries, most of their literary works were representing interrelations between the colonizer and the colonized like *Midnight's Children* (1981), *Things Fall Apart* (1958).

For more information about Postcolonial literature and its contexts we have first to know the background of this literature because it has been good for discussions and criticism. So, in this chapter, we are going to deal with the very definition of the term postcolonial itself then with the Post-colonial theory. Also, we are going to discuss the issue of postcolonial literature. After going through the overall core of the field of postcolonialism, we will also deal with the issue of gender and a general overview of the link between postcolonial literature and gender to give the frame to our work.

1.1.1. Postcolonial Theory

It might seem that semantic basis of the term post-colonial suggests an interest in the national culture only after the imperial power had gone. It has been occasionally used in some previous work on an area to distinguish between the periods before and after independence, (colonial period and post-colonial period) because of two reasons: the first reason is that postcolonialism started at the first instance of the colonial encounter, the second one is because the imperial process does not end at the independence, for example, in constructing national literary histories, or in suggesting comparative studies between stages in those histories. Generally speaking, although the term 'colonial' has been used for the pre-independence period and a term referring to a national writing, such as modern Canadian writing or recent West Indian literature has been used to distinguish the post- independence period. Stephen Seminar, using Pêcheux's terminology of dual identities, said that the term "post-colonial":

Locates a specifically anti- or Post-colonial discursive in culture, one which begins in the moment that colonial power inscribes itself onto the body and the space of its others . . . Thus, Post-colonial critical discourses are not entirely absent from colonial culture. It means there is always a network of dual identities in the discourses of the colonized.(Childs, P., & Patrich, R.J, 1997 :86).

Briefly, we can say that the term "Post-colonial" refers to the period following the first colonial settlements in a country, not from its independence.

Theorists take different views about defining Postcolonial theory. From a positive point of view, they considered Postcolonial theory as a means of defiance by which any exploitative and discriminative practices, without regard to the time and space, can be challenged. And

from negative point of view, they regard postcolonial theory as ambiguous, ironic and superstitious. These two contradictory views create an interest that must be addressed before researchers can apply the theory in their fields.

Another challenge of a definition of Postcolonial theory is its contextual framework, as it is linked to race, culture and gender, settler and native. The pertinent questions theorists need to ask are: When does a settler become coloniser, colonised and postcolonial? When does a race cease to be an oppressive agent and become a wealth of cultural diversities of a postcolonial setting? Or in the human history of migrations, when does the settler become native, indigenous, a primary citizen? And lastly, when does the native become truly postcolonial? The answers of these questions make the nature of Postcolonial theory problematic and difficult to have one clear definition.

The concept of post-colonial literary theory emerges from the incapability of European principles to deal correctly with the complexities and diverse cultural provenance of post-colonial writing. European theories themselves grow out from unique cultural traditions hidden misconception about 'the universal'. Theories of style and genre, assumption about the normal elements of language, epistemologies and value systems are all radically puzzled by way of the practices of Post-colonial writing. Post-colonial theory has proceeded from the need to address this one-of-a-kind practice. Indigenous theories have developed to accommodate the differences within the more than a few cultural traditions as properly as the want to describe in a comparative way the features shared throughout these traditions.

1.1.2. Postcolonial Literature

Postcolonial literature is a large topic, that's why it is hard to take out one definition. Starting first with the literature which means different things to different people. Generally speaking, literature is any kind of literary work (written or spoken) that possesses literary

merit. Literature can be classified according to whether it is fiction or non-fiction and whether it is poetry or prose. It can be further distinguished according to major forms such as the novel, short story or drama, and works are often categorized according to historical periods or their adherence to certain aesthetic features or expectations (genre)

Post-colonial literature, in its broadest sense, is a kind of writing which has been affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day. Postcolonial writings are distinctly considered as a response to the colonial process or to the question of what is Postcolonial Literature. In this context, some writers asked if considering only the semantic meaning of the term Postcolonial Literature could easily be misinterpreted as a restricted label only reserved the literature which was written in the wake of the colonial powers withdrawal from the colonies in the period after independence has been obtained.

Turning to the hidden meaning, the term was regarded as being in some measure misleading, contemplating that the field of Postcolonial literature symbolizes written works on both sides. For some postcolonial theorists, post-colonial literature is 'subversion' and 'resistance' of the imperial centre and for others; it is an assertion of identity both in themes and language. It is essential precondition that Postcolonial Literature must be written in English that has given an identity to Post-colonial literature which is both lovable and enduring. In the Post-colonial era, we see Post-colonial literatures in the formerly British colonies written in varieties of Englishes which may be regarded as dialects of the Queen's English. Thus, we find Indian English, African English, Australian English, Canadian English, Caribbean English, and so on. Each one of these englishes has a produced substantial body of literature in the formerly British colonies after the period of colonization.

The Postcolonial writers wanted to make a radical change to the word otherness from other to us which makes us adhere to a based view of history, this case was supported by Ashcroft,

Griffith and Tiffin in *The Post-colonial Studies Reader*(2002:318) : the map of the world can be seen as a palimpsest on which Europe has written its own dominance through the agencies of history .

The literature became a remedy for postcolonial writers whereas the Postcolonial Literature seeks to give voice to those people who previously were wordless by the colonial power. The Postcolonial narratives recount a different story of colonization to share their colonial trail, revealing sides of colonization that previously put a lid on Postcolonial Literature.

The fact is that literature includes all literatures affected by the colonial process from the moment of colonization to the present day and makes the African countries, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, India, Caribbean countries, all Postcolonial Literatures. Besides the issues of language and hegemony and what have been discussed before, Postcolonial Literature always featured the issue of place and displacement through the narration, description and dramatization of their writers as Ashcroft et al think that : "the special post-colonial crises of identity come into being the concern with the development or recovery of an effective identifying relationship between self and place."(Ashcroft et al,2002 :03).

Whereas, the native cultures of those countries were often marginalized and suppressed. In response, much Postcolonial Literature seeks to assert the richness of indigenous cultures in an effort to bring back pride in practices and traditions that were systematically degraded under colonialism, even for writers who were described as being Postcolonial for instance Chinua Achebe was recurrently described as Igbo writer, a Nigerian writer, an African writer, a Commonwealth writer, a third world writer but seldom as a "Post-colonial"one (Lazarus Rukundwa ,2004 :03), as in the case of Edward Said who was described as Palestinian American academic writer, eastern writer, political activist, literary critic and theorist, polymath scholar it is also rarely the same as "post-colonial".

Mark Stein, in his book, *Black British Literatures: Novels of Transformation*, said "Post-colonial literatures can be defined as those Europhone literatures that have arisen in the wake of European colonialism". (Stein 2004: 201). Another distinct definition is that of Marie Rose Napierkowski who said that "postcolonial literature seeks to describe the interactions between European nations and the peoples they colonized".

Conclusion

To sum up, in this section we provided a historical and literary overview of postcolonialism as a theory. Then, we discussed how Postcolonial Literature is defined before moving to the way Postcolonial writers are perceived and the different issues that are featured in Postcolonial Literature like language, hegemony, place and displacement.

Section Two: An Overview of the Concept of Gender and Gender in Postcolonial

Literature

Introduction

Many people view the topic of gender from one dimensional lens. The distinction between the man and woman concerning the physical action that each should possess seems to be clear, but the issue is not that clear-cut. When viewed in terms of masculinity and femininity, the idea of gender can be explained on a much broader and complex level. Postcolonialism focuses on cultural and national identity in literature produced by the people of current or former colonies in places like the Middle East, South Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean. Many Postcolonial authors delve into to the issue of gender when expressing their ideas about post colonialism, as the case with feminist writers.

1.2.1. The Distinction Between Sex and Gender

The issue of gender cannot be tackled without firstly distinguishing between sex and gender. These two terms are most than often used interchangeably in which we regard sex and gender as the fact or the state of being a male or a female, dismissing the biological, social psychological and cultural differences. The former, Lindsey defines it as the biological, physiological, hormonal and chromosomal differences that determine if a person is male or female (qtd. in Copenhaver 16). Whereas the latter, by definition, according to West and Zimmerman " is not simply an aspect of what one is, but, more fundamentally, it is something that one does, and does recurrently, in interaction with others" (140). In other words, gender is not inherent nor something we possess but rather it is a set of traits constructed by human societies and cultures throughout history, thus gender is learnt by performing. For instance, women and men clothes are designed differently. Men's shirts button is on the right side while

women's shirt is on the left one, similarly men have different accessories and perfume fragrance from women.

Consequently, we may take the example of babies shower to clearly demonstrate the distinction of sex and gender. In some modern societies, parents throw a party to celebrate the upcoming of the baby and reveal the sex of the fetus, is it male? Is it female? This revelation is made by using the colors pink and blue. Pink for girls and blue for boys. Thusly, human societies ascribe these two colors to indicate masculinity and femininity according to the fetus sex.

1.2.2. Gender Stereotypes

Gender stereotypes are considered as a synonym to the word Gender beliefs. In this context, individuals “men or women” are expected to behave depending on the roles given to them by their societies. According to gender belief which is close in meaning to gender stereotypes; there is reproduction of naturalized gender distinctions. Therefore, they work on maintaining power of male control and less importance to female. A second example provided by a British study about teenagers’ experience and talk’s expectations in the class. Michelle Stanworth (1983) discovered that teachers supported boys to behave confidently and don’t be frightened to say what they believe in the classroom debate and that the girls approved most of those boys who show the ability to do this. Girls showing the same skills but were not totally respected. In contrast, Girls who express their opinions or complaints in speech were not respected by other girls. One could say in evaluation of their different behaviors that girls who are not vocal cheated and oppressed other vocal girls because they support the view of the boys'superiority; their attempt to compare or even to equalize themselves with those boys. In this way, the dominance of male and subordination of girls are maintained. To extract what

gender stereotypes are, one could say that American engineering students should have these characteristics such as, showing feeling of sorry, nervous or not certain and giving encouragement; the British schoolgirls should be obedient and subordinate. These are ideological methods or standards concerning behavior that make them under heavy pressure in terms of “good” stereotypes, highly reductive and less complicating ones. “Bad” stereotypes represent verbal blames that can be seen as “correction” to the situation of contribution of talk from women or even an attempt to control. In 1985 Spender proposed that women are seen as so talkative because how much they talk is evaluated not against the amount of speech of men, but against perfection of silence of females. In perfect way women should be saying nothing. So, how they should behave is called “good” stereotypes and how not to presents “bad” stereotypes.

1.2.3. Gender Role Theory

Pursuant to the definition of gender above, Macionis and Plummer define gender roles as “learning and performing the socially accepted characteristics for a given sex”(367). Namely, gender roles are those behaviors, actions and attitudes that a given society and culture consider appropriate for men and women. On account of this definition, different theorists introduced several gender role theories to explain how these roles are established. Three major theories can be biological, structural-functional and cognitive theories.

1.2.3.1. The Biological Theory

The Biological theory proposes that males and females role differences are biological not environmental. These biological differences are exhibited through physiological, emotional, mental and genetic qualities. This distinction made men be associated with breadwinning and women be associated with domestic care and security seeking. For example, due to their

physical distinction, men are greater in size and strength in comparison to women. Correspondingly, men excel at mathematical tasks and logic while women are better in verbal and social skills, intuition, endurance and empathy (Reese 17).

