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***‘A SPECK OF DUST’ REMEMBERING THE PAST:
FRAGMENTATION, INTUITION AND MEMORY IN
SALMAN RUSHDIE’S MIDNIGHT’S CHILDREN***

Abstract: *The ‘speck of dust’ in the title refers to Saleem Sinai, the main character of Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children*. The paper focuses on the identity problems raised by fragmentation in this book and the manner in which this narrative device blends with the main character’s intuition, paranormal and memory. It analyses both the post-modern manner of writing the book and also the identity change of the main characters (Saleem, his mother, Amina, and his sister, the Brass Monkey) and studies in depth the reasons underlying this. Saleem boasts several identities according to the moment in the story to which he refers (being also called Snotnose, Stainface, Baldy, Sniffer, Buddha and even Piece-of-the-Moon), his mother also changes her identity once (from Mumtaz, the young woman in love, to Amina, the mature woman who raises children and keeps her family united) and his sister twice, as she changes roles (from Brass Monkey to a singer, Jamila, and then to a nun, with no new name mentioned). The geography of Saleem’s mind influences that of the reader who is supposed to retrace the story while rebuilding it, using the clues given by the narrator. Saleem also plays a double part, that of main character and narrator at the same time. The present time of the novel belongs to the grown-up Saleem who tells his stories to Padma, the lover who patiently listens and awaits her marriage to him. However, he considers himself an unlucky fellow as far as his partners are concerned and postpones his union to her in order to narrate the story in the novel, which he carefully mixes with pieces of Indian history.*