

## I. Depiction of Western Obsession

This research work is based on *East West*, an anthology of stories by Salman Rushdie, one of the most successful India born English writers of post-colonial era. He depicts three categories of stories in the collection, *East*, *West* and *East West* to counter the increasing phenomenon of western hegemony. This anthology – a collection of various stories, published mostly in the western based newspapers, covers stories from the rural backdrops of India, as far as to Ontario, Canada and to London, and back to the suburbs of Indian cosmopolitan cities. In the process, it penetrates into the absurdities invited by the modern into the As such, the present researcher will take this compilation of stories from the perspective of counter against the western obsession.

Rushdie, once a victim of religious intolerance, picks his characters from the background of eastern soil based largely on the social and ethical happenings that has its impact to the characters in the long run of life. His stories depicts minor characters who are obsessed from a minor 'radio' to 'slipper' and the 'harmony of spheres,' a religious concept. He sets ground for the clash of ideas and mannerisms depicting the varying social and cultural milieu of the people from the separate parts of the world – east and west, to counter the western obsession.

Culture shapes the human behavior and helps people guide their action. It surprisingly gives the individuals their identity. Moreover the hanger of culture brings about identity crisis in the lives of individuals as they cannot assimilate to new culture. Regarding this, Said says, "culture with its superior position has the power to authorize, to dominate, to legitimate, denote, interdict and validate" (The World 9). Thus, the superiority of new culture dominates individuals as they feel inferiority of their culture in new culture. When someone nurtured in one culture is placed in another they face cultural dislocation and alienation and the resultant reactions may be anger, frustration, fear, curiosity, fascination, hatred or confusion.

Diaspora in literary understanding is scattering of people, language and their ideas, largely due to migration. Dispersion of people, their language and culture will ultimately give rise to the hybrid culture, a concept that Rushdie presents in *East, West*. Through these tools, he counters the western supremacy over the east.

Western obsession is the inclination of the eastern people towards the mannerism, norms and values of the west. According to *Illustrated Oxford Dictionary* obsession is, "persistent idea or thought dominating a person's mind." As such, western obsession relates to the inclination of a human being towards the culture and trends followed in the west. Here, west indicates to the developed first world nations, including the United States, the Great Britain and other European nations. The way of living and behavioral approach followed by the people of the west, is obviously different to that of the people of the east. Inclination to the west is not due to the fact that they (west) are more civilized or developed, but due to the fact that they have advertised their culture and commodity in the eastern market more than necessary. And the fact lies that the eastern people are still struggling for make their hands to mouth meet. Besides, the level of awareness also is not according to the west prescribed model, which makes ground the west to claim themselves as superior to the east and its people.

Rushdie, now a British novelist, is of Indian descent. He was born on August 14, 1947 on the Independence Day of India. He rose to international fame through his second book, *Midnight's Children* (1981) which won him the prestigious British Booker Prize in 1993. In 2008 *Midnight's Children* was adjudged the best book to have won the Booker Prize in the previous 25 years. However, *The Satanic Verses* (1988) earned him a life threat from the Islamic fundamentalist, in the pretext that the book preaches against the Islamic norms and ethics. It is probably one of the most controversial novels of the twentieth century, which was adjudged blasphemy to the Islamic sacred book, *Kuran* by the Muslims for, and hence was

banned in several Islamic countries. After Iranian leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini issued a fatwa (Islamic decree), sentencing Rushdie to death, Rushdie went into hiding for several years and remained under constant police protection. In 2007 Rushdie was awarded a Knighthood, by the Queen Elizabeth of Britain, an honor that drew protests from the governments of Iran and Pakistan.

Rushdie's collection of stories *East, West* traces the model of nation where different cultures and people are treated equally. He established the idea of multicultural nation by depicting east, west in the canvas of harmony. Rushdie, developing his idea about nation, views that a nation is not a concrete entity within certain geographical boundaries; rather it is an imaginary construction. Same is the case of identity. It is not stable rather keep on changing due to the shifting locality. The collection of stories *East, West* manages to capture the pain and angst of Diasporas people are cured by treating them equally.

The position of the migrant writer and the discourse of those who write conscious of spatial, temporal and linguist alienation from their native land have come to occupy an important place in literary and cultural studies. One of the principal exponents of this discourse is Rushdie himself, a product of the postcolonial and Diasporic condition. He comes from a dualistic background, born in India and later moved to Pakistan, and finally to London. This Diaspora is visible in his writings. His literary and critical endeavors are recurring meditation on the plight of those who like himself, have had to deal with the change and continuity, strangers and familiarity, characteristics of our increasingly complex, multicultural world. Multiplicity of thematic pattern and skilful presentation of different cultures without prejudices clearly depicts his commitment to multicultural ethos which is the backbone of his writing.