1.2.3.2.The Structural-Functional Theory

The structural-functional theory suggests that roles and places of men and women are shaped by cultures and societies not biologically determined, as a result of its different traditions, customs and conventions (Rhode 21). Parsons and Bales (1955) believe that women's main role of nurturance and men's main role of financial support of the family help in creating and maintaining the structure and stability of the society(qtd. in Copenhaver 27).Parsons and Bales concluded: It seems quite safe in general to say that the adult feminine role has not ceased to be anchored primarily in the internal affairs of the family, as wife, mother, and manager of the household, while the role of the adult male is predominantly anchored in the occupational world, in his job and through it by his status-giving and income-earning functions for the family. (p. 14-15)

1.2.3.3.The Cognitive Development Theory

According to Bussey and Bandura, Kohlberg (1966) suggests that gender roles are not biologically or culturally determined, but are developed by children's conceptions of gender roles from what they see and hear. Once they come to understand their gender identity, what is meant by being male or female, they attempt to behave and act in ways that are consistent and congruent with regard to their gender (3-4)

1.2.4. Gender in Literature

Using gender as a synonym to sex is still occurring frequently for instance “she is of the female gender”. After the interrogations of ‘second wave’ feminism 1970s, these two terms disentangle from each other. In 1974, anthropologist Sherry Ortner published a much-anthologized essay, ‘Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?’ which furnished a framework with which to begin to disentangle ‘sex’ from ‘gender’ Ortner inquired into the ways in which women’s bodies align them with nature, and how their destiny is only with reproductive life, and how men lack ‘natural’ creative functions, assert their creativity ‘artificially,’ through the medium of technology and symbols’ Ortner suggested as hypothesis that gender is related to culture as sex related to nature as well as gender is the social expressions, the roles fixed to, gendered dichotomies of men and women. Thus, it could now be considered that the nineteenth century doctrine of separate spheres for men and women that depended on constructs of gendered identity without any inherent predisposition based on anatomy and capacity for child bearing.

The birth of the debates relating to women’s liberation in the 1960s and 1970s were also influenced by the work of sexologists, such as Masters and Johnson’s (William H. Masters and Virginia E. Johnson) *Human Sexual Response* (1966). Sexologists reported that, far from the female sexual passivity, frigidity or disinclination and inherent monogamy outlined by Freud, women were sexually active, initiatory and multiply orgasmic: ‘women’s inordinate orgasmic capacity did not evolve for monogamous, sedentary cultures’ wrote psychiatrist Mary Jane Sherfey in a 1966 essay on ‘The Theory of Female Sexuality’.

1.2.5. Post Colonialism and Feminist Studies

The ability to read the past and present together is the basis to be able critique the Postcolonial as we try to understand anticolonial feminisms and women's movements today. Gender and women is the center of Postcolonial Studies. As Said's Orientalism details, the characterization of the oriental in feminized terms marks the early prominence of gender in the colonial project. Also key to understanding colonial logic is the way in which the status of native women was used to justify the colonial project as a civilizing mission. GayatriChakravortySpivak famously describes British intervention in the Sati practice in India as "white men saving brown women from brown men" (Spivak 1988, 297). Partha Chatterjee explains that the colonizers were thus able to "transform this figure of the Indian woman into a sign of the inherently oppressive and unfree nature of the entire cultural tradition of a country" (Chatterjee 1993, 118).

1.2.5.1.Hierarchical Dualism

Number of feminist and antiracist analysts like John Hodges,Donald Struckmann, and Lynn Trost 1975; Rhonda Williams 1993; Ann Jennings 1993 have considered race and gender as an integral part of a large hierarchical "dualistic" standpoint that takes a big interest in the western culture for centuries. Members of the dominant political, economic, and cultural group – middle- and upper-class European and European American men – developed this viewpoint, and it both motivated and justified this group's domination of others (Oliver Cox 1959). It is based basically on earlier dualistic from Hierarchical Dualism to Integrative Liberation, polarizations, in particular, the historically all-pervasive polarization of males and females into genders: masculine-only men and feminine-only women. The construction of hierarchical dualist point of view and theoretical framework was a multi-faceted, complex

process, which progressed over many centuries. Educated, middle- and upper-class European and European American men who enjoy their supposedly superior innate qualities which justified them the dominance in working on developing the hierarchical dualist framework. It involved racist, sexist, and classist theories – theories which associated certain attributes and personality characteristics with race-ethnicity, biological sex, and even class position– which “scientifically proved” the superiority of middle- and upper-class European and European American men. They built two racial dualistic attributes, “whiteness “and “Blackness/of coloredness,” which supposedly made those people deal with “whiteness” as superior in ability, motivation, and character to all other people, who were characterized by “Blackness” or “coloredness.” They also formed two other dualistic gender attributes, “masculinity” and “femininity,” which supposedly made men (who were seen as possessing masculinity by virtue of their biological maleness) different from and superior to women (whose biological femaleness was seen as conferring femininity).

Civil Rights, anti-racist and feminist movements succeeded in confronting a key aspect of hierarchical dualism concerning the economic system: neglecting people of color and women from the better-paying, higher status jobs which had been previously allocated only for white people and men. People of color and men got the legal right of “equal opportunity” and a small share of these previously subordinated groups achieved entry into positions in the top tiers of the economic hierarchy. This challenge to job segregation was connected to women’s growing rejection of their restriction to Traditional full-time homemaker roles, and the massive entry of married women into the paid labor force (Matthaei 1982). However, equal representation of white women and people of color throughout the economic hierarchy is far from having been achieved. Entrenched patterns of discrimination are proving difficult to eradicate.

1.2.5.2. Otherness and Gender in Western Feminist Discourse

Regardless to the historical establishment of the concept gendered otherness, it becomes widespread in both the western and non-western world. The western gendered ideology publicly challenges the discrimination between the two sexes like Mary Astell's late 17th-century and Mary Wollstonecraft's 18th-century liberal European/English feminist articles on gender discrimination, which developed into three phases of modern feminism: first-wave feminism' of the early 20th century, 'second-wave feminism' from the late 1960s/early 1970s to the 1980s and 'third-wave feminism' since the 1990s. The phenomenon that discussed frequently is the unbalance model between the two sexes in a society has its roots in the cultural construction of gender differences.

The western radical feminists claim to date change not within the old socio-cultural structures but aim for a complete re-organization of the existing order. According to Pam Mourris in *literature and feminism: in the introduction of 1993*, changing the existing relations of power between the two sexes would mean a social revolution, and the present world order necessarily would be transfigured. The transformational idea of the radical feminists would indirectly mean the continuance of the oppositional based gender construction known as "gender essentialism" rather than the equality of the sexes.

In the contrary, the less radical feminists seek a change of thinking by means of a reconsideration of the old dichotomous reception of gendered entity. Regardless to their suggestions for change, generally the feminists believe that the concept of the difference between the sexes is defined by the society and its system of meanings and values based on the modes of difference and separation in place of identification and community. In this way, hierarchal, dominating, competitive and confrontational behavior patterns and ways of thinking between men and women are brought forth. According to Simone de Beauvoire's *The*

Second Sex (1994), Pam Morris also states in his connection in 1993 that interfering the social norms in gender resulted the generalization according to which the term 'man' has a positive connotation, while the term 'woman' is associated with the gendered Other. This means that the woman, the so called gendered other, is defined in opposition to the man (the Self). At the same time, the woman – as the negative other – helps the man to construct himself as the positive Subject. In different cultures, femininity means nature, beauty, purity and goodness, but also evil, enchantment, corruption and death. Mary Eagleton remarks in 2003 patriarchal thinking does not associate only with feminine features to the persecuted women that is known as the gendered other but also related to any other oppressed population group in the non-western world (the ethnic Other).

The main basis that the two sexes have to handle is including the self and other dichotomy which is integral in our society and simultaneously entrenched in the historical western ethnic alterity discourse. The male perspectives on woman have become prevalent in both of society and literature and make women at some point of time accept and inherit the male conception by regarding themselves as the other, because of his impact on culture and thus take the social norms in control within the context of literature. Thus, Pam Morris calls upon female readers in 1993, to start rereading men's readings of women to learn how to begin reading as a woman.

Like de Beauvoir, Nancy Hirschman points out to a dual opposition between self and other. Specifically, when she gave an explanation of the relationship between freedom and gender in *Gender, Class, & Freedom in Modern Political Theory* (2008). According to Hirschmann, it is Isaiah Berlin's 'negative liberty' which refers to freedom based on personal ability and absence of any external barriers, that is associated with men. The social hierarchy and women's unfreedom make men get the advantage of this freedom. This connection was also established

by the political theorists Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Immanuel Kant. The concept of freedom is hence composed of masculine experiences and interests. For Jean-Jacques Rousseau, women's imposed unfreedom was justifiable in so far as women are able to control men by means of their sexual freedom and power which are in turn caused by passion, sexuality and jealousy. Rousseau feared that any form of passion could affect men's general will. In addition, emotion and love could manipulate men's rule. As a consequence, Rousseau propagated women's positioning within the private sphere in order to take control over women's passion and hereby reduce their power. In this way, Rousseau also assumed to suppress any female political freedom and involvement since women have powers of biology and sexuality, when coupled with political power they will gain superiority over men.

1.2.6. The Place of Daughter of Postcolonial House

In relation to the national son, the self-defining inheritor of the post-independence era and the protagonist of the nation-shaping narrative, the female child is a non-subject within the national family romance. Detectably and contradictory, given that her self-determination has been in principle achieved, the daughter figure within the framework of the Postcolonial narrative that inscribes the new nation is peripheral and quiet, then it is about to be invisible.

Contrariwise, the daughter of the new nation in male-authored texts is predominantly pictured as homebound and tradition-bound. She inhabits either private spaces or the peripheries of public, national space. The daughter's fate encapsulates the negative destiny of the nation whenever early national promises are betrayed. In this sense, she is a lesser or secondary national 'mother'. Simply, she is subsidiary figurehead.

However, Postcolonial women writers have faced the symbolic inheritance that is the peripheral figure of the postcolonial national daughter, whether child or adolescent, part of, or

in addition to, adopting the writerly resistance strategies. Some women writers have chosen to explore the relationship of daughter with her immediate, father-led family, and with the patrilineal community of which it is a microcosm. They have dramatized her negotiated bid for selfhood and status within what might be called the national house, that is, within the inherited and correlated structures of both family and nation-state.

Conclusion

To conclude, in this section we dealt with the concept of gender and the distinction between gender and sex. Then, we provided an overview of Gender in literature, Gender stereotypes and Gender roles main theories. Finally, we dealt with the project of Postcolonial feminism and the recurrent presentations of gender in Postcolonial Literature

Section Three: Gender in India in Postcolonial Period

Introduction

Gender is globally thought to be a central concept among women and men in understanding themselves and the world around. It influences human development/societies as it comes out from different social contexts in which it is created and recreated through certain actions, and Indian society is not an exception. Chowdhury believes that the life events of an individual born into an Indian family is found to be gendered (59).

According to Aparajita Chowdhury and Manjo Patnaik, Lucia Gilbert describes three theoretical structures of gender: gender as process, gender as difference and gender as structure. Gender as process is the type of interactions among women and men dependent upon what role is proper for one's gender; women are nurturers and men are breadwinners. Gender as difference refers to the way it widens out our understanding of individuals' behaviors in a particular society while simultaneously masking gender inequality through differences in power among men and women. Gender as structure refers to how different attitudes regarding men and women are established in practice within societies. Take, for example, employees in a work-place. Males are perceived as males whereas females are seen as mothers (59).

