

its foul embrace; and in the darkest hours of my career in slavery, this living world of faith and spirit of hope departed not from me, but remained like ministering angels to cheer me through the gloom”(Douglass,34-35). He would talk to little white boys and say, “You will be free as soon as you are twenty one, *But I Am A Slave For Life!* Have I not as good a right to be free as you have?”(Douglass, 41). Douglass developed his awareness through education and made attempts to run away. Henry Bibb mentions that slaves were not allowed books, pen, ink or paper to improve their minds. He possessed a keen sense of observation and retention. He says, “But more especially, all that I had heard about liberty and freedom to the slaves, I never forgot. Among other good trades I learned the art of running away to perfection. I made a regular business of it, and never gave it up, until I had broken the bands of slavery and landed myself safely in Canada, where I was regarded as a man, and not as a thing” (Bibb, I, 15-16). He knew that God had made man a free, moral, intelligent, and accountable being. He believed that every man had a right to his wages, family, liberty, and pursuit of happiness, and worship of God according to his own choice. Booker T. Washington learnt from his mother's prayer that the freedom of the slaves was being discussed. She prayed fervently that Lincoln and his armies might be successful and one day she and her children might be free. Slaves were able to keep themselves update without any media with the progress of freedom movement. The “grape-vine” telegraph worked silently and unobtrusively. The slaves were ready to begin life anew like masters except in the matter of book learning and ownership of property. Booker recalls the most distinct thing,

The most distinct thing that I now recall in collection with the scene that some man who seemed to be a stranger (a United States Officer, I presume) made a little speech and then read a rather long paper - The Emancipation Proclamation, I think. After the reading we were told that we were all free, and could go when and where we pleased. My mother, who was standing by my side, leaned over and kissed her children, while tears of joy ran down her cheeks. She explained to us what all it meant, that this was the day for which she had been so long praying, but fearing that she would never live to see (Washington,19).

The reactions of the Black community to the Emancipation Proclamation were mixed. They were happy and at the same time sad due to the thought of parting from their masters. Booker T. Washington's self narrative is considered as the last slave narrative. The Black Americans became free in 1863. The Reconstruction programme taken up to ameliorate the Black's lot took a reverse course. The Fourteenth Amendment of 1868 established the rule of law by its “due process clause”, promising the Black equal protection. The right to vote was given to the Blacks by the Fifteenth Amendment of 1870. The Civil Rights Bill of 1875 conferred on them full citizenship with all civil liberties. Waghmare's comment on the situation of the Blacks is very pithy. He says,

The Black was robed in freedom. But he could not wear the robe of

freedom for a long time; it was torn into rags on his body itself. The Southern States were not in favour of giving civil rights to him. The definition of the term "Black" in the Constitution of most of the Southern States shows that he was not regarded as a *full* man. He was a *fractional* man. Soon the Black was defranchised and then stripped of all his civil rights. In 1883 the Supreme Court held the Civil Rights Bill of 1875 as unconstitutional. Again in 1896...it upheld the "separate but equal" doctrine. (Waghmare, 38).

In the twentieth century too, there was not much change in the condition of Black-Americans. A shift from South to North was seen. Their marginalization and exploitation continued unabated and they always remained on the periphery. In 1954, the Supreme Court declared "separate but equal" doctrine as unconstitutional. In 1960's Civil Rights Movement gathered momentum and Martin Luther King Jr.'s speech exploded the myth of the American progress and exposed reality. In spite of all these developments, there was not much change in the plight of Black Americans and their problems remained the same. Du Bois in *Credo* of the *Darkwater* writes, "I believe in liberty for all men: the space to stretch their arms and their souls, the right to breathe and the right to vote, the freedom to choose their friends, enjoy the sunshine, and ride on the railroads, uncursed by color; thinking, dreaming, working as they will in a kingdom of beauty and love" (Du Bois, *Credo*). The quotation indicates that even in the year 1920, Du Bois longed for equality and liberty. Langston Hughes in *The Big Sea* describes many experiences of discrimination experienced in his young life. Richard Wright (*Black Boy*) mentions that Negroes were told in a language possibly they could not misunderstand that their native land was not their own. When Negroes asserted their birth right, whites retaliated. He describes the Negro "as the most cast-out of all the outcast people in America" (Wright, 298). For him Negro life was a sprawling land of unconscious suffering. Claude Brown in *Manchild in the Promised Land* describes the Garveyites and the Black Muslims led by Elijah Muhammad fighting for liberty, equality, fraternity, and justice for Black Americans. Due to poisons fed by the adults, says Amiri Baraka (*Autobiography of LeRoi Jones Amiri Baraka*), the kids (Blacks and whites) drew apart as they grew up. All grammar school and street level relationships had just disappeared. Gordon Parks (*Voices in the Mirror*) experienced 'daily anguish of racism'. In childhood, he had seen Blacks and whites moving about in deceiving air, seeming to avoid any sort of relationship. Baldwin recognized himself as "a kind of bastard of the West..." (Baldwin, Notes, 6). He further says, "I was an intercaler, this was not my heritage" (Baldwin, Notes, 7). He could not bring himself to recite the pledge of allegiance.