Rushdie was born on 19<sup>th</sup> June 1947 in Bombay, India. As a member of a middle-class Muslim family, he had the high school education in his hometown. In 1964, the family

moved to Pakistan and Rushdie by then had been sent to England for further study. He entered King's College in Cambridge, where he received an M.A. with honors in 1968, and joined the Cambridge Footlights Theatre Company, as an art student. After graduating, he lived with his family who had moved to Pakistan and worked briefly in television before returning to England. He worked there as a copywriter for an advertising agency.

Rushdie entered into the charm of the literary world with the publication of *Grimus* (1975). However, his literary genius was acknowledged with the publications of his second novel *Midnight's Children* (1985), which received the Booker Macconnell Prize the same year. It accelerated his literary life, and he became one of the most successful professional writers of the era.

Today, Rushdie is a towering figure in the literary world of the twenty first century. He is an honorary professor in the Humanities at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. He was made distinguished fellow in literature at the University of East Anglia in 1995. He was awarded the Austrian state prize for European literature and the Aristein Literary Prize in 1996, and has received eight Honorary Doctorates. He was elected to the board of American Pen in 2002. Last but not the least, he is awarded as "Sir' Salman Rushdie by the British government.

Rushdie has multi figured identification, a novelist, essayist, travel writer and screen writer, martyr for free speech and purveyor of society, he has not only achieved the singular distinction of being recognized as an artist in his own lifetime but is also arguably the most prominent novelist of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century both for his literary achievements and for the controversy surrounding them. Rushdie has taken history as his subject. He fictionalized it, instituting a new genre. He has received almost every award in the course of a near 30 years career and has become the living image of the romantic writer.

His first book *Grimus* is often overlooked in any overview of the writer's Oeuvre, perhaps because it lacks the marked sense of geographical and historical context which characterizes his later and more acclaimed work. *Grimus*, the tale of Flapping Eagle, the novel's immortal hero, who travels to Calf Island after seven hundred years of sailing the seas with the hope of regaining his mortality, is a beautiful, funny, and surprisingly teaching book. A science fiction with religious myth and literary pastiche, *Grimus* has all the complexity of deeply questioning philosophical novel. *Grimus* introduces, in raw form, many of the themes developed by Rushdie in his later writing.

Then *The Satanic Verses*, which introduced Rushdie with the tryst with controversy. He has attracted dissent, protests, and flared tempers as easily as picnic attracts ants. With *Midnight's Children*, an absolutely marvelous novel that deserved every bit of the Booker prize it received, Rushdie boldly entered the arena of serious literature while at the same time exhibiting his dangerous predilection to rub people the wrong way. Indira Gandhi sued him for libel over his depiction of her in the novel. However, when he came out with *Satanic Verses*, he did so with bravado, offering the world a great work of fiction, but he insisted on etching a halo around himself. It made him a convenient target for the lynch-mobs espousing intolerance, for fundamentalists seeking to bring conformity in the world, using violence if necessary.

The main butt of the satire in *The Satanic Verses*, one of the most controversial writings of the Sub-Indian continent is Britain's treatment of its ethnic minorities. Alternating sections of the book, however, recount the dreams the actor Gibreel has while playing the archangel: He witnesses the birth of Islam and relays Allah's answers to Muhammad's questions – answers that cumulatively will become the Qur'an. The novel's title refers to a legendary episode in the life of Muhammad in which Satan substituted his own voice and message for Allah's. But Rushdie's Gibreel asserts that, since Allah is seldom around, he

(Gibreel) receives both the questions and – telepathically – the answers from Muhammad and then transmits the latter back as though they came from Allah.

The author's implication that our reception of a divine message is subject to interference because of human fallibility – that is, we hear what we want to hear would offend any fundamentalist. Even more offensive to most Muslims is the novel's description of a brothel where business doubles after the prostitutes take the names of Muhammad's 12 wives. Devout Muslims took this as a grievous and gratuitous insult to Muhammad and his wives. As a result of demonstrations, India, Pakistan, South Africa, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia banned the work, and in 1989 Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini, without having read the book, issued a fatwa against Rushdie.

Although Rushdie offered an apology and a formal statement of his adherence to Islam, the fatwa was not lifted, and he remained in hiding until late 1991, when he began to make isolated and unscheduled appearances and to allow a few interviews. In 1995, despite the continuance of the death threat, Rushdie began making television appearances, granting more frequent interviews, and giving public readings of his works. The Iranian government made a statement in 1998 lifting the death threat, although the fatwa cannot be lifted completely because, according to Islamic law, only the person who issued it can lift it as Ayatollah Khomeini had died shortly after he pronounced Rushdie's death sentence.

Pronouncement of fatwa by the Islamist orthodox leaders brought both hope and challenge to Rushdie. He went underground after the fatwa, however, continued to write. His novels after *Midnight's Children* were awaited anxiously all over the world, and Rushdie did not disappoint his readers. Similarly, Rushdie's novel, *Shame* (1983) is a savagely controlled satire of Pakistan's political life that targets especially Pakistani leaders Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and General Muhammad Zia ul-Haq.