1.3.1. Gender System Prevailing Within Indian Family Life

Aparajita Chowdhury believes that two cannot argue with the fact that gender system is a code of organization that affects all aspects of social functioning. Patriarchy as well as gender system take part in shaping obstacles and barriers for human resource development in Indian society, including the negative conditions that the female element of all ages faces in India, even though Indian government embodied articles and policies and called Indian people to

abandon such norms and customs (Kapur 03). Major features of gender system prevailing within India family (133-134):

1.3.1.1.Male-Female/ Boy-Girl Differentiation:

Indian social structure formation of gender is based on the practice of male-female differentiation. The social placement of males and females is related to biological sex differences. Gender preference is experienced by children early in their childhood in multiple aspects of their lives. Differentiation in their relationships with one another, distribution of family resources like properties and lands, nutrition, healthcare, and education. Femicides/infanticides crimes too speak volumes about son preference and daughter aversion. Chaterjee (1987) was of the same opinion that, "the discrimination begins with the fact that a girl is unwanted and therefore eliminated even before she can emerge into the world." Child Rights and You (2007) states that despite the fact that about twelve million girls are born in India yearly, one million of these baby girls die at the age of one-year-old or soon after birth. Admittedly, this male-female differentiation started to change slowly as Indian society is taking different attitudes.

1.3.1.2.Role Allocations:

Status/Role of men and women in India has close relationship to the patriarchy system and Hinduism as they have always been in practice in Indian families. Gender roles are traditional and specific from birth onwards, men are supposed to take care of the resources, dominate, control social functions. Whereas, supportive functions like performing the domestic works, nurturing of children and caring of elderly members are prescribed for women. From their early days, boys and girls are aware of the special preference and treatment of the male child through parents' and family behaviors, traditions and social customs.

Good marriages, good mothers and womanhood are considered to be primary roles for Indian women (Puri 36). Ramachandra Rao (1969) describes women per ideal social expectations as obedient daughter, faithful wife, nurturing mother, powerful mother in law and benevolent grandmother. Women's worth as individuals gradually degrade as their value is connected to persons in their lives; under guardianship of her father as a child, under guardianship of husband as a wife and she raises her children and shapes their destiny as a mother (Sinno and El Siebai). Moreover, in rural India, girls are to only follow instructions; banning them from providing their suggestions or ideas regarding them as a responsibility (Kapur 12). Karishna Kumar (1986) explains that young girls grow up feeling vulnerable, self-conscious to which they become non-persons. The report of the committee on the Status of Women in India (1974-75) confirms that women have roles but no personality.

Sharma and Khosla (1999) agree that, "to be a female is often less than to be human. Woman's role in society, her limited rights, considerable duties and the shabby treatment meted out to her in all walks of life originate from the fact that she is basically considered a handicap and a burden on the family right from birth itself". To put it differently, families believe that males bring benefit not burden to the household. They are treated with care, respect and superiority per their roles. Their primary roles are to be husbands, the leaders of the house, providers of financial support, decision makers, authority figures and enhancers of family reputation through academic success and job opportunities(12). For them, to be a man is "enough". Young boys develop their personality feeling superior and worthy (Kumar 1986 Moses 151; Huma 105).

Religious rites, as a striking factor, influence the roles of Indian gender; offering limited freedom for women and ideal life for men.

1.3.2. Inter-Generational Relationship Within Indian Family

Throughout the years, several descriptions were attributed to the Indian family due to its social, cultural and religious system. Its family system is extremely classical in which joint/extended family structure is established in practice to a very large proportion of the Indian population, meaning it is based on hierarchical relationships. Sometimes three to four generations, who belong to the same caste, class and religion, could be found under one roof: grandparents, sons, daughters, grandsons, paternal cousins and relatives, where the oldest men are very much involved in household matters, elder women too, though less than men, are in position of authority; younger women come under the authority of older women too. These set of hierarchical beliefs and attitudes are conveyed by older female family members to the youths: grandmothers, mothers, aunts and sisters (Goswami 2000). Seymour (1999) views Indian family as a Banyan tree; it grows, expands and branches out new roots (number of newly married couples) to the ground from its boughs (grandparents /parents). For they are the sources of knowledge and wisdom, grandparents are of a significant aspect and are treated with utmost importance and respect. Grandfathers and grandmothers possess a strikingly unique relationship with their grandsons, focusing on their well-being and future prospects like marriage and education. They act as caregivers, mentors, best companions, direct negotiators and buffers between them and their parents (Das 2000). Indian culture and family have always glorified this hierarchical and intergenerational relationship due to its message of appreciation of traditional customs and conventions, solidarity and resilience, love and affection (qtd. In Chowdhury 139-143).

1.3.3. Gender and Violence

Much the same in third world countries post-independence, India too entered the tunnel of violence. In India, the prevalence of violence has been described as a never ending phenomenon (Sharma and Gupta). To say that acts of violence in India are targeted to both genders is a miss understatement; aimed mainly at the Indian female element from conception, birth to death. Muslim women, too, experienced some of these acts during the partition. These practices could take the forms of sex-selection abortion, female infanticide/foeticide, child/minor marriage, physical and sexual abuse, sexual harassment and most importantly dowry-related deaths. The definition of dowry system in the Indian context is the payment/price which the family of the bride is required to pay to the groom or the groom's family at the time of the wedding, it takes the forms of large sum of money, property, jewelry, clothes, household items and so on (Rastogi 67). Indian parents view it as a transfer of the women's burden to her husband's family (Fernandez 441). Rates of female femicides are high in some areas like Punjab; parents reckon that generous dowry influences their daughters' treatment in her marital family to which some of them experience difficulties in paying it (Gupta 88). The groom and marital family practice violence against young brides who cannot afford large dowries, they harass, humiliate and murder them to extract payments from their parents and make a substitute for a new bride (Kumari 372). The National Crime Records Bureau of Indian Government confirms that even though government of India has forbidden dowry system in 1961, dowry deaths increased by 15.2% in 1998 because it is deemed insufficient (44).

Conclusion

In this section, we dealt with how gender is perceived in Postcolonial India. By doing so, we investigated the actual status of the prevailing gender system in Postcolonial India; their men and women roles and their status. Afterwards, we explained the intergenerational relationship within the Indian family as well as their issue of violence.

Chapter two

Gendered Discourse in *Midnight's Children*

Section One: An Overview About *Midnight's Children*

Introduction

Midnight's Children is Salman Rushdie's 1981 novel. The novel deals with The India's transition from British colonialism to independence and the partition of British India. It is considered an example of postcolonial, postmodern literature and magical realism. "*Midnight's children*" does not represent merely a nation, but also represents gender issue in Postcolonial era.

2.1.1. Biography of Salman Rushdie

Salman Rushdie is a British Indian writer who was born on June 19, 1947, in Bombay (now called Mumbai). His father was a wealthy businessman and a school teacher, his mother also was a school teacher and he was their only son. Rushdie started his education at a Bombay private school then he attended The Rugby School which is a boarding school in Warwickshire, England. His University education was on The King's College at the University of Cambridge, where he chose to study history. His writing career started with his debut novel *Grimus* in 1975. Unlike his second novel *Midnight's Children*, *Grimus* did not gain success and fame. *Midnight's Children* took both prizes "The Booker Prize" and The James Tait Black Memorial Prize". It was pronounced the 'Booker of the Bookers,' which was considered as the best example of that illustrious prize. Malcolm Bradley in *The Modern British Novel* (1994) pronounced the book "a new start for the late-twentieth-century novel." Rushdie's next novel, *Shame*, also won critical acclaim and international awards. In a horrible way, Rushdie's next book, *The Satanic Verses*, caused a big confusion in the Islamic society. So, Salman Rushdie continued his writing hidden from views.

2.1.2. Feminism and Salman Rushdie:

Salman Rushdie's works characterized by feminine characters, which has made large number of critics praised and condemned such works. While the view of early feminist writers was almost different, they noted that Salman Rushdie's work consisted of texts completely hostile to women.

Beginning with his novel "Shame," the oppression of women was at her heart, which is what has written about a number of hostile articles whose authors believe Rushdie has a problematic relationship with the female characters. Inderpal Grewal and Ijaz Ahmed dealt with the issue of Rushdie's authoring style in the novel, where the first said: "There is a separation between the method of inclusion in which the narration is written and the author's official position ... which breaks the alliance between the writer and the woman." (125). The latter, rebuked Rushdie for producing an "exhibition" Pictures of frozen and unrelated women . . . Or crazy and stupid, or unconscious in contraindication or driven to despair, suicide, and sheer surreal". The best summarized say for all these critics was by Catherine Cundy, who observes that, "women [in Rushdie's novels] are invoked to prove a point about social injustices and inequalities, and then effectively demeaned. . . or marginalized by the writing itself" (17).

After a few years, new opinions began to appear among feminist schoolgirls. Most assert that although Rushdie's portrayal of women is problematic, he never wavered in his decision to challenge the structure of persecution. Take Samir Dial, for example. He is convinced that Rushdie in "shame" intentionally "undermines the authority of masculinity." Other critics remained skeptical but did not follow the method their predecessors used in their

writing. According to Umbrian Hay, Salman Rushdie, as a post-colonial writer, his novels function as a symbol of his own identity, and they often have a "distinctive exhibit creativity" that metaphor undermined by the masculine narrative style. From the same point of view, HarvinSachdeva Mann was explaining that despite his attempts at feminist discourse in his novel *The Satanic Verses and Midnight's Children*, Rushdie "has largely failed to defend the cause of women". (Mamm294).

From all these voices, the only credible fact emerges is that Salman Rushdie is not a "misogynist, plain and simple". Like any writer, Salman Rushdie's gender portrayal is slippery. Therefore, they are constantly defying critics' attempts to restrict them.

2.1.3. Plot Summary of the Novel

The novel initiated by SaleemSinai the narrator, starts by explaining that he was born at midnight, August 15, 1947, which coincides with the exact moment India gained its independence from British rule. When Saleem approaches to his thirty-first birthday, he believes his body is falling apart, and fearing that his death is near he decided to tell his story. His loyal beloved, Padma serves him as patient, as well as his audience.

Saleem's story begins in Kashmir. Saleem's grandfather doctor Aadam Aziz begins treating the daughter of AbdualGhani called Naseem behind a perforated sheet for three years. Aadam Aziz falls in love with her and marries her then they move to Agra, where he loses his religious faith. Aadam and Naseem have three daughters, Alia, Mumtaz, and Emerald, and two sons, Mustapha and Hanif. Aadam becomes a follower of the optimistic activist Mian Abdullah, who is eventually assassinated due to his anti-Partition attitude. After Abdullah's death, Aadam hides Abdullah's frightened assistant, Nadir Khan, in the basement of his house

despite his wife's objection. While living in the basement, Nadir Khan falls in love with Mumtaz, and his father makes for them a secret wedding. After two years of marriage, Aadam discovers that his daughter is still virgin, which pushed Naseem to force Nadir Khan to divorce her daughter and flees the house after Mumtaz's sister 'Emerald' tells an officer in the Pakistani army called Major Zulfikar who is soon to be her husband about his hiding place in the house. After Mumtaz's divorce from Nadir Khan, she agrees to marry Ahmed Sinai, a young businessman who was before seeking to attract her daughter Alia.

Ahmed Sinai changes Mumtaz's name to Amina and moves to Delhi with her. When Amina becomes pregnant, she goes to a fortune-teller who tells her about her unborn child that he will never be older or younger than his country and declares that he sees two heads, knees and nose. Ahmed and Amina move to Bombay, after a terrorist organization burns his factory. They buy a house from an Englishman called William Methwold who has an estate at the top of the hill. Wee Willie Winky, a poor man who entertains the families of Methwold's Estate, says that his wife 'Vanita' is also pregnant and expecting a child soon. Vanita hides the reality that she made an affair with William Methwold so that the true father of the expecting child is William. Amina and Vanita both go into labor and at exactly midnight each woman delivers a son. Mary Pereira a midwife at the nursing home is preoccupied with thoughts of her radical socialist lover Joseph D'Costa. Wanting to make him proud, she switches the two newborn babies, thereby giving the poor baby a life of privilege and the rich baby a life of poverty. Feeling guilty, Mary Pereira becomes 'Ayah' or nanny of Saleem.