The slave narratives have been written since 1770 approximately. Instances of discrimination, oppression, marginalization, and subjugation are rampant in all these slave narratives and autobiographies. James Baldwin, the African-American writer, in one of his essays, *Letter to My Nephew on the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Emancipation* sets down the condition of the Blacks which is no different from the Untouchables in India. He points out to his nephew,

You were born where you were born and faced a future that you faced because you were black and for no other reason. The limits of your ambition were, thus, expected to be set forever. You were born into a society, which spelt out with brutal clarity, in as many ways as possible, that you were a worthless human being. You were not expected to aspire to excellence; you were expected to make peace with mediocrity (Kannabiran, 151).

Black American autobiographies have evolved through various varied phases and are of different kinds. The multiplicity of motifs and their style is directly related with the complexity of their life. Even after so many years of struggle, their problems still haunt them and their misery, and agony is unabated, unredressed and hence, all Black American writers longed for a just, equal, human and humane society. Writers like Baldwin, Richard Wright, Claude Brown, Langston Hughes and Gordon Parks have written their autobiographies in the later decades of the twentieth century when plenty of changes had taken place in the American society and yet all these writers longed for emancipation. Kapoor has very eloquently summed up their situation and mindset. He writes,

It is for this reason that freedom is a powerful concept for them – freedom from physical and psychological bondage as also freedom to choose a kind of world that they would like to live in. In America this quest for freedom began with slave narratives which became a powerful form of self expression for them. These were the first stirrings of their soul and have undergone innumerable mutations in other forms. Freedom is still an important component of their imaginative perception of reality (Kapoor, 159).

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The Fluidity of Locale: Negotiating the Notion of Nation in Salman Rushdie's *Shalimar the Clown*

- Roshan Lal Sharma

Abstract: In common parlance, locale signifies the “where” and “when” (Cuddon 861) of a story—the former comprising the geographical location whereas the latter being a pointer towards time-period during which the action takes place. It also implies the occupation(s) of various characters along with the ethos (social, moral, religious and emotional) in which they live. The present paper seeks to work out the extent of the locale-specificity that Salman Rushdie adheres to in his latest novel *Shalimar the Clown*, (Rushdie) and how and why he imparts it a fluid character. Another aspect that this paper seeks to look into is the notion of nation in view of the fluidity of locale through which Rushdie seems to simultaneously acknowledge as well as transcend the geo-political territorial limits thereby viewing the whole world as rapidly evolving or non-static.

Keywords: Nation, Geo-politics, Rushdie, *Shalimar the Clown*.

Rushdie powerfully echoes Paul Valery's observation that “Nothing can ever happen again without the whole world's taking a hand . . .” (Valery 8-10). Viewed in this light, the specificity of locale in the sense of fixity seems pointless. *Shalimar the Clown* mainly laments the devastation of Kashmir, which serves as backdrop for much of action in the novel. Moreover, the best scenes of the novel are set in Pachigam—a virtual paradise on earth not only owing to its natural charm but also due to happy and peaceful co-existence of the people there irrespective of their religions. Like most of Rushdie's novels, *Shalimar the Clown* moves through diverse locales (e.g. Kashmir of 1960s to the present, Strasbourg and Paris during Second World War along with the contemporary Los Angeles). However, they coalesce as Rushdie deliberately dissolves the temporal frame after a certain point. This is because no place is exclusive; no clime is alien and no story is locale-specific in the strife-torn world of today. Commenting on this aspect, Rushdie aptly writes in the novel:

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

The loss of “calm” the world over is a serious cause of concern for Rushdie. He lucidly states that insurgency (whether in Kashmir or anywhere else in the world), counterinsurgency, jihaad (holy war) in the name of freedom struggle and the 9/11 toppling of the twin towers, must be viewed as 'one movement' commonly characterised by violence,

bloodshed and the loss of innocent lives. In such a situation, none can be viewed as single, separate person as “everyone's story . . . [is] a part of everyone else's.” (269) Rushdie's sense of historicity finely blends with his perception of the fluid character of locale at the present times. The devastation of Kashmir along with the ravaging of Kashmiriyat over a long period of time dovetails with what Strasbourg and Paris experienced during the Second World War. Moreover, the resistance heroism during the Nazi excesses in the early forties counterpoints Saudi Arabia, Libya and Afghanistan—the breeding ground for the mujahideens or jihadis creating unrest the world over. After keenly observing the global scenario (marked by terrorism and counter-terrorism), Rushdie suggests that the whole world is strife-torn, full of unrest and violence—“Everywhere was a mirror of everywhere else. Executions, police brutality, explosions, riots: Los Angeles was beginning to look like wartime Strasbourg; like Kashmir” (355). Thus, instead of being a mere geo-political fact, the locale is inclusive as well as encompassing in Shalimar the Clown. Rushdie does not adhere to the locale-specificity in an absolutist sense which is why one place either approximates or points towards the other. Likewise, Rushdie's sense of historicity also undercuts the notion of fixity in terms of spatio-temporality. The temporal vis-à-vis its historical periodisation is viewed in terms of a continuum, which, in no way lacks specificity, yet goes beyond it. Germane to the fluidity of locale is the notion of nation, which is implicit in the entire fabric of the novel. It is not just history extending from Strasbourg to Kashmir but also an attempt to render the notion of nation redundant in view of the crisis of the contemporary times. In an interview with Prasannarajan, Rushdie comments:

When I wrote *Midnight's Children* I felt able to focus my story on one place, the Indian subcontinent, and didn't feel the need to encompass any elsewheres. Since then I have begun to feel more and more that because of many things—mass migration, internal mayhem, economic globalisation—the world's stories are no longer separate but commingled, and have set myself the challenge of exploring the literary consequences of taking on this newly frontierless world (Prasannarajan 89).

However, to impart it locale-specificity, Rushdie writes about Pachigam and Shirmal (two villages) in Kashmir, wartime Strasbourg along with the contemporary Los Angeles with conviction and authenticity. According to Benedict Anderson, nation is “an imagined political community [...] both inherently limited and sovereign.” This is so because the citizens of even a small nation scarcely get the opportunity to meet/ know their fellow beings. However, in their minds, there is always “the image of their communion” (Anderson 5). Interestingly, this definition questions the very premise established by Renan who observed in the context of the nineteenth century that the “existence of nations is good thing, necessary even” (Renan 52). What he expected was that it would guarantee liberty in the face of the largely prevalent dictatorial regimes across the globe. Contrary to Renan's expectations, we have witnessed how during the twentieth century the very idea of

nation has been subverted and used as a ploy to perpetrate crimes against humanity. Anderson's perception concerning the "imagined" status of the entity called nation may not augur too well for people with a closed mindset, as they tend to narrow down the possibilities of a more open debate. However, viewed overtly, the world seems divided in discrete units called nations despite their "imagined" character. It is deplorable that any attempt to question the falseness of the notion of nation is largely denounced as well as denigrated. Its worst offshoot is the phenomenon called nationalism, which has attained lethal proportions in the present context. Many critics have associated nationalism with "some of the worst aspects of modern history." This, according to Ross Poole, is mainly because

Large number of otherwise decent people have carried out unbelievable atrocities for no better reason than their nation required them to. Authoritarian and totalitarian regimes have crushed dissent, eliminated opposition and trampled on civil liberties in the name of the nation (Poole 1).