Through his writings, he challenged the radical forces of Islamists. He disagrees with any such reclusive theories of which the very title speaks of the quality life and ethics. In fact, it is obvious from his writings, that he took the decree as a humor as no place in the world is safe. Commenting on the modern insecurity, Rushdie writes:

We live in a world without hiding places, the missiles have made sure of that. However much we may wish to return to the womb, we cannot be unborn. So we are left with a fairly straightforward choice. Either we agree to delude ourselves, to lose ourselves in the fantasy of the great fish, for which a second metaphor is that of Pan gloss's garden; or we can do what all human beings do instinctively when they realize that the womb has been lost for ever-that is, we can make the very devil of a racket where Orwell wished quietism, let there be Rowdyism. (99)

Therefore, it is not surprising to find politics almost always drawn into Rushdie's literature. This said it is also important to note that in "In Good Faith", another essay from the same collection, Rushdie speaks of the novelist's right to write as he pleases: "A book is a version of the world. If you do not like it, ignore it; or offer your own version" (412).

M. Madhusudan Rao, one of the contemporary critics of Rushdie is of the opinion that Rushdie's *East, West* gaps the so-called bridge that exists between the east and the west. He opines:

There is nothing like a consistent theme in *East, West*. There are signs, however, of certain key ideas shaping up, of a perspective developing in his writing, which ultimately collect for a larger whole. However, Rushdie revives the Indian tradition of story writings, as in *The Mahabharata*, *The Panchatantra* and thereby claims the coming of Indian form of writings in the western world. (31)

The rhetoric of the novel covers larger features of South Asian nationalities reviving the ways of story telling like that of the ancient Hindu epics.

Commenting further on the anthology, Rao feels that time is an important factor in the anthology of Rushdie. He writes, “The narratives in the collection move from victimizing history to painful anonymity and disintegration, and finally silence” (23). Rao is justified in saying so because Rushdie presents all the major events related to the rise of conflict in communal to global agenda from pre independence to post independence and in a chronological manner.

Rushdie's writings evolve, like a mountain river flowing eastward. They evolve and revolve around the issues of religion, fundamentalism intolerance, and the needs to create a politically democratic and culturally hybrid and, multicultural world. Roa, commenting on Rushdie's way of narration of story writes:

*Shalimar the Clown* is lavishly interspersed with details of religious tussles, communal hatred, and fundamentalist activities. References to the Nazi atrocities on the Jews during and previous to the World War II, terrorist onsets on Western metropolises, and the more-than-a-half-century-long Indo-Pak conflict in Kashmir make the novel an engaging reading of the plight of the present day world in its personal, political and cultural dimensions. *Shalimar the Clown* presents the picture of turbulent world rife with fundamentalist attitudes and terrorist activities born therefore. (67)

The storyline of the novel moves to and fro, from the eastern part of the world to Europe, and to the U.S., from the communal to global issue. At the same time the novel paints a picture of turmoil present in the world. In fact, the reality is no part of the world today is free from disturbances of one or other nature.

There is a connection between the antics of "East" and "West" of *East, West* that Rushdie exhibits as regards his relationship with Islam, politics, and the west. He seems largely liberal on presenting his ideas in section "east," "west" and "east, west" in the respective section of the text. Commenting on his universality of treating texts above religion and community Eric Spanberg in *Science Christian Monitor* writes:

Besides being a phenomenally gifted writer of fiction and criticism, Rushdie is also a political novelist, an early veteran of the current clash between Islam and the west and eastern ethics to that of the western ethics. His special relation with multiplicity of ideas of the east and west of its residence in the western metropolis, has made him a public figure that is constantly sought after by the media to comment on the political development or the so-called terrorist crises. (14)

On a more artistic plane too, he is asked to comment on the elusive connections between the art of the novel and the art of the orator or demagogue, and the rhetoric of the western power houses.

Rushdie in *East, West* seems to be taking social responsibility of bridging gap between the two different polar of the world, its people and civilization. However, he has to appear to be convinced of the distance between the art world and the real world, if only for the sake of his own freedom. Otherwise, the intolerant forces and fundamentalist elements would take issues claiming his novels have blasphemed their faith. But this dual instance has created confusion both for his admirers and his detectors. His defensiveness of art as a free domain is a symptom of a confusion that mars his reputation as a critical writer and thinker.

Commenting on the social and political fusion invited by the *East, West* Dougary Ginny writes:

Regardless of the proliferation of news reports, or even because of it, *East, West* has a role to play in enlarging our awareness of suffering and its causes. Specially, in providing a counterbalancing account of the activities of the political structures, Rushdie literature has a commendable status that penetrates into the east and the west and into people's slow but steady sufferings. (27)

*East, West* is one of the finest collections of ideas and stories that joins, in one hand and exposes on other hand the people of separate hemisphere.