The birth of Saleem coincides with the exact moment India gained its independence, which the press considers as hugely significant. Saleem becomes young and has an enormous cucumber like nose and blue eyes like his grandfather Aadam Aziz. After few years Saleem

has a sister called the Brass Monkey. One day Saleem becomes overwhelmed by the expectations laid on him by the prophecy, and ridiculed by other children for his huge nose he hides himself in washing chest, he sees his mother sitting in the toilet, and she discovers him and punishes him for one day of silence. On that day, and for the first time, he hears a babble of voices in his head and discovers that he has the power of telepathy and can read anyone's thoughts. Saleem begins to read the other children born during the first hour of independence. The 1,001 midnight's children who are reduced to 581 by their tenth birthday and all have magical powers, which vary according to how close to midnight they were born. Saleem discovers that 'Shiva' the boy with whom he was switched at birth, was born with a pair of enormous, powerful knees and a gift for combat.

One day, Saleem loses a portion of his finger in an accident and they take him to the hospital, where his parents realize that according to Saleem's blood type, he is not their biological son. After he leaves the hospital, Saleem is sent to live with his Uncle Hanif and Aunt Pia for a while. After a short time of Saleem's return to his parents; uncle Hanif commits suicide. While the family mourns the death of uncle Hanif, Mary Pereira confesses her guilt of switching Saleem and Shiva at birth. Ahmed Sinai becomes alcoholic, addictive and violent with Amina who decides to move with her children Saleem and the Brass Monkey to Pakistan where her sister Emerald moved too.

After Four years, Amina and the children return back to Bombay after Ahmed suffers a heart failure. India goes to war with China; while Saleem's undergoes a medical operation for his nose, in which he loses his telepathic powers but, in return, gains an incredible sense of smell, with which he can detect emotions.

Saleem and his family move to Pakistan after India's military loss to China. His younger sister becomes known as Jamila Singer; she becomes the most famous singer in Pakistan. During the war between India and Pakistan, Saleem's entire family, except Jamila and himself, die in one day. During the air raids, Saleem gets hit in the head by his grandfather's silver spittoon, which erases all his memory.

After Saleem's memory relieves, he becomes in an animalistic state. He finds himself conscripted into military service, and his sense of smell helps him to be an excellent tracker. Though he doesn't know exactly how he got the idea to join the army, he predicts that Jamila sent him there as a punishment for having fallen in love with her. While in the army, Saleem helps quell the independence movement in Bangladesh. After witnessing a number of atrocities, he flees into the jungle with three of his fellow soldiers. In the jungle of the Sundarbans, he regains all of his memory except the knowledge of his name. After leaving the jungle, Saleem finds Parvati-the-witch, one of midnight's children, who reminds him of his name and helps him escape back to India. He lives with her in the magician's ghetto, along with a snake charmer named Picture Singh.

When Parvati-the-witch is disappointed that Saleem will not marry her, she has an affair with Shiva, who becomes a famous war hero. Things between Parvati and Shiva quickly sour, and she returns to the magicians' ghetto, pregnant and still unmarried. There, the ghetto residents keep away from Parvati until Saleem agrees to marry her. Meanwhile, Indira Gandhi, the prime minister of India, begins a sterilization campaign.

After the birth of Parvati's son, the government destroys the magician's ghetto. Parvati dies while Shiva captures Saleem and brings him to a forced sterilization camp. There,

Saleem divulges the names of the other midnight's children. One by one, the midnight's children are rounded up and sterilized, effectively destroying the powers that so threaten the prime minister. Later Indira Gandhi loses the first election she holds.

The midnight's children, including Saleem are all set free. Saleem goes in search of Parvati's son, Aadam, who has been living with Picture Singh. The three take a trip to Bombay, so Picture Singh can challenge a man who claims to be the world's greatest snake charmer. While in Bombay, Saleem eats some chutney that tastes exactly like the ones his ayah, Mary, used to make. He finds the chutney factory that Mary owns, at which Padma stands guarding the gate. Saleem decides to marry Padma, his lover and listener, on his thirty-first birthday, which falls on the thirty-first anniversary of India's independence.

2.1.4. Theme of Gender in Salman Rushdie's "*Midnight's children*"

Salman Rushdie is one of the most prominent contemporary authors of twenty-first century. Because of his controversial and explicit writings, he catches the attention of all the people around the world. He tried to affect people with his incisive writings. He wrote on many themes such as gender roles, and that is what the present papers discuss or in other words it observe how the gender issues presented in Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* in which masculinity and femininity are important factors in how certain characters function.(35)

I propose first to study the femininity and to be clear, when we talk about femininity we talk about women. So, after generations of purdah—the belief that Muslim and Hindu women should live separately from society, behind a curtain or veil, to stay out of the sight of men—postcolonial women are encouraged to become “modern Indian women” and remove their veils. Uncounted years in the domestic sphere has branded them as weak, demure, and

dependent on men, and the women of *Midnight's Children* struggle against these traditional gender stereotypes. However, as Saleem Sinai, Rushdie's protagonist, tells the story of India's independence, it is clear that the women wield much of the power, in the domestic sphere and beyond. Rushdie's portrayal of women in *Midnight's Children* dispels the common misconception that women are the "gentler sex."

Despite new freedoms, the women of *Midnight's Children* are still treated like second-class citizens in society. When Saleem's grandfather, Aadam Aziz, is first introduced, he is described as a man with a nose so large it "established incontrovertibly his right to be a patriarch." Noses are often a phallic symbol within Rushdie's novel, and the size of Aadam's is a reflection of his supposedly God-given power over women. In addition, Mr. Ghani, a blind landowner and Naseem's father, offers his daughter up to Aadam from behind a perforated sheet. Repeatedly claiming that his daughter is sick, Ghani frequently summons Aadam, a local doctor, to their home and forces him to examine her from behind a purdah. Naseem eventually falls in love with the man on the other side of the sheet, but Aadam's initial visits are a ploy by Ghani to marry his daughter off to a doctor. Presumably, Naseem is not given the agency to pursue a man of her choosing. Furthermore, after Aadam and Naseem are married and she turns into Reverend Mother—an unpleasant and unattractive version of herself in which she rules over her domestic responsibilities with an iron fist—they frequently argue over the best way to raise their family and run their home. When Reverend Mother disagrees with Aadam's firing of their children's religious tutor, she is "dismayed; but it is a father's traditional role, so she could not object." (42). As the patriarch, Aadam assumes complete control of their family and does not allow Reverend Mother to teach the children her religious beliefs. Similarly, when Saleem's mother, Mumtaz, marries Ahmed Sinai, he gives her a new

name. As Ahmed's wife, Mumtaz Aziz becomes AminaSinai, and she has no say in her new identity. Likewise, when Saleem marries Parvati-the-witch, he says, "she took a name which I chose for her out of the repository of my dreams, becoming Laylah." (495). The name Saleem selects for Parvati has meaning in his life, not hers, and when he changes her name, he assumes control of his wife's identity just like his father. As women, neither Mumtaz nor Parvati have agency over their own identities, reflecting the broader maltreatment of women in patriarchal postcolonial India.

However, despite this unfair treatment, the women of *Midnight's Children* have a considerable amount of power in the domestic sphere and even outside the walls of the home. When Aadam Aziz fires the children's religious tutor and Reverend Mother is denied the right to teach her children her beliefs, she says, "I swear no food will come from my kitchen to your lips! No, not one chapati, until you bring the maulvi sahib back and kiss his, whatsitsname, feet!" (43). Aadam has crossed her, and she boldly makes him pay. She refuses to feed him, and in his own stubbornness, he refuses to eat outside the home as well and nearly dies of starvation. It is only after Reverend Mother pretends to be ill that Aadam finally begins to eat, and from her faux sick bed, it is clear that she has won the argument. Aadam again crosses his wife when he allows Nadir Khan, the private secretary of a pro-Indian Muslim politician, to hide in their basement after his employer is assassinated. When Reverend Mother objects to their secret guest, Aadam orders her, "Be silent, woman!" (57). Reverend Mother responds with three years of literal silence, claiming, "Very well. You ask me, whatsitsname, for silence. So not one word, whatsitsname, will pass my lips from now on." In a power display of her own, Reverend Mother refuses to speak.

In another display of power, when Ahmed Sinai's failed business attempt leaves all of his assets frozen and his family broke, a very pregnant Amina sneaks off to the race track and gambles for extra money. While her husband sinks deeper into alcoholism and depression, Amina "fights her husband's fight" and keeps her family afloat, dismantling the idea that a man has to be the head of the household. What's more, at the climax of the story, it is a woman, Indira Gandhi (the corrupt Prime Minister of India whom Saleem refers to as the Widow), who declares a public emergency in an effort to destroy the Midnight Children's Conference—the 1,001 children born with supernatural powers on the eve of India's independence who serve as the metaphorical mirror of the nation—by hunting down each member and sterilizing them in a sinister attempt to control India's overpopulation. While most members are given forced vasectomies or tubal ligations, Saleem, the most powerful of the conference and therefore the most dangerous, is castrated by the Widow to ensure complete and irreversible sterility. Indira Gandhi's power is unmatched throughout the novel.

Eventually, Saleem is emasculated by a powerful woman; yet he is strangely accepting of his sterility. Sexual impotence reoccurs throughout the story, and it seems to matter very little to those it affects, suggesting that sex is not necessarily the most important part of a relationship as far as women, the most powerful, are concerned. After all, Amina spends her life loving an impotent Nadir Khan, and it is only Reverend Mother who openly objects to their sexless marriage. Amina is willing to overlook Nadir's impotence, but Reverend Mother's tradition dictates otherwise. Similarly, Padma, Saleem's companion and audience for the writing of his story, is also accepting of Saleem's impotence. He refers to his sterility in an almost humorous way, but she nevertheless loves him and intends to marry him. Ultimately, the Widow's power does not lie solely in her ability to emasculate Saleem, it lies with her

ability to completely destroy his life. According to Saleem, “women have made me; and also unmade. From Reverend Mother to the Widow, and even beyond.” He speaks of a great “cosmic energy, which is represented as the female organ” and Mother India who “there is no escape from.” Despite blatant sexism, the women of *Midnight’s Children* rule Saleem’s world.

In Indian society the social discrimination against women begins at an early age. Right from the childhood a girl is always counselled to learn to be patient, to adapt, adjust and submit. After all, she was supposed to change her home after marriage and spend a major part of life in her adopted family. In addition, preference for the male child and discrimination in his favor is an everyday experience for a girl. The social safety or lack of it becomes another constraint when she grows up and recognizes that she cannot move around as freely as the boys in the family or neighborhood. The dropout rate of children, and within them girl children, continues to be very high from primary school onwards. A few that reach the portals of colleges and universities face further constraints.

It also presents the upbringing of a Muslim girl in a traditional Muslim society where she has limited exposure to the public life. Her family is like everything for her. Aziz is not even allowed to see his patient even when she falls ill. This has profound impact in the course of the novel.

It is due to this kind of upbringing that Naseem is unable to come out of her veil throughout her life. For her, not covering her ankles and feet is nakedness. She does not endorse her husband’s idea that the religious teachers’ preaching her daughters to hate Hindus, Buddhists and other vegetarians is not a good idea. When India is divided into three parts, she

wants to go to Pakistan quite against her husband's wish. In Pakistan she runs a profitable profession of running a petrol Bunk.

