# MULTIMEDIA STUDY ENVIRONMENT (MSE): Salman Rushdie *Midnight's Children*

## Description

The *Midnight's Children* Multimedia Study Environment (MSE) provides students the opportunity to gain a richer understanding of Salman Rushdie's acclaimed novel, the play derived from it, and the historical and cultural context in which the story is set. A primary goal of the MSE is to provide a multimedia resource base for inquiry in a variety of fields including literature, history, drama, and, cultural theory. Using excerpts from the novel and the play script as spines or hubs, the MSE provides a wealth of related content including: reflections from Rushdie himself and more than a dozen Columbia faculty, filmic, photographic, artistic and musical resources, dramaturgical commentary from the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) Director, Tim Supple and colleagues, performance footage, as well as, links to research resources.

## Multimedia Study Environment Features

- Novel spine – includes ten selections from the original text of *Midnight's Children*. These ten selections are easily accessed through numbered links across the top of the MSE.

- Play spine – includes ten selections from the play script, adapted from the novel by Rushdie, Supple and Simon Reade.

- Annotations – embedded throughout the MSE are hyperlinked resources that contextualize both the novel and the play. These references include historical information, archival photographs, maps and video clips. These annotations have been compiled and written by an expert research team recruited across various Columbia departments.

- Video Clips – throughout the MSE, numerous video clips of interviews with Columbia University faculty, Salman Rushdie, and Tim Supple, and scenes from the stage performance provide illuminating commentary to the student.

- Images – archival photographs and maps appear in the annotation area of the MSE and provide students with imagery and placement of the culture and times of this story.

- Timeline – demarcates chronological divisions of South Asian history and the lifespan of Saleem Sinai, the protagonist of the novel.

- Library resources – allows students to continue in-depth research in South Asian studies through online and print resources.



## Faculty Testimony

Professor: Neguin Yavari, Religion Department.
Course: Religion, Gender & Literature: Muslim Women Write Islam.

*"The* Midnight's Children *project focuses on a novel rooted in a specific locality at a certain juncture in history and yet invites questions and raises issues directly relevant to the interplay of religion and culture in different spheres and contexts…*

*…it* [MSE] *promises to exploit one of the Web's most useful assets, its capability to respond to different users and provide for different needs. I therefore look forward to using the project with my students and I am hoping to learn as much from their reactions as my own".*

## ABOUT COLUMBIA CNMTL

**Dedicated to the Purposeful Use of Technology in Education.**
CCNMTL (Columbia Center for New Media Teaching and Learning) is a service of Columbia University whose goal is to enhance teaching and learning through the purposeful use of new media. We form partnerships with faculty, providing them with as much support as they need in everything from the construction of course Web sites to the development of more advanced projects. CCNMTL is committed to remaining a leader in its field, engaging with its faculty partners in the reinvention of education for the digital age.

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