Communalism is another topic of *East, West*. Today, communalism has become a global issue. It has broken the barrier of mere religion and local politics but has gained an international status. Unfortunately, today no nations from the Latin America to Central and America, from Europe to Africa and Asia are free of communal issues and its impact on their people and community. In the postmodern scenario communal issues has crossed the frontiers of the nations and has become international. John C. Hawley in the context writes:

The focus of this novel is extremism. It tells the tale of two Kashmiri villages whose inhabitants gradually get caught up in communal violence. As we know from Yugoslavia, hatred takes on especially horrific manifestations when neighbors turn against each other. Their passion of hatred originates from a marriage solemnized by both Hindu and Muslim rites and reaches as far as Europe and America. (910)

The global scenario of breath taking pace of development has affected all the sectors of social life of a small remote village to international forum. So, is terrorism in the present context has crossed the barriers of all mere India or Pakistan to Europe and the United States of America.

There are several issues in the anthology; however, the present researcher will take the collection from the perspective of counter against the western obsession. For the same,

the second chapter will be a comprehensive study of Hybridity, Diaspora and Culture to penetrate into the global complexities of the existing era. Similarly, the third chapter will be a thorough analysis of how Diaspora has had helped the eastern people to lessen their gap with western counterparts, followed by a fourth chapter, conclusion.

## II. Diaspora, Hybridity and Culture

### II. 1. Diaspora

The literary meaning of the term 'Diaspora' is scattering of language, culture and people, who were formerly concentrated in same place. It has its origin in Greek term *dispeirein* which means disperse or scatter. In ancient Greek, Diaspora was conceived as migration and colonization. In historical actualization, Diaspora referred to the Jewish communities outside Israel. Traditionally, Jews outside Israel considered themselves in exile (Hebrew *galut*), but many Jews no longer hold this view. Interpreting this historical approach, Simon Blackburn in *Dictionary of Philosophy* writes:

The Jewish Diaspora began with the exile of Judaeans to Babylonia by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC. The majority of Judaeans remained in Babylonia even after the refounding of Jerusalem. Under Hellenistic rulers, large numbers of Jews settled in Alexandria. During the Graeco-Roman period, Jews settled throughout Asia Minor and southern Europe. Many Jewish prisoners of war were brought to Rome after the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. (105)

However, this migration did not stop there, and from Italy, Jews migrated to France and Germany, and from there to England, Scandinavia, and Eastern Europe, becoming known as Ashkenazim. Under the sway of Islam, Jews from North Africa moved westwards into the Iberian Peninsula. Expelled by Christian rulers in the 15th century, these Jews, known as Sephardim, resettled in the Netherlands, the Balkans, Turkey, Palestine, and the Americas. In the 19th and 20th centuries, large numbers of central and east European Jews went to North America and, after World War II, Jews of all groups immigrated to Israel.

However, in modern time, the term has acquired a more sinister and brutal meaning. According to Blackburn in modern days, Diaspora signifies to "a collective trauma, a

banishment, where one dreamed of home but lived in exile" (105). R. Radhakrishnan's book *Diasporic Mediation* defines Diaspora as the space of hyphen that tries to coordinate with the identity which is related to the place of origin with that of present home. He writes:

The Diasporic location is the space of the hyphen that tries to coordinate within an evolving relationship, the identity politics of one's place of origin with that of one's present home. The term is not used either as a mark of privilege or as a universally representative human condition. . . . As a matter of fact Diaspora strongly contests such a comfortable universalization of Diasporic perspectives. (Introduction, xiii)

Diasporic subjectivity is thus necessarily double: acknowledging the imperatives of an earlier "elsewhere" in an active and critical relationship with the cultural politics of one's present home, all within the figurality of a reciprocal displacement. 'Home' then becomes a mode of interpretive in-betweenness, as a form of accountability to more than one location.

The Diasporic people can never be the first class people in the alien world. The hyphen between them (African-American) always create we and other. Thus, the migrated people feel themselves alienated and search for their identity. Similarly, Leela Gandhi's book *Postcolonial Theory* defines Diaspora as trauma of displacement either it is of Jewish or Africans. He writes "Diaspora' evokes the specific traumas of human displacement-whether of the Jews or a Africans Scattered in the service of slavery and indentures" (131).

The world Diaspora suggests, therefore, a linkage asserted in the context of exile from a homeland, and a unity maintained in the varying circumstances confronting a scattered population. Such a concept refers by extension to other dispersed peoples, such as those exile Americans who resettled across much of Europe and Asia from the eleventh century and throughout the period of Ottoman Empire. While we cannot think of Diaspora without regard

to Jewish history, we must beware of making this history normative for our understanding of the concept.