Aziz's mother is also another notable character here. Though she never comes out of her veil throughout her life, when her husband has a stroke, she gains courage and runs a gemstone business for feeding both her husband and her son. Now it is her husband who "sat hidden behind the veil which the stroke had dropped over his brain" (7)

When observing the Rushdie women characters in the novel, they seem stronger than their male counterparts. It is Naseem who literally controls the whole of the family affairs and even all the servants and people are afraid of her. Aziz's mother feeds the whole family. Pia is able to run a profitable business of running a petrol bunk, Amina Sinai on the one hand, secretly maintains an affair with Nadir Khan, the Humming bird but at the same time she remains committed to her husband. She begins loving her husband bit by bit. She carefully transforms her husband bit by bit to make him an exact replica of her ex-lover Nadir Khan. At the time of need, her courage comes to the fore. When Lifafa Das is nearly killed by the Muslim people, she protects him and challenges them that they should kill her before killing him and she has sheltered Lifafa Das. Her secularism is commendable. Jamila, Saleem's sister becomes a famous singer in Pakistan. It is she who plans to send Saleem to Cutia unit of the Pakistan's army to get rid of him. Mary Pereira in order to get admiration from her lover, changes the two babies and Saleem the baby born as a result of the relationship between Methwold and Vanita gets the advantage of the richness and Shiva, the son of the rich Sinais is doomed the life of a poor.

We talk previously about the femininity that covers some terms like women, girl, daughter, mother, and so on. The novel could easily have passed for a feminist epic of powerful women and the men who could no longer hold the strings of a flailing patriarchy. We cannot talk about femininity without talking about masculinity because Rushdie used them together in his novel *Midnight's children*. The interest to explore the representation of masculinity in Rushdie's work is largely due to consistent patterns in the author's male characterizations. Rushdie's 'men' are repeatedly seen in various states of crisis, whether physical, psychological, mental or emotional. This is seen in *Midnight Children's* Saleem Sinai, Aadam Aziz and Ahmed Sinai, *Midnight's Children* begins its disjointed narrative with an image of Saleem's 'crumbling, over-used body'. As he struggles through the novel, crushed by events and dominant characters, the narrative repeatedly refers to the main character's mysterious physical ailment. Saleem's physical state, 'crumbling' to pieces, mirrors the fractures in his mental and emotional state. His narrative is disjointed, consisting of broken passages and irregular memories, and constantly blurring fact and fiction. His neurotic reactions while recounting crucial moments of his life (the revelation of his parenthood, the realization of his incestuous feelings towards his sister) even reflect a level of schizophrenic psychosis. Schizophrenia can also be seen in his internal construction of the "Midnight's children conference" itself:

Disjointedness or "fractures" are not the only conditions ailing the men in *Midnight's Children*. Recounting the story of his grandfather and his father, Saleem exposes 'where the curse begins already', where a process of alienation of the men of his family can also be seen to begin. The (false) genealogy linking Aadam Aziz, Ahmed Sinai and Saleem itself isolates each of these men in terms of lineage, contributing to their alienation. Aadam bears no sons;

Ahmed's "son" Saleem is not really his own, and Saleem can have no children. The grounding of the crisis in genealogy, and particularly in the male line suggests that alienation in this novel is of a male nature. Indeed, the genealogy of the *Midnight's Children* family saga follows a female line from Naseem to Amina, with even the newborn Aadam Sinai being not Saleem's son, but the child of Parvati.

Individually, each of these men is pushed deeper and further into isolation, alienated from the world around them. Aadam relinquishes patriarchal power to his formidable wife – the Reverend Mother dominates the household, exerting her will by, at one point, vowing silence, at another starving him, thus causing further emasculation in Aadam:

If Aadam is alienated from his family and his religious origins, Ahmed Sinai is also seen to withdraw from his estranged wife into alcohol. Also incapable of personifying the patriarch (which, ironically, is seen to emerge in Amina), Ahmed grows increasingly reclusive as Amina's love for Nadir Khan virtually fills his place in the house. Further rebuked as Amina effectively seems to choose her son over him, Ahmed's moral weakness culminates in his defeat to alcoholism and the neurotic delusional fear of his "djinns", which are uncannily similar to Saleem's own imaginings of the *Midnight's Children*.

As for Saleem, it seems he is doomed to alienation even before he is born – his alienation already caused by the twists and turns of his lineage. While the reader begins the narrative expecting the Ahmed-Alia couple to pursue the Sinai family name, Alia's exit and Amina's entry begin to suggest that Saleem's lineage is unclear. Later, he is revealed as 'an Anglo!', the real product of the affair between Vanita and William Methwold. With no bond linking him to his "father", Saleem's alienation and rootlessness are amplified by multiple, but absent

and tragically flawed father figures (Methwold, Winkie and Joseph D'Costa). Emasculated patriarchy thus trickles down from Aadam Aziz to Ahmed Sinai to Saleem himself – impotence or vasectomy, Saleem is the end of his own line. In a sadistic twist of emasculation and isolation, Parvati and Shiva's son will be named for Saleem's "father" and "grandfather".

The narrative of *Midnight's Children* is itself directed by Padma, in whom Saleem finds not only the strength to take him through his tales, but who offers to marry him in the final chapter and represents his ultimate hope of salvation. The gender-reversal is evident – Padma's "masculinity" is matched by Saleem's "feminine" hysteria and frailty:

In one of Rushdie's favorite metaphors of doubleness, Shiva presents himself as Saleem's nemesis, his "other self". 'Major' Shiva, the 'terrifying figure of the war-hero with lethal knees' (462), embodies the physical strength of the hero, knows no crisis of roots and fathers countless children. His hyper masculine sexuality is directly opposed to Saleem's impotence, and as the biological father of Aadam Sinai, triumphs over Saleem's weakness and inadequacy.

But neither Shiva's hypermasculinity, nor Saleem's emasculation is essential to either's "nature": an essentialist interpretation of the contrast as signifying "Hindu hypermasculinity" triumphing over "Muslim emasculation" or vice versa, for example, is invalidated by the fact that both characters are hybridised by the mix of their birth and their social identity. Who of the two is the "real" Muslim and who the "real" Hindu (or "Anglo"-Hindu) is deliberately left ambiguous, with the answer eventually proving immaterial. Rather, the disparity between the two forms of masculinity is seen to emerge from the class conditions of each character: Shiva

is the son of Vanita and Wee Willie Winkie, both lower-class former employees of the Methwold Estate, while Saleem is of the elite bourgeoisie.

It appears then, that if colonialism affects the colonized male psyche, as described by Fanon and represented in *Midnight's Children*, these effects are localized in the interaction between colonial power and the national bourgeoisie respectively, and exclude the non-elite classes. The subjects of "native" patriarchal dominance, symbolized by Ahmed Sinai and the men of the bourgeois 'educated classes', find themselves on the losing side of a battle of dominant masculinity against the colonial power represented by William Methwold – a defeat hastily conceded. Fanon's identification of the psychological internalization of colonial influences and the creation of "Macaulay's" children is significant. They suggest causal factors for the alienation, emasculation and inadequacy of "Midnight's Men".

Conclusion

To conclude, in this section we dealt with the biography of the writer Salman Rushdie in brief, Rushdie and feminism and a plot summary of the novel. Then, we discussed the theme of gender. By which we deduce that most of Postcolonial writers used to show the weakness of the women and how is dominated by men by contrast Salman Rushdie shows the struggle of women against behaviors and traditions that offended them. *Midnight's Children* offers a loss of patriarchal power. Then, at the end of the novel, Saleem suggests the hopes of a re-empowered native Indian masculinity lie in the future generations, embodied by his son, Aadam Sinai

Section Two: Characterization of Male and Female Characters

2.2.1. characters

Midnight's Children trilogy is remarkably considered a special piece of literary work with its long narrative, many major events and sheer number of characters, irrespective of whether these characters are main characters or secondary ones. The author, through the narrator Saleem Sinai, describes different forms of characters in different periods of times as they are introduced in the period of British rule, independence and post-independence. Namely, he gives an account of their early childhood, adolescence and adulthood. In this manner, he describes them from physiological, psychological, sociological, religious and humanely aspects, meaning the way their physical characteristics affect how they are perceived in their society, the essence of their relationships with themselves, their partners, their neighborhood, their religion and their business partners.

The main characters which play distinguishing roles could be: Saleem Sinai, Padma, Aadam Aziz, Naseem Ghani, Mumtaz/Amina Aziz, Ahmed Sinai, Shiva, Mary Pereira, Parvati-The-Witch/ Laylah Sinai, Brass Monkey/Jamila the singer, Indira Gandhi, The Widow, along with secondary characters which play moderately important roles: Aadam Aziz's mother/father, Emerald Aziz, Alia Aziz, The Hummingbird, Nadir Khan, William Methwold, Vanita, Wee Willie Winkie, Commander Sabarmati, General Zulfikar, Zafar Zulfikar, Hanif Aziz, Mustapha Aziz, Pia, Homi Catrack, The Picture-Singh, etc. Furthermore, he, out of 1001 *Midnight's children*, focused only on three: Saleem, Shiva and Parvati the Witch, while at the same time introducing mysterious characters like Tai the fisherman and Dr. Narlikar's women.

Strikingly, he changes the names of some characters, gives other characters nicknames and presents some characters sporadically in narrative.

2.2.2. The Images of Female Characters

2.2.2.1. His Mother

She is the mother of Aadam Aziz. She is conservative independent Kashmiri woman. After her husband experiences a stroke making him disabled, gives her son's studies and family utmost importance, she strongly takes over his small gemstone business selling turquoise, rubies and diamonds. Her removal of the Purdah and the direct contact with the customers were a hard pill to swallow, she says:" how life does turn out. For so many years even my ankles were a secret, and now I must be stared at by strange persons who are not even my family members"(Rushdie 12). On the ground of this she suffers from rashes, blotches and headache; nevertheless, she continues to suffer and work in the gemstone shop unveiled saying:"who would buy a turquoise from a woman hidden inside a black hood? It is a question of establishing trust. So they must look at me; and I must get pains and boils"(Rushdie 14).

Feeling jealous and resentful, she objects Aadam visits to examine Mr. Ghani's daughter, Naseem, thinking she is a sickly pampered girl who lacks a mother figure in her life and Mr. Ghani thinks of her son as a good catch only due to his medical career. Though she shortly followed her husband in 1918, she perceives his death as a liberation from all her duties and responsibilities.

2.2.2.2. Naseem Aziz

She is the daughter of Mr. Ghani, the wife of Aadam Aziz, the mother of five children: Alia, Mumtaz /Amina, Emerald, Hanif and Mustapha and the grandmother of SaleemSinai. She goes by the name Reverend Mother. She is a decent and traditional Kashmiri woman. This is why she is examined for four years of illnesses through a hole in a sheet by the doctor Aadam Aziz at her house where she first meets him. The day the World War ends Naseem and

Aadam get to see each other for the first time, Saleem tells that Aadam saw" a soft face that was not ugly at all, a cushioned setting for her glittering, gemstone eyes, which were brown flecks of gold: tiger's eyes. Doctor Aziz's fall was complete"(Rushdie 21). They move from Kashmir to Agra as a husband and a wife.

Reverend Mother has a defensive and stern personality. For example, when Aadam once brings to her attention that she mistakes red medicine for blood she retorts "You do it on purpose to make me look stupid. I am not stupid. I have read several books"(Rushdie 29). She becomes bitter of her husband when he burns her Purdah and forces her to remove it. In addition to her abhorrence to politics and photography, she is fanatic where religion is concerned, and makes a habit of pouring her feelings in the food she cooks and entering her daughters' and husband's dreams.