Rushdie purposely engages himself with the menace caused by narrow nationalistic considerations. He strongly condemns extremism and bigotry thereby suggesting it to jihadis that they should stop their pointless pursuit of the "absolutism of the pure," which is pathological and destroys "innocently hybrid societies" (Mishra 11). Religious fundamentalism has shown its hideous face in the recent past. As a case in point is Ayotollah Khomeini's fatwa (death warrant) that haunted Rushdie for more than a decade. The post-9/11 era is marked by a high level of anxiety among the people of the world. Rushdie deals with the whole issue of mental derangement that has occurred due to the undemocratic and insensitive mindset via approaching the notion of nation afresh, in the newly emerged "frontierless world." In an interview with Bill Moyers, Rushdie makes a pertinent statement about the 9/11 and its aftermath by saying:

Well, I do think, that it was a moment of great change. And I think that some people have said, "Well, it wasn't that big an event, people die all over the world all the time." But I do think that it was a hinge moment. And if only because it showed us that we're now inescapably involved with each other. That we can't disengage. There's no way, even if America wanted to return to a kind of fortress, American isolationist policy, there's no real way in which America can do that. You know, the world is too interpenetrated. You know, all our political institutions, our financial institution[s], armies, populations are too intermingled (Moyers).

As such, 'isolationism' of any sort seems absurd as no country of the world can be insulated as a safe and exclusive unit given the pervasiveness of the terrorists' network across the globe. The world has virtually shrunk and become vulnerable. The novel *Shalimar the Clown* traverses diverse locales and cuts across time to portray the strife-ridden world of today. Nevertheless, Kashmir serves as the hub where the central characters, Shalimar the Clown (also called Noman Sher Noman) and Boonyi are born and brought up here. The second section

of the novel entitled "Boonyi" is executed in Pachigam and Shirmal—two villages of Kashmir truly representing the pristine glory that Kashmir used to have before its devastation due to insurgency, counterinsurgency and the geo-political tussle between India and Pakistan. The novel begins with the murder of Maximilian Ophuls, former American ambassador to India who is "slaughtered" like "a halal chicken" (4) by Shalimar the Clown (Max's driver) out of sheer vindictiveness. Thereafter the novel turns back in time to unfold the causes and circumstances that led to Max's murder. The locale keeps shifting perpetually as well as proportionally to suit Rushdie's narrative requirements. The strife-torn Kashmir metaphorically mirrors unrest across the globe. Viewed thus, Shalimar the Clown emerges as a true work of the era of globalization, intricately mingling lives and countries, and finding unexpected and at times tragic connections between the seemingly disparate. For instance, the violent fate of Kashmir recalls Strasbourg's experience in World War II; resistance heroism against the Nazis counterpoints Al-Qaeda's terror in Afghanistan, North Africa and the Philippines. Pachigam of 1960s is not much different from post-war London or the Hollywood-driven present-day Los Angeles where Max's daughter, India Ophuls lives. The sensuous and the sensual run hand in hand in Rushdie's description of the landscape. For instance, his exquisite sense of locale comes to fore when Rushdie describes the entrance to Shalimar garden in his deft poetic prose:

At the entrance to Shalimar garden, beside the sumptuous lake bobbing with boats that resembled an eager audience waiting impatiently for the show to begin, beneath the whispering chinars and the gossiping poplar trees and in the silent eternal presence of the uncaring mountains, who were preoccupied by the gigantic effort of very slowly pushing themselves higher and higher into the virginal sky, the villagers of Pachigam herded together the animals they had brought for slaughtering [...]. (75-76)

The inherent sensuousness in the pristine glory of Shalimar along with fascinating vignettes such as "the high flower-strewn meadow of Khelmarg," "a talkative little river, the Muskadoon," [meaning "refreshing" (46)] and which remained ever "loquacious," "the fertile fields and animal herds" of Pachigam, Kashmiri "folk arts" besides rich theatrical and "gastronomic traditions" (300) used to be in fine consonance with love, care, concern and a unique sense of togetherness which was the hallmark of Kashmiriyat. Amidst this, Rushdie weaves the tale of love between Shalimar and Boonyi (Pachigami boy and girl) who were madly in love with each other and wanted to get married. Boonyi being a Hindu, and Shalimar, a Muslim, the question of different religions had to crop up. But, after initial hiccups, both sides agreed to the marriage because it was more of a love-centred rather than religion-centred Kashmir. Moreover, "The words Hindu and Muslim had no place in their story [...]. In the valley these words were mere descriptions, not divisions. The frontiers between the words, their hard edges had grown smudged and blurred" (57). However, the way this matter is

resolved in the village panchayat of Pachigam, counterpoints the wounded sense of Kashmiriyat in the present day Kashmir. After criticizing the "licentious" behaviour of Boonyi and Shalimar and the "improprieties" involved therein, Abdullah Noman (Shalimar's father), the village sarpanch gives it a clear go-ahead. Rushdie writes:

Abdullah then mentioned Kashmiriyat, Kashmiriness, the belief that at the heart of Kashmiri culture there was a common bond that transcended all other differences. Most bhand villages were Muslim but Pachigam was a mixture [. . .]. "So we have not only Kashmiriness to protect but Pachigaminess as well. We are all brothers and sisters here," said Abdullah. "There is no Hindu-Muslim issue. Two Kashmiri—two Pachigami—youngsters wish to marry, that's all. A love match is acceptable to both families and so a marriage there will be; both Hindu and Muslim customs will be observed." Pyarelal added, when his turn came, "To defend their love is to defend what is finest in ourselves." (110)

By evoking the whole notion of Kashmiriyat/ Kashmiriness, Rushdie carefully reiterates its locale-specificity along with its innate inclusive character. Moreover, it is a satirical dig at the way Kashmiriyat has been desecrated and insulted due to lack of political will and maturity. The sufferers are the innocent Pachigamis who represent Kashmiris at large. The prevalence of the "finest" in Kashmiriyat as pointed by Pyarelal is what blurs and dissolves all "frontiers." A harmonious co-existence is the soul of Pachigaminess or Kashmiriyat, which sounds farcical as well as far-fetched. Rushdie gives a dramatic twist to the narrative by making Maximilian Ophuls (an American ambassador to India) visit Pachigam. Max has been described as the scion of a cultured Ashkenazi family, a French Resistance hero and also Marlon Brando's chum. Owing to Boonyi's physical [she is "dark as a secret, bright as happiness" (48)] as well as artistic charm as a dancer, Max falls for her. Boonyi, besides being bewitchingly beautiful, was "daring" too in her love as well as aspirations in life. Shalimar had fallen for her largely because "[. . .] she was so seldom afraid, because she reached out for what she wanted and grabbed at it and didn't see why it should elude her grasp" (93). With a hope to grow as a dancer and get exposed to more open an atmosphere compared to "Pachigam [which] was a trap" and where her life was like that of a "prison" (194-95), Boonyi leaves for Delhi rather "savagely" even though her heart calls her a "fool" to live with Max whom she could never love as she did her lover and husband, Shalimar the Clown. Boonyi calls Max "the snake" who ate the "rat" which she was before she came to Delhi. This shift in the locale from the salubrious Pachigam to the oppressiveness of Delhi along with "[. . .] its surfeit of muchness, its fecal odours, its hellish noise, its anonymity, its uncaring crowd of the desperate fighting to survive" (201) caused her to suffer from stress, depression, hypertension, and hysterical ailments. After becoming a complete physical wreck, Boonyi gives birth to Kashmira Noman, later renamed as India Ophuls by Peggi and Max Ophuls who kept the daughter and arranged for the mother's (Boonyi's) flight back to Pachigam in Kashmir where she had already been declared dead out of

desperation, despair, longing and rage by her husband, Shalimar the Clown and his family members, and also mourned over. After Boonyi leaves for Delhi to be with Max, Shalimar is constantly haunted by the phantom of their “murdered love” (195). His longing for her aggravates into anguish after Himat and Gonwati (two performing artists who had accompanied Boonyi while going to Delhi) returned to Pachigam. This deeply pained, cuckolded, “super-idiot number one” husband expresses his longing for his wife by sending trusting letters that would, of course, humiliate her every time she would receive them, by writing thus: “I reach out to you and touch you without touching you as on the riverbank in the old days. I know you are following your dream but that dream will always bring you back to me. If the Amrikan is of assistance well and good. People always talk lies but I know your heart is true. I sit with folded hands and await your loving return” (195). Along with Boonyi's physical wrecking and deranging, Rushdie works out the razing of Kashmir in general and Pachigam in particular due to militancy, insurgency and counterinsurgency. However, Shalimar the Clown's psychological deranging is the worst and most painful. He turns hostile, deadly and vindictive. Now he can see nothing around him except the vengeance that he has to wreak upon those (Max as well as Boonyi) who ruthlessly trampled his love underfoot. Through matchless narrative skill, Rushdie works out the interplay of the motifs of love and death. To slit the throat of his beloved wife, Shalimar has to wait for the death of his father (Abdullah Noman) as well as Boonyi's father (Pandit Pyarelal Kaul) because they are the ones who stand between his vow to kill his wife and her. But, ironically enough, by the time they die, Pachigam along with the heavenly valley of Kashmir are completely ravaged. Abdullah Noman shares his sense of loss with his wife, Firdaus: “The times are growing so dark [...] that we must try as best as we can to cling to the memory of brightness” (79). To counterpoint the ravaging of Kashmir, Rushdie recapitulates how the Golden Age began for Kashmiri Pandits in the middle of 15th century consequent upon Dr. Butt or Bhatt's saving the life of Sultan Zain-ul-abidin. The precious gift that Dr. Butt had asked for was the stopping of the persecution of Kashmiri Pandits. Moreover the Sultan himself saw to the “[...] Rehabilitation of their devastated and scattered Families, and allowed them to preach and practice their Religion without any Hinderance. He rebuilt their Temples, reopened their schools, abolished the taxes that burdened them, repaired their Libraries and ceased to murder their Cows. Whereupon a golden age began” (80). Thus, Rushdie uses history to juxtapose the contemporary situation in Kashmir with reference to the sad plight of the Kashmiri Pandits who were forced to leave the valley, and stand displaced till date. During early nineties, even Pandit Pyarelal Kaul has to conjure up the picture of Kashmir, which was an earthly paradise till some time ago. He recapitulates the crystal lakes, walnut, poplar, chinar and apple trees along with the “mighty peaks.” He also sees himself on the top of Mount Shankaracharya and feasting his eyes on “gentleness,” “time” and “love.” His heart is filled with so much delight and serenity that he starts considering the idea of moving out into the valley to enjoy its ethereal

charm. The saddest Rushdiean stroke comes with Pyarelal Kaul's decision not to go into the valley due to the havoc wreaked upon it by insurgency, counterinsurgency and cross-border terrorism:

No, he would not ride out into Kashmir, did not want to see her scarred face, the lines of burning oil drums across the roads, the wrecked vehicles, the smoke of explosions, the broken houses, the broken people, the tanks, the anger and fear in every eye. Everyone carries his address in his pocket so that at least his body will reach home (305).

During the crackdown on Pachigam, Anees Noman, leader of JKLF and brother of Shalimar the Clown, is killed. When the soldiers bring his corpse to his parents, they brutally shoot down Abdullah and Firdaus too. No questions could be asked about these senseless killings "[...] because brutality is brutality and excess is excess and that's all there is to it." Rushdie satirically comments: "There are things that must be looked at indirectly because they would blind you if you looked them in the face, like the fire of the sun." (309). In this way Pachigam, which serves as the microcosm of Kashmir in the novel, is destroyed. Now, "there was no Pachigam any more" (309) since it was physically obliterated. However, it still exists (and will remain) on the official maps of Kashmir, or at least in memory. Rushdie laments thus:

The village of Pachigam still exists on the official maps of Kashmir, due south of Srinagar and west of Sirmal near the Anantnag road. [...] This official existence, this paper self is its only memorial, for where Pachigam once stood by the blithe Muskadoon, where its little street ran along from the Pandit's house to the sarpanch's where Abdullah roared and Boonyi danced and Shivshankar sang and Shalimar the clown walked the tightrope as if treading upon air, nothing resembling a human habitation remains. (309)

As such, the situation that has arisen in Kashmir is terribly perturbing. There is violence, killings, explosions, rapes and bloodshed all around, which triggers a barrage of queries in the author's mind:

Who lit that fire? Who burned that orchard? Who killed the sarpanch? [...] Who slaughtered the animals? Who burned the beehives? Who poisoned the paddies? [...] Who raped that grey-haired lazy-eyed woman as she screamed about snake vengeance? Who raped that woman again? Who raped that woman again? (308).

Rushdie carefully works out this deadly, ghastly and enigmatic "Who" that could be held responsible not only for the devastation of Kashmir but also for causing chaos and unrest across the globe. This weird, dangerous, blood-sucking, ghostlike "Who" has been identified as the iron mullah, Maulana Bulbul Fakh. He is a stinky, inhuman hater who breathes, preaches and practices hatred. He enters Kashmir as a Pak-sponsored militant in the guise of a preacher to fight out Indian army from the valley by preaching hatred. Rushdie castigates the iron mullahs such as Bulbul Fakh by attributing their origin to the "scrap metal junkyards." "Then one day by the grace of God the junk began to stir. It came to life and took on human form. The men who were miraculously born from these rusting worn metals, who went out into the