The problem of definition arises whenever a new field of academic study is developed. For a number of reasons the need for a clear definition is particularly evident in the case of ethnic Diasporas. As Gabriel Sheffer defines:

Ethnic Diasporas are created either by voluntary migration (e.g. Turks to West Germany) or as a result of expulsion from the homelands (e.g. the Jews and the Palestinians) and settlement in one or more host, countries. In these host countries the Diasporas remain minority groups. In their host countries Diasporas preserve their ethnic or ethnic religious identity and communal solidarity. (9)

In order to avoid undesirable conflicts with the norms and laws established by the dominant group in their host countries, the Diasporas accept certain rules of the game of these countries. At certain periods, dual authority patterns may create tension between elements in the host country and the Diasporas.

One result of capitalism's global expansion was the voluntary and forcible dispersion of increasing numbers of people and it is in relation to these impelled dislocations of modern history that the concept of Diaspora becomes more widely germane as displaced populations attempted to trace a story of unity in the face of dislocation and alienation. At the same time, the rise of nationalism as the single most prominent form of modern communal organization give the idea of the 'homeland' a one state-oriented connotation, associating it with political and popular self, determination. In the wake of the French revolution, for example, it was the Diaspora of Greek intellectuals across Europe that was instrumental in campaigning for an independent Greek homeland which meant also an autonomous Greek state.

From the point of view of imperial history, however, the most obvious and most brutally achieved example of forced dislocation is that of African within the Americans and elsewhere as a result of the slave trade. Particularly in this context, where the exile population was denied control or cultural representation in the new world, it becomes a political act to affirm the oneness of the dispossessed.

In the context of global migration the ideas of Diaspora and of Diasporic culture have become more, not less, significant and continue to be grounded on the assertion of a unity based on something conceived of as sufficiently fundamental to override geographical separation. The fundamental something, of course, might be precisely the promise of a future, restored geographical unity as in dreams of a Kashmiri homeland. Unity between scattered peoples can also be asserted on the basis of shared religious projects, shared blood ties, shared melanin levels, or shared histories of dispersion. Many of these discourses of unity are developed in the face of on going racism or prejudice; many are also manipulated by ruling groups within Diaspora populations for their own purposes of control.

In postcolonial studies, however, the concept of Diaspora often carries the ant essentialist freight as the concept of hybridity. For a writer like Stuart Hall, the notion of culture as Diasporic registers the fact that ideas essential unity based in blood or land are, at best, fictions which people put to think of themselves as a single congregation: cultural identities are the points of identification, the unstable points of identification as sutures, which are made, within the discourses of history and culture. In this theoretical context, Diaspora becomes a term of critical intervention against the essentializing categories used to control and delimit peoples including such nations as are employed by elites within diasporas themselves.

In short, "diaspora is taken to have the same kind of critical charge as hybridity, a conjecture that exposes the formulation of identity as a positioning, or as a project,

repudiating the idea of a definite and stable home" (Andrew Smith, 256). Thus, diaspora is a position from where people desire definite and stable home.

The colonial and postcolonial countries can be the appropriate places to analyze nation and nationalism rather than the west. The feeling of nation and nationalism affected the whole social and political life of the colonizer and colonized during the period of direct colonial involvement and postcolonial time. The national and independent movements abused trouble to the colonized and decolonized people. Homi K. Bhabha's project is a theoretical model which manifests the difficulties that a writer has to face with reference to cultural ambivalence of the people. Culture is of supreme importance for both Bhabha and other cultural critics because the nation is the conglomeration of cultural policies. Nation can formulate its identity only through cultural manifestations. But, only through national and nationalism, cultural project is possible. In his book *Nation and Narration* Bhabha writes, "The nation, as a form of cultural elaboration, is an agency of ambivalent narration that holds culture at its most productive position, as a force for subordination, fracturing, diffusing reproducing as much as creating, producing, forcing and guiding" (4).

The nation in this sense is the sum total of cultural practices, which ultimately contributes to national identity. It describes other cultures in terms of differences so as to put the self in the superior position where culture acts as a force for subordination. Bhabha disseminates about the time narrative and the margins of the modern nations. However, he is concerned with the formulation of 'the complex strategies of cultural identification and describes address that functions in the name of 'the people' or the nation and make them the immanent subjects and objects of range of social and literary narrative (192). His focus on nation is a form of the locality of culture that paves the way for the temporal dimension in the study of as narration. The locality of culture for Bhabha is:

More around temporality than about historically: a form of living that is connotative than country less patriotic than parties more rhetorical than the reason of state more mythological than ideology, less homogenous than hegemony; less centered than citizen more collective than subjective, more cyclic than civility, more hybrid in the articulation of cultural difference and identification's gender, race clues than can be represented in any hierarchical or binary structuring of socio antagonism. (292)

Bhabha further argues:

It is neither sociological study of these terms, nor their holistic history that gives them the narrative and psychological forces that they have brought to be a cultural production and projections. It is the man of ambivalence of the nation as a narrative strategy and an apparatus of power that produces a continual slippage into analogous, even metonymic categories, like the people, the minorities and cultural differences that continually overlap in the act of writing the nation. (292)