She never misses a chance to prove herself right or to sail into battle with her husband; feeling victorious when Aadam visits Rani of Cooch Naheen to discuss politics matters, taking an oath to not serve him food from her kitchen unless he apologises to her children's muslim tutor and practicing the silent treatment for three years when Aadam covers up Nadir Khan. The wellbeing of her children and grandsons, though she dislikes her daughter's black skin, her kitchen and pantry are her top priority. Over the years, she gets old and too heavy with two witch moles as well as stronger while her husband declines. Saleem tells" Reverend Mother had grown so wide that armchairs, though soft, groaned beneath her weight" (Rushdie 136).

Despite disliking Pia at first for her acting career, when her husband dies Naseem and Pia move to Pakistan in mid-1964. She never grieves or mentions him. They invest in a successful

petrol pump near Rawalpindi-Lahore where they serve pink Kashmiri tea. This has always been Naseem's dream.

When the novel comes to an end she becomes too wide, prematurely old, proud and curiously interested in the life of her customers as well as advising them before she dies in a bomb explosion. Saleem narrates "The first landed on the bungalow in which my grandmother Naseem Aziz and my aunty Pia were hiding under a table"(Rushdie 339).

2.2.2.3. Rani of Cooch Naheen

She is a mysterious wealthy muslim lady and a loyal friend of Aadam Aziz. When his wife swears that she is not to serve Aadam food, she sends moderators to convince her of taking back her oath. She has a kind personality. Rani and Aadam share a penchant for politics, for this reason he pays her a visit everytime he wishes to discuss political matters. She is the funder of The Hummingbird's party. She loathes The Muslim League, the opposition party, due to its call for India partition. She considers herself a "hapless victim" to her cross-cultural issues.

When the party she funds falls, she suffers for years from an illness that makes her skin lighter in colour. She helps Aadam's daughter and Nadir Khan to marry offering them a spittoon as a wedding gift before she dies in 1945 looking "sheetly-white that it was difficult to see her against the bed-clothes "(Rushdie 53).

2.2.2.4. Padma

She is the fiancée of SaleemSinai. Her mother named her after the Lotus Goddess. She has a strong and straightforward personality. She is a plump, muscular lady with hirsute forearms. She is generous and cheerful. She works for Mary Pereira's pickle factory where she meets

Saleem. She becomes the caregiver of Saleem: she takes care of his poor health, she cooks meals for him and acts as a source of comfort, he says:" Padma would know what I mean"(Rushdie 156). She is an illiterate and superstitious person, this is why she hates the fact that she does not know what other people know.

Saleem considers her as a "consolation for my last days". She is Saleem's only listener and audience. Padma thoroughly shows interest in SaleemSinai's narration of his life story. She interrupts his storytelling to question his actions and relationships with others, other people's behaviors, to comment on people's relationships with one another, the unfolding of events and to guess what is about to happen. She dislikes persons, sympathizes with some and empathizes with others. Saleem recounts: 'O, mister, this war tamasha, kills the best and leaves the rest!' Looking as though hordes of snails have recently crawled down from her reddened eyes, leaving their glutinous shiny trails upon her face, Padma mourns my bomb-flattened clan. I remain dry-eyed as usual (Rushdie 342).

She often doubts his story and reliability, Saleem tells:" The midnight's children shook even Padma's faith in my narrative"(Rushdie 211). Even though he is unmanned, she stays loyal and faithful to him as well as proposing to him.

2.2.2.5 Mumtaz / AminaSinai

She is the second daughter of Aadam and Naseem Aziz and the supposed mother of Saleem. She is one of the three bright lights in town. She has a close relationship with her father than with her mother due to her dark luminous skin resembling a South Indian fisherwoman. Saleemsays that:"AndMumtaz, who had come out of her mother's womb black as midnight? Mumtaz was never brilliant; not as beautiful as Emerald; but she was good, and

dutiful, and alone"(Rushdie 49). He adds:"Her daughter Mumtaz, the blackie whom she had never been able to love because of her skin"(Rushdie 49). She is well educated, good-hearted and loving lady. Her distinctive characteristics are assiduity, nobility and forbearance. For example, she defends the Hindu boy Laffa Das when a group of fanatic Muslims attack him.

She married twice. Though her first marriage to Nadir Khan was her best time in her life, she forcibly leaves him for children. She gets married for the second time to Mr. Ahmed Sinai who he changes her name to Amina. Ahmed was the supposed fiancé of her sister Alia. She tries to train herself to love him because she is unable to forget Nadir. She has two children with him: Saleem and The Brass Monkey (Jamila) in Bombay. As a wife, even though she resumes meeting Nadir in a café for some time but stops out of fear after the Sabarmati's incident, she lives up to the society expectations of her in which she is diligent, determined and runs her house perfectly, in Saleem's words:

My mother was by nature the most meticulous person on earth. Assiduously, she arranged flowers in the corridors and rooms of the Delhi house; carpets were selected with infinite care. She could spend twenty-five minutes worrying at the positioning of a chair. By the time she'd finished with her home-making, adding tiny touches here, making fractional alterations there, Ahmed Sinai found his orphan's dwelling transformed into something gentle and loving(Rushdie 61).

She is driven by the sense of doing what must be done. This is why she bets secretly on horse racing for some time when her husband faces financial distress and returns from Pakistan to India when he suffers a heart attack to take care of him. She suffers from verrucas due to the house chores and the rebellion of her daughter The Brass Monkey.

As a mother, she is devoted and loving. She may favor in treatment her son Saleem over her daughter because of his historical birth. She adopts the silence punishment as a

disciplinary method because she hates striking her children. She is jealous of the relationship between Saleem and his nanny Mary Pereira; she feels threatened by it. When she discovers the truth of her supposed son she hesitates at first but later she continues to cherish him. Her neighbors, Lila Sabarmati and Nussie Ibrahim, talk with her about their troubles and they solicit for advice.

When the story comes to an end, she gets pregnant for the third time and gets prematurely old. She suffers from her sister's cooking and horrific nightmares. She dies at the age of forty-two in a bomb explosion.

2.2.2.6. Mary Pereira

She is the nanny of Saleem. She is an Indian Christian revert. She is a small and plump woman from Goa. At the time she works as a midwife in Dr. Narlikar's Nursing home she changes the name tags of Saleem and Shiva. She did this to show Joseph D'Costa that she shares his cause and to win his love, when her sister Alice runs off with him. She says: "No, Father, I swear to God, I don't know what I won't do to get me back that man" (Rusdie 104), and "Love me, Joseph!" (Rushdie 116). She immediately falls prey to the remorse and guilt of her crime. She suggests to be Saleem's nanny as an expiation of her sin.

Mary is valued and respected in the Sinai's house by everyone except Musa the servant. Musa sees Mary as a rival and a threat because she enjoys many privileges. She cooks chutney perfectly. When she cooks she pours emotions of guilt and remorse in her cooking. Saleem sees her as a second mother. She cares for him beautifully; cooks, nurtures, bathes him, sings for him and gives him advice. She too considers him her child, she says: "Look: here's my own big son" (Rushdie 125). She is lovely, tolerant and merciful lady. She forgives her sister and

secures her a job at the Sinai's. During her stay at the Sinai's, she could not get rid of her guilt nor confess her crime to them. On the ground of this, she suffers recurring nightmares, paranoia and insomnia. She runs to Goa when she confesses, she says:

I am a poor woman, sahib, one mistake, one mistake in so many years, not jaikhana sahib, I will go, eleven years I gave but I will go now, sahib, only this is a good boy, sahib, you must not send him, sahib, after eleven years he is your son...O, you boy with your face like the sun is coming out, O Saleem my piece-of-the-moon, you must know that your father was Winkie and your mother is also dead..and Mary ran out of the room(Rushdie 279).

She grows to be an independent rich woman who owns a pickle factory with the help of her sister Alice and Narlikar's women. She changes her name to Mrs. Braganza. Even though she becomes rich, she remains modest and humble. For example, she still sleeps on the floor instead of beds. She gets old and hands the pickle's factory over to Saleem. She becomes the nanny of AadamSinai.

2.2.2.7. Alia Aziz

She is the eldest daughter of Naseem and Aadam Aziz. She is one of the three bright lights in town. She moves to Pakistan after India gains its Independence where she teaches in a fine college, before she is promoted to be a headmistress. She settles in Karachi. She is a fat and unmarried lady. She is an independent, studious, knowledgeable and clever woman. She is the wisest child in the Aziz family. She provides the family with solutions whenever required. Her achievements make her parents proud.

Alia holds grudges for twenty-five years when Ahmed Sinai chooses her sister, Amina, over her, she says in her diary:"Who wants to get landed with this marrying business? Not me; never; no"(Rushdie 58). She bitterly sends her nephew and niece children clothes filled with

jealousy and envy. When her sister's family moves to Pakistan, she welcomes them in her house. She sees this as an opportunity to take her vengeance. This is why Saleem dislikes her. She pours her emotions of hypocrisy, envy, jealousy and revenge in the food she makes to make them suffer. She dies in a bomb explosion.

2.2.2.8 Vanita

She is the unfaithful wife of the poor Wee Willie Winkie. She is the supposed mother of Shiva and the real mother of Saleem. She commits adultery with Mr. Methwold. She suffers twenty-four-hour labor before she dies three minutes past midnight due to Post-partum haemorrhage.

2.2.2.9. Emerald Aziz

She is the youngest daughter of Aadam and Naseem Aziz, the mother of Zafar and Saleem's maternal aunt. She is the brightest of the three bright lights in town. She is pretty, nightly and elegant lady. Emerald possesses captivating and fascinating eyes in comparison to her sisters. She has a selfish and snobbish personality. She shows interest in Major Zulfikar because of his wealth, position and appearance. Thus, she is gold digger and ambitious.

She reports Nadir Khan to Major Zulfikar because she considers him a troublemaker plumpie and coward. She is insensitive person. This shows when she asks her newly divorced sister to cheer up for her wedding to Zulfikar because her sadness seems rude to Emerald. Moreover, as a wife to Zulfikar she enjoys a life of many privileges. As a family, due to military atmosphere, they share a house devoid of family warmth and spirit, Saleem tells: "The furniture was expensive and surprisingly beautiful; Emerald could not be faulted on her taste. It was a dull, lifeless house, for all its military airs; even the goldfish in the tank set in

the dining-room wall seemed to bubble listlessly; perhaps its most interesting inhabitant was not even human"(Rushdie 284).

When she welcomes her sister's family in Pakistan, she does not miss a chance to boast about her husband's status, success and reputation; she gives utmost importance to the family name. At the time she is to be exiled to England when her son kills his father, she dies in a bomb explosion.

2.2.2.10. JamilaSinai

She is the second child of Ahmed and AminaSinai and the supposed sister of Saleem. During her childhood, she is nicknamed the Brass Monkey due to her thick thatch of red-gold hair. She is a beautiful girl. She is a tough tomboy in character. She possesses an energetic, stubborn and fiery personality. Saleem thinks that her troublemaker and attention seeking attitude is because he is the family's only center of attention; feeling left out. She makes a habit of doing unpleasant acts: burns people's shoes and her father's books, has poor table manners, breaks the household windows, vases and plates, and stains expensive Persian rugs. She is careless to the punishments and the threats given by her mother; on the contrary, she welcomes and ignores them. Mary Pereira comments on The Brass Monkey behaviors:"That one! That Monkey! Should have been born with four legs!"(Rushdie 149)., and Saleem adds :

Possessed by her need to place herself at the center of events, even of unpleasant ones (she was my sister, after all; but no prime minister wrote letters to her, no sadhus watched her from their places under garden taps; unpropheised, un-photographed, her life was a struggle from the start), she carried her war into the world of footwear hoping, perhaps, that by burning our shoes she would make us stand still long enough to notice that she was there... she made no attempt at concealing her crimes(Rushdie 148).

She sees her brother Saleem as an ally. During the cat invasion to the Methwold Estates, she gets into fight with Evelyn for killing them. This shows that despite her violent, mischievous and noisy behaviors, she has a soft spot for animals. She speaks to them and defends them.

She refuses any type of affection from others, and when they do, she makes an example of them. For example, when Sonny declares his affection for her, she punishes him by making up stories about him and attacking him. Furthermore, she makes a lot of troubles and shows interest in Christianity when the truth of Saleem is revealed because she becomes her parents focus of attention.

She becomes a famous and loved singer with the help of Major AlauddinLatif when she moves to Pakistan with her family. She becomes Jamila Singer and "The Angel of Pakistan", and "the Voice of Pakistan". Jamila hides her Christian faith from others. Though she sings through silky burqa by the order of Latif, she grows to be a good-natured girl and give up her rebellious behavior, Saleemsays:"she was growing out of scrawny tomboy youth into a slender, slant-eyed, golden-skinned beauty whose hair was nearly long enough to sit on; even her nose looked good"(Rushdie 312).

When Saleem declares his affection for his not-real-sister, she ignores him completely. She disappears by seeking refuge in a convent in Karachi during the war.

2.2.2.11 Lila Sabarmati

She is the unfaithful wife of Commander Sabarmati. She is a resident of the Methwold Estate. She is the mother of two sons. Eyelice and Hairoil. She is pretty lady who has an expensive elegant taste. She hates dogs and loves playing piano all day. She commits adultery

with HomiCatrack. Saleem dislikes her due to her infidelity. When her husband discovers this, with the help of Saleem, he shoots them both, causing the death of HomiCatrack. Furthermore, she vanishes from their lives after she is denied custody of her sons.

2.2.2.12. Evelyn Lilith Burns

She is an American girl who moves to India with her widowed father on the New Year's Day in 1957. She represents the foreigners who come to India after it gains its Independence. She lives two years in Noor Ville near the Methwold Estate. She goes by the name Evie. She is six months older than Saleem; she was his first love. Saleem describes her as: "hair was made of scarecrow straw, her skin was peppered with freckles and her teeth lived in a mental cage"(Rushdie 179).

Evelyn is imperious and hostile person. She has great bicycle skills which she tends to show it off in front of the Methwold Estate children. She loves eating cakes and ice-cream. She possesses a Daisy air-pistol. When she first meets the kids of Methwold Estate she declares herself their boss, she says: "From now on, there's a new big chief around here. Okay, Indians? Any arguments?"(Rushdie 181). This means that she has a dictatorship, violent and cruel personality. She is feared by every kid in the neighborhood. Even though she dislikes Saleem, mocks him for his physical appearance and kicks him out of the gang, he often tries to capture her attention. She feels herself superior than the Indian children. Her father sends her back to America when she gets into a fight with the Brass Monkey for killing the cats with her pistol; she was thrown in the dirt and got her braces and dominion broken.

In America, she knifes an old lady when she scolds her for assaulting a cat, as a revenge to The Brass Monkey, and she is sent to Reform School.

2.2.2.13. Parvati the Witch

She is one of the Midnight's Children and the daughter of an old conjurer from Delhi. She was born seven seconds after Midnight on August 15th. She lives in an old slum called the magicians' ghetto. She is gifted the powers of true adept, the illuminatus, the genuine gifts of conjuration and sorcery. She has saucer eyes and long hair. Parvati is powerful, energetic and loyal girl. When she sets her mind to something nobody could change her mind. She sees the Picture-Singh as a father figure.

Saleem considers her his "fondest supporter for so long". When she accidentally finds and saves Saleem's life, she decides to never leave him. This is why she becomes pregnant by putting a spell on Shiva, forcing Saleem to save her honor by marrying her, Saleem tells: "This is how it came about: how Parvati took her destiny into her own hands" (Rushdie 402). As a married woman she becomes Laylah Sinai. She dies in The Widow's state of emergency shortly after she gives birth to a baby boy named Aadam Sinai.

2.2.2.14. Pia Aziz

She is the unfaithful wife of Hanif Aziz and the daughter-in-law of Naseem Aziz. She is a famous and talented actress. They live in a small apartment on the Marine Drive. She is very pretty, exquisite and divine lady. She is open-minded and out-going person. Everyone thinks that her face is her fortune. Moreover, everybody cherishes her except her mother-in-law. Naseem dislikes her because of her acting career, and because of her constant criticism; Pia too does not like her.

She is good-hearted and affectionate. For example, she treats Saleem like a son she has never had when he comes to stay in her house. When her and her husband's popularity

declines, she urges her husband to stop writing about social problems because they are boring, and instead he should switch to writing different modern scripts. She commits adultery with HomiCatrack before he is shot by Commander Sabarmati.

After her husband commits suicide, she and her mother-in-law invest in a petrol pump after their immigration to Pakistan.

2.2.2.15. ZohraSinai

She is the distant cousin of Ahmed Sinai. She makes racist remarks about Amina's dark skin. She is racist and materialistic lady. She hopes that her cousin's children would come to have fair skin so they marry her children, and to have large dowry in the process to make her rich. She and her husband die in a bomb explosion in Amritsar.

2.2.2.16. Alice Pereira

She is the younger sister of Mary Pereira. She is a beautiful and frivolous woman. She becomes the secretary of Ahmed Sinai with the help of her sister, after she is dumped by her sister's companion Joseph D'Costa. She is terribly tolerant of Ahmed's poor behavior. When Mary forgives her for her betrayal, she sees this as a second chance and tries to right her wrongs. When she leaves Ahmed to work for Dr. Narlikar's women, she helps her sister Mary to become rich by recommending her cooking to business women. Saleem tells: "I told them, nobody makes achar-chutney like our Mary," Alice had said, with perfect accuracy, "because she puts her feelings inside them." So Alice turned out to be a good girl in the end" (Rushdie 454). She becomes Mrs. Fernandes and the responsible for Finances.

2.2.2.17. The Widow's Hand

She is a beautiful woman who wears black and green patterned chiffon, green glasses and black shoes. She lives a double life. In public, she engages in social work after she was the owner of a jewellery boutique. In private, she is the assistant of The Widow, Indira Gandhi, in which she is in charge of the sterilization program applied to Midnight's Children during the state of emergency. Midnight's Children fear her, including Saleem. This means that she is psycho, dangerous and a hypocrite woman. She has an evil and criminal spirit.

2.2.2.18. IlseLubin

She is the German friend of Aadam Aziz during his study in Germany. She is an anarchist and racist lady. She mocks at Aadam Aziz for following a religion. When she comes to India, she commits suicide in Dal Lake after her husband is killed by the army in Germany.

2.2.2.19. Nussie Ibrahim

She is a resident of the Methwold Estate. She is married to Ismail Ibrahim and the mother of Sonny Ibrahim. She is called Nussie-the-duck due to her walking behavior. She sees her son and Saleem as rivals.

2.2.2.20. Masha Miovic

She is a fourteen years old girl. She is a student at Walsingham school for girls on Nepean Sea Road and a champion breaststroker swimmer. She is a beautiful girl with golden hair and a beautiful voice. She is the friend of the Brass Monkey and Saleem's beloved.

2.2.2.21. The Widow

She is the prime minister of India, nicknamed The widow. She is a representation of the true historical figure Indira Gandhi. She has long arms with fingernails sharp and polished

black, her hair has center-parting; green on the left and black on the right. She is powerful, criminal and evil woman. She is responsible for the midnight's children torture.

In 1977, she declares the state of emergency; she sees the midnight's children as a threat to her power, as a result of which she kidnaps them and applies a sterilization program on them with the help of The Widow's Hand and Shiva. Midnight's Children fear and detest her. The Indian public is displeased with her abuse of power, misconduct and corruption. This means that she has an insensitive, heartless and psycho personality.

2.2.2.22. Narlikar's Women

They are the mysterious heirs of Dr.Narlikar. They are business women who buy and turn the Methwold Estate into a pink skyscraper. They are successful, independent, determined and strong women. They represent the modern and civilised Indian women. Ahmed Sinai sees them as a reminder that "his position is hopeless" after his business partner Dr. Narlikar dies. With their employee's, Alice, recommendation, they help in financing Mary Pereira's pickle factory.

2.2.2.23. Sonia Aziz

She is the wife of Mustapha Aziz. She is Indian Irani woman. Sonia and her children have distant relationship with her husband's family. Her dislike of Saleem comes as a result of her great jealousy of his historical birth and the attention it has got him. She considers Saleem a traitor when he fights by the side of the Pakistani Army and refuses to serve him food.

2.2.3. Images of Male Characters

2.2.3.1. SaleemSinai

SaleemSinai is the protagonist as well as the narrator of the novel; he is one of the midnight children who his birth coincides with the independence of India, as all the midnight's children who have great talents, Saleem has the powers of telepathy and an unnatural acute sense of smell so that he can find the other midnight children and form the midnight's children's conference. In his birth he is switched by Mary Pereira with another boy called Shiva in which Saleem's life changed to be raised in prosperous family in Bombay.

He has great feeling, love, sympathy, compassion and lover of mankind. Saleem tells his story when his body started to fall apart in which he describes his individual life as well as the history of postcolonial India. Saleem faces the harsh realities of life and becomes a victim of society as a man. Saleem has four possible fathers, Ahmed Sinai, Nadir Khan, Wee Willie Winkie and Methwold and three presumed mothers Vanita, Amina and the ayah Mary Pereira. So that can be understood how he struggles through the novel, crushed by events and dominant characters. He suffers a lot due to the death of his parents in the India Pakistani war. He describes the inhumanity and cruelty shown by the soldiers of the respective countries. Saleem accounts this event to Padma:

And while we drove through city streets Shaheed looked out of windows and saw things that weren't-couldn't- have-been true: soldiers entering women's hostel without knocking; women, dragged into the street, were also entered, and again nobody troubled to knock. And newspaper offices, burning with the dirty yellow black smoke of cheap gutter news print, and the offices of the trade unions smashed to the ground, and roadside ditches filling up with people who were not merely asleep-bare chests were seen, and the hollow pimples of bullet-holes. (497)

Saleem's character is associated with his audience, caretaker and beloved Padma who insisted a lot of times to be married with him and finally get what she wants after Saleem

surrenders to her demand which is clear in the last pages when Mary Pereira asked him “why are you married so sudden? Because Padma wants. No, she is not in trouble” (559). And before Padma he is asked by Picture Singh to marry Parvati the witch but he rejected pretending with his impotence. Saleem’s submission to marry Padma contradicts the opinion that the dominance is always with males.

2.2.3.2. Shiva

Shiva is also one of the midnight’s children, he is the son of Vanita, the wife of Wee WillieWinkie, the poor Hindu low-caste clown and street entertainer who earns a living by singing for the wealthy families of Methwold’s Estate, but Shiva’s real parents are Ahmed Sinai and Anina because heis switched with Saleem by Mary Pereira as stated by Saleem: “Thanks to the crime of Mary Pereira, I became the chosen child of midnight, whose parents were not his parents, whose son would not be his own ... Mary took the child of my mother’s womb, who was not to be her son” (157)

Shiva as Saleem and the other midnight’s children enjoy with talent of powerful knees and a gifted warrior. The guilt of Mary Pereira of switching the two boys Shiva and Saleem resulted Shiva gets the poor parents and deprived him from good life. The extreme poverty and the forces of history made from him a violent character.

In 1957’s Bombay election Shiva and his gang threaten the voters and keep them away on the Election Day. Shiva promoted to major and this step opens many chances for him. The rumors about his heroism elevated him both in military rank and social status and he becomes lover of many girls as Parvati-the-witch.

2.2.3.3. Aadam Aziz

Aadam Aziz is the grandfather of Saleem. He falls in love and gets married to Naseem the grandmother of Saleem in a strange way, after treating her behind a perforated sheet as he agreed with her father when she is sick. He got many children with her; three daughters Mumtaz, Emerald and Alia, and two boys Mustapha and Hanif. Aadam Aziz takes the responsibility of teaching his children. He teaches them foreign languages and instills in them his liberal and progressive ideas.

Aadam Aziz is a western educated who rejects the ancestral ways in favor of modernity. He spends five years in Germany to study medicine. The impact of Western civilization induces in him anti-religious thoughts after his return from Europe; he abandons his Indian and Muslim faith due to his association with the anarchist friends. He disagrees with his wife in putting the purdah and he calls his wife to forget her traditional inhibitions in favor of modernity as he advises her, "Forget about being a good Kashmiri girl, Start thinking about being a modern Indian woman" (39).

He is the patriarch of the family. Although the objection of his wife Naseem to give shelter to a man in a house full of young unmarried girls, he agrees to marry his daughter Mumtaz to Nadir Khan, which proves that Dr. Aziz has the complete control over the house.

2.2.3.4. Ahmed Sinai

Ahmed Sinai is the second husband of Amina, he falls in love with her after her divorce from her first husband, he is considered as the supposed father of Saleem after switching him with Shiva. He is a smart leather-cloth businessman. He renamed Mumtaz to Amina after getting married to her.

Ahmed Sinai's life is full of troubles. The Reverend Mother does not like him from the beginning, and Amina too continues to pine over her first husband. After the birth of Saleem his wife loses interest in him which made him alcoholic addictive and his behaviors changed into unmoral; due to these foul practices his business declined. His relationship with his children Saleem and the Brass Monkey is not good; as well as their mother deprives him from seeing them for four years when she moves with them to Pakistan without him.

Ahmed's relationship with his family improves after he suffers a cardiac complication, but for most of the story he alienates himself from his family. He died after moving to Pakistan in an air-raid during the Indo-Pakistani War.

2.2.3.5. Nadir khan

He is the first husband of Mumtaz, he is known with his 'rhymless poet', he is the personal secretary of the Hummingbird or 'Main Abdullah'. He is known as coward because after the assassination of Main Abdullah, Nadir Khan escapes frightened to Aadam Aziz who agrees to hide him in the basement of his house where Nadir khan falls in love with his daughter Mumtaz, and Aadam Aziz makes a secret wedding for them. After two years Naseem discovers that her daughter is still virgin then she breaks her silence and berates her husband and Nadir, then Nadir willingly divorces Mumtaz and runs away.

After leaving Mumtaz and changing his name to Qasim Khan, Nadir becomes an official candidate of the Communist Party in India's 1957 election, during Mumtaz's second marriage to Ahmed Sinai, Nadir makes secret meetings with Mumtaz and frequently calls her, arousing the suspicions of her children, Saleem and the Brass Monkey.

He finally exits *Midnight's Children* after Commander Sabarmati murders Homi Catrack for having an affair with his wife, Lila. After Homi's murder, Muntaaz stops accepting Nadir's phone calls and secretly meeting up with him as a result of fearing the consequences of infidelity.

2.2.3.6. William Methwold

William Methwold is an Englishman. He owns Methwold's Estate, a part of which he sells to Ahmed Sinai. He was the first officer of the East India Company, and he was the last European to rule over India. He is considered as Saleem's biological father.

2.2.3.7. Tai

Tai is the boatman. He takes Aadam Aziz to the house of Mr. Ghani to treat his daughter Naseem. Tai speaks insulting languages and he has fantastic ideas. He is a short-tempered man. His unwashed clothes and body without bathing for months give bad stink. He and his wife have no idea of their ages. He has two golden teeth. Tai is a good storyteller in which he has an endless number of stories of India's rich history, which he acquired as a result of his long life which he happily shares with Aadam in his youth. His chats are fantastic and ceaseless.

Tai makes his living as a simple ferryman, despite all the rumors of wealth. He carries the English men in his boat with too much gossip. He sometimes takes booze. He is a boastful man. When Aziz asks him about his age he responds that he is older than the mountains. He uses decent language while talking to Dr. Aadam Aziz. He teaches Aadam Aziz the secrets of the lake. He is a conservative character and contradicts doctor Aziz from keeping a stethoscope

which he considered it as foreign machine. He falls ill when Dr. Aziz leaves Kashmir with his wife Naseem and moves to Agra.

2.2.3.8. Lifafa Das

Lifafa is hardworking boy who wanders in the streets of Delhi presenting his peepshow by placing different cards in his special apparatus, so that children can see the world through it. Lifafa Das has a small drum which he rattles to attract the children with shouts, “come see the whole world” (Rushdie 96). He becomes victim of religious fanaticism. A small girl incites the crowd by identifying him as Hindu. Through wild rumors he is seen as a rapist of Muslim women. He is chased by a mad crowd and would have been lynched but timely intervention of Amina saves him. Lifafa Das knocks at her door for refuge. She lets him in and stands defending him among the angry mob. When her reasoning fails to convince the mob, she challenges them to touch a woman carrying a child in her womb. Responding to the traditional respect for an Indian mother-to-be the crowd melts away and Lifafa Das’s life is saved. Here again Amina plays a secular role by saving life of a Hindu refugee without knowing his whereabouts.

2.2.3.9. Major Zulfikar

He is Emerald’s husband, one of the wealthiest men in Pakistan. Zulfikar falls in love with Aadam Aziz’s daughter, Emerald, and promises not to press charges on Aadam for harboring Nadir if he agrees to allow him to marry her. Zulfikar and Emerald are married and move to Pakistan after India’s independence, where he later becomes a major in the Pakistani Army and is instrumental in a coup to overthrow the Pakistani government. Zulfikar serves as a stand-in father to his nephew Saleem Sinai before. He is killed by his own son Zafar, a young man who repeatedly wets his pants growing up and is generally rejected by his father.

Conclusion

This chapter is a descriptive study of gender images in Salman Rushdie novel *Midnight's Children*. It reviews the different and recurrent characterization that he projects upon his male and female characters through their behaviors, physical, psychological, religious and moral descriptions with the use of magical realism technique. Rushdie unambiguously portrays men and women in *Midnight's Children* in uncommon ways. He gives images of weakness to men and images of strength to women.

General Conclusion

The analysis of gender representation in Salman's Rushdie *Midnight's Children* leads to the following conclusions. Unlike Postcolonial writers, Rushdie strikingly portrays men as helpless and weak while women as powerful, courageous and rebellious in the periods of the British rule and post-independence. Rushdie presents them through their physical, psychological, moral descriptions, behaviors and familial relationships. Namely, he gives gender in India several unconventional and unusual traits and characterization.

A good number of male characters are physically, psychologically, mentally, religiously and financially presented as fragile, sick, depressed and vulnerable. In this manner, they neglectfully give up their gender roles in which these roles do not influence their behaviors. They lack the ability to overcome life's hardships and crises. They are neither the leaders nor the primary authority of the house. They thoroughly alienate themselves from their family members into isolation. The depression and agnosticism of Aadam Aziz, the alcohol addiction and failure of Ahmed Sinai, the impotence and sickness of SaleemSinai and Nadir Khan, the suicide of Hanif Aziz, and the poor personality of Zafar are examples of this presentation. Additionally, he gives other portrayals of men as strong and masculine like Shiva and Commander Sabarmati.

Contrastingly, he gives images of power, rebellion and resilience to female characters. This presentation covers their behaviors, emotions, mentality and physical capacity. In this way, they are strong, independent financially, determined and willing. They perform their domestic duties and roles and deal with their men's deficiencies. They make great sacrifices in the name of keeping their families united. They are the authority figures and the decision makers. Rushdie grants females the usefulness, determination and power that the males lack. For

example, the removal of Purdah and independence of Aadam Aziz's mother, the authority and power of Naseem Aziz over her husband, the betting of Amina in horse racing at the time of her husband's financial distress, the independence and strength of Dr. Narlikar's Women. He gives other images to them as unfaithful and disloyal like Pia Aziz, Lila Sabarmati and Amina Aziz.

While Rushdie presents some women as unfaithful, beautiful, kind-hearted and motherly, he also portrays others as racist, evil, criminal and psycho such as Zohra Sinai, Indira Gandhi, The Widow's Hand and Evelyn Burns.

Midnight's Children is an allegorical novel. There are various allegorical presentations such as the independence of India, the dispute over the territory of Kashmir, Amritsar massacre, the partition of India, the Pakistan-India war, India-China war and Indira Gandhi's abuse of power, the declaration of state of emergency and sterilization of men. Though this does not prevent Rushdie from the technique of magical realism to portray gender unconventionally. This presentation of men and women does not reflect the real and actual status of gender in India because the Indian society is a patriarchal and male dominated one. Despite the fact that women and men are given equal rights shortly after independence, men are socially superior and leaders and authority figures while women are considered inferior and helpless. In Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* gender presentation does not reflect all social classes but rather the upper-class in which they are given images of wealth, education and freedom of choice.

To conclude, in *Midnight's Children* Rushdie breaks the stereotypical images of men and women in Indian society as well as different postcolonial works. By doing so, he grants women strength, visibility and resilience that extremely surpass those of men in different domains while at the same time he, to some extent, presents the upper-class people.

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المخلص

تتناول هذه الأطروحة معالجة صورالجنس في أدب ما بعد الاستعمار في رواية أطفال منتصف الليل لسلمان رشدي. يسلط الكاتب الضوء على حياة المجتمع الهندي قبل وما بعد الاستقلال وفقا لمكانة الرجل والمرأة اجتماعيا من خلال عاداتهم وأديانهم ومعتقداتهم. هذا التصوير يؤثر على وجهات نظر و تحليلات النقاد والقراء على حد سواء. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل صور الجنس في هذا الأدب وكيف أعطى سلمان رشدي صور متناقضة للرجال والنساء. اتبعنا في بحثنا هذا الدراسة الوصفية لكي نصل إلى هذاالتجسيد معتمدين على صفاتهم الفيسيولوجية والنفسية والعائلية وحتى ظواهرهم الخارقة للطبيعة. تنقسم هذه الدراسة إلى فصلين. يعالج الفصل الأول الذي ينقسم إلى ثلاث أقسام نظريا إشكالية الجنس في أدب ما بعد الاستعمار. يدرس القسم الأول الخلفية التاريخية والأدبية لنظرية وأدب ما بعد الاستعمار. يعرض القسم الثاني لهذا الفصل مفهوم الجنس والصور النمطية الجنسانية ونظريات أدواره المحورية.يعالج أيضا الجنس في الأدب والدراسات النسوية لما ما بعد الاستعمار وطريقة عرض كُتاب ما بعد الاستعمار للعنصر الرجالي والنسائي في أعمالهم. يطرح القسم الثالث الحالة الواقعية للجنس في الهند في هذه الحقبة وعلاقاتهم العائلية عبر الأجيال إلى جانب قضايا العنف. الفصل الثاني هو الفصل التطبيقي والذي يحتوي على قسمين. يعطي القسم الأول لمحة عن السيرة الذاتية لرشدي وملخص الرواية وموضوع الجنس فيها. بينما، يحلل القسم الثاني الصور التي أعطاها الكاتب لشخصياته. ومن ثم فإن التصوير الاجتماعي من خلال وجهة نظر سليم سنائي له لا يتطابق مع الوضع النمطي الحقيقي والواقعي للجنس في أدب ما بعد الاستعمار وحتى في المجتمع الهندي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تصوير الجنس، ما بعد الاستعمار، أدب ما بعد الاستعمار، أطفال منتصف الليل