Such an argument shows that there is always on kind a controversy between the idea of the historical necessity of the nation and the arbitrary signs and symbols. It signifies the effective life of the national culture as Bhabha quotes E. Gellner's words and says that "nationalism is not what it seems and above all not what it seems to itself . . . cultural shared and patched used by nationalism are often arbitrary and historical investments" (293). Postcolonial writers like Rushdie showed the shortcomings of nationalism. He mocks the boarder lines of the world's nations. He cold not find nationalism nowadays; particularly after the independence. He questioned about the socio-cultural aspect of decolonized nation. The ideologies, awareness and consciousness grow rapidly. Life in third world countries will be painful, if the people do not trample, the nationalistic feeling. Leela Gandhi argues that the impact of

cultural materialism upon critical practices in postcolonial literature of the mid 1980's conceded the national underpinnings of all cultures. She in her book *Postcolonial Theory* says:

Text, as is now commonly agreed, are implicated in their economic and poetical contexts. Few critics would despite the understanding that all literature is symptomatic of and responsive to, historical conditions of repression and recuperation. Whole postcolonial literary theory invokes these cultural materialists assumptions in its account of textual production under colonial and post colonial conditions. It goes a step further in its claim that sexuality is endemic to the colonial encounter. Texts, more than any other social political product, it is argued, are the most significant instigators and purveyors of colonial power and its double, post colonial resistance. (141-142)

Literature and text are based on colonial and postcolonial conditions. The most important aspects of socio-cultural and individual life are economics and politics. These two aspects play an important role to produce literature. Literature concerns common people. After independence, literary artists are sometimes influential and sometimes they are influenced by the colonial masters. Leela Gandhi once more says:

The postulation of Romanticism as the 'originary moment', if you like, of textual politics, is particularly pertinent. For in the textual obsessions of postcolonial literary theory we might read the first symptoms of a process where by metropolitan culture obtains an especially 'romantic' investment in post colonial literature and its migrant writers. These texts/writers and often seen to embody energies and values allegedly or under thereat in the postcolonial world. And these values as we have seen already, are animated by single concept, namely, hybridity. (161)

Fragmentation is an element of postcolonial ideology. No rigid ideology or conception remains, no discipline and be studied independently. One should simultaneously study, literature, economics, politics, history, geography etc. Notably, while these accounts 'romanticise' the postcolonial writer's vision for 'marginalized' postcolonial societies, they simultaneously insist that postcolonial texts characteristically write back to the metropolitan center. Postcolonialism, too, insists on rupturing the centre/margin hierarchy like as post structuralism. Bill Ashcroft's *The Postcolonial Studies Reader* articulates the issue vigorously and find similarity between the postcolonilism and structuralism. He writes:

"Poststructuralism the destruction of centralized logocentric master narratives of European culture is very similar to the post colonial project of dismantling the culture/margin binaries of imperial discourse (61).

Similarly, the intellectual history of postolonial theory is marked by a dialectic between Marxism, on the one hand, and poststruturalism/postmodernism, on the other. So, too this theoretical contestation informs the academic content of postcolonial analysis, manifesting itself in an ongoing debate between the competing claims of nationalism and internationalism, strategic essentialism and hybridity, solidarity and dispersal, the politics of structure totality and the poetics of fragment. Leela Gandhi and some point to clarify the idea:

Critics on both sides of this divide are persuasive in their claims, and compelling in their critique on theoretical opponents. Neither the assertions of Marxism nor those of poststructuralism, however, can exhaustively account for the meanings and consequences of colonial encounter. While the poststructuralist critique of western epistemology and theorization of cultural alterity/difference is indispensable to postcolonial theory, materialist philosophies, such a Marxism, seem to supply the most compelling basis for postcolonial politics. Thus, the postcolonial critic has do work towards a synthesis of or negotiation

between, both modes of thought. In a sense, it is an account of its commitment to this project of theoretical and political integration that post colonialism deserves academic attention.

There is the question of postcolonial constituency- the cultural audience for whom its theoretical disquisitions are most meaningful. There is a little doubt that in its current mood postcolonial theory principally addresses the needs of the western academy. It attempts to reform the intellectual and epistemological exclusions of this academy, and enables non-western critics located in the west to present their cultural inheritance as knowledge. This is of course, a worthwhile project and, to an extent, its efforts have been rewarded. The Anglo American humanities academy has gradually stretched its disciplinary boundaries to non-western world. But of course, what postcolonialism fails to recognize is that counts as 'marginal' in relation to the west has often been central and foundational in the non-west. Thus, while it may be revolutionary to teach Gandhi as political theory in the Anglo-American academy, he is, and has always been, canonical in India. Despite its good intentions, then, post-colonialism continues to render non-western knowledge and culture as 'other' in relation to the normative self of western epistemology and rationality

To conclude, postcolonialism has poststructuralist and Marxist parentage to "diagnose the material effect and implication of colonialism" (Gandhi, 26). As post structuralism, it insists to rupture the hierarchy of 'center' and 'margin' of European construction and it is to bring 'subaltern' voice into center as Marxism does for proletariat.

Post colonialism emerged as a distinct category only in 1990s. It has gained popularity through the influence of such books: *Other Worlds* by Gayatri Spivak, *The Empire Writes Back* by Bill Ashcroft et al. *Nation and Narration* by Homi K. Bhabha and Edward Saids' *Orientalism*. The main focus of this school of thought is the rejection of master narrative of western imperialism, in which the colonial other is not only subordinated and marginalized, but in effect deleted as a cultural agency and its replacement by a counter

narratives in which the colonial cultures fight their way back into a world history written by Europeans.

In the last decade postcolonialism has taken its place with theories such as poststructuralism, psychoanalysis and feminism as a major critical discourse in the humanities. As a consequence of its diverse and interdisciplinary usage, this body of thought has generated an enormous corpus of specialized academic writing, nevertheless, although much has been written under its rubric, 'Postcolonialism' itself remain a diffuse and nebulous term. Unlike Marxism or deconstruction, for instance, it seems to lack an 'originary moment' or a coherent methodology. Though Marxism and deconstruction challenge the legacy of colonialism, they can't remain aloof from master narrative that put Europe at its center. Thus, recent postcolonial criticism, seeks to undo the Eurocentrism produced by the institution of the west's trajectory. It does so, however, with the acute realization that postcoloniality is not born and nurtured in a panoptic distance from history.

Gayatri Spivak's *Outside in the Teaching Machine* defines postcoloniality as "the heritage of imperialism in the rest of the globe" (80). The line of demarcation between the so called 'colonial' and 'postcolonial' intellectuals was that the 'colonial' one spoke from positions imbibed from metropolitan culture while 'postcolonial' ones spoke from outside those positions. That argument was unsustainable enough, now, in Spivak's formulation, postcoloniality itself equals the heritage of imperialism which the postcolonial critic inhabits deconstructively or, as Bhabha would say, ambivalent. The legacy of imperialism that Spivak identifies in this passage consists almost entirely of political concepts and practices, nationhood, constitutionality, citizenship, democracy, socialism-for which according to her, no historically adequate referent may be advanced from post colonial space.

Postcolonialism articulates emergence of newly formulated idea of nation and individual identifies rejecting the western tradition. Although it studies the ideological and

cultural impact of western colonialism and it is in particular, aftermath and accommodates itself to hybridity, syncretism, diaspora, migrancy etc. to bring the minority voice into the center, many people claim of the continuation of western colonization in different forms. In her book *Post Colonial Theory* Gandhi asserts:

Postcolonialism can be seen as a theoretical resistance to the mystifying amnesia of colonial aftermath. It is a disciplinary project devoted to the academic task of revisiting, remembering and crucially, interrogating the colonial past. The process of returning to colonial scene discloses a relationship of reciprocal antagonism and desire between colonizer and colonized. (4)

The political experiences and practices of the colonial past are theorized from the enlightened perspective of the present. It helps to know "culture and political identities of colonized subjects" (Gandhi, 5). This awareness leads postcolonial people to create their individual as well as national identity as it is done by Salman Rushdie, Michael Ondaatje etc.

Postcolonial literature presents cross-cultural scenario which is complex as well as hybrid, at best Bill Ashcroft in his famous book *The empire Writes Back* posits similar view regarding postcolonial literature. He writes, "All post colonial literatures are cross-cultural (Ashcroft et al. 39); the postcolonial text is always a complex and hybridized formation (110); hybridity is the primary characteristics of all post-colonial societies whatever their source" (185).

## **II. 2. Hybridity**

Hybridity comes from the term 'hybrid,' which in turn is derived from Latin word *hybrida* which means 'combining of two different species or elements.' However, in the modern times, it is one of the most widely employed and most disputed terms in literature. It commonly refers to the creation of new transcultural

forms within the contact zone produced by colonization. Hybridization takes many forms: linguistic, cultural, political, racial, etc.

In linguistic examples, it include Pidgin and Creole languages, and this echoes the foundational use of the term by the linguist and cultural theorist, like Mikhail Bakhtin, who used it to suggest the disruptive and transfiguring power of multi-vocal language situations and, by extension, of multi-vocal narratives. The idea of polyphony of voices in society is implied also in Bakhtin's idea of the carnivalesque; which emerged in the Middle Ages

The assertion of a shared post-colonial condition such as hybridity has been seen as part of the tendency of discourse analysis to de-historicize and de-locate cultures from their temporal, spatial, geographical and linguistic contexts and to lead to an abstract, globalized concept of the textual that obscures the specificities of particular cultural situations. Pointing out that the investigation of the discursive construction of colonialism does not seek to replace or exclude other forms such as historical, geographical, economic, military or political, Robert Young suggests that the contribution of colonial discourse analysis, in which concepts such as hybridity are couched, provides a significant framework for that other work by emphasizing that all perspectives on colonialism share and have to deal with a common discursive medium which was also that of colonialism itself. Colonial discourse analysis can therefore look at the wide variety of texts of colonialism as something more than mere documentation or 'evidence.'

However, Young himself offers a number of objections to the indiscriminate use of the term. He notes how influential the term 'hybridity' was in imperial and colonial discourse in negative accounts of the union of disparate races-accounts that implied that unless actively and persistently cultivated, such hybrids would

inevitably revert to their 'primitive' stock. Hybridity thus became, particularly at the turn of the century, part of a colonialist discourse of racism. Young draws our attention to the dangers of employing a term so rooted in a previous set of racist assumptions, but he also notes that there is a difference between unconscious processes of hybrid mixture, or creolization, and a conscious and politically motivated concern with the deliberate disruption of homogeneity. He notes that for Bakhtin, for example, hybridity is politicized, made contestatory, so that it embraces the subversion and challenge of division and separation. Bakhtin's hybridity sets different points of view against each other in a conflicted structure, which retains "a certain elemental, organic energy of hybridity to reverse the structures of domination in the colonial situation" (23), which Young recognizes, that Bhabha also articulates. Bakhtin's intentional hybrid has been transformed by Bhabha into an active moment of challenge and resistance against a dominant colonial power ... depriving the imposed imperialist culture, not only of the authority that it has for so long imposed, politically, often through violence, but even of its own claims to authenticity.

Young does, however, warn of 'the' unconscious process of repetition involved in the contemporary use of the term. According to him, when talking about hybridity, contemporary cultural discourse cannot escape the connection with the racial categories of the past in which hybridity had such a clear racial meaning. Therefore deconstructing such essentialist notions of race today we may rather be repeating the fixation on race in the past than distancing ourselves from it, or providing a critique of it. This is a subtle and persuasive objection to the concept; however in a more positive manner. Young also notes that the term indicates a broader insistence in many twentieth-century disciplines, from physics to genetics, upon 'a double logic, which owes against the convention of rational either/or choices, but which is

repeated in science in the split between the incompatible coexisting logics of classical and quantum physics' (26). In this sense, as in much else in the structuralist and post-structuralist legacy, the concept of hybridity emphasizes a typically twentieth-century concern with relations within a field rather than with an analysis of discrete objects, seeing meaning as the produce of such relations rather than as intrinsic to specific events or objects.

Whilst assertions of national culture and of pre-colonial traditions have played an important role in creating anti-colonial discourse and in arguing for an active decolonizing project, theories of the hybrid nature of post-colonial culture assert a different model for resistance, locating this in the subversive counter-discursive practice implicit in the colonial ambivalence itself and so undermining the very basis on which imperialist and colonialist discourse raises its claims of superiority.

### **II. 3. Culture**

Culture in simple understanding is a set of shared beliefs and values of groups of person living in a larger community. It compromise of beliefs, customs, practices, and social behavior of a particular nation or people. According to Blackburn, culture is, "The way of living of a people, including their attitudes, values, beliefs, arts, sciences, modes of perception, and habits of thought and activity. Cultural features of forms of life are learned but are often too pervasive to be readily noticed from within" (90). As such, culture, in most communities are determining aspects of determining an individual's mannerism.

Critics licensed with cultural discourse of suspicious on the part of colonized people, seeks to undermine the imperial subject. It has forcefully produced parallel discourses which have questioned stereotypes about myths. The power and authority of western colonial representation have been questioned and challenged by the discourses produced by the people supposed to be subordinates. Those post-colonials writes and critics turned the table from the

real situation of the colonial countries and presented the colonial history from the perspective of colonized people's experiences. By doing this, they revealed what the colonial authority did in the name of progress, science and civilization. Frantz Fanon, one of the eminent postcolonial writers and critics, seems to be more radical on this issue. Said in his *Culture and Imperialism* writes about Fanon:

Fanon reverses the hitherto accepted paradigm by which Europe gave the colonies their modernity and argues instead that not only were the well being and the progress Europe built up the sweat and the dead bodies of Negroes, Arabs, Indians and the yellow Races but Europe is literally the creation of the third world. (197)

Whereas, Boehmer in *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature*, writes:

The wretched of the both, Fanon called for the entire structure of colonial society to be changed from the bottom up violently. For him to decolonize meant that the indigenous be forcefully substituted for the alien, in literature as in life colonized had to 'insult and 'varmint' up white mans value. (182)

Emerging from displacement and dereliction of social marginality, the post colonial writer produced parallel discourse in order to re-inscribe and relocate cultural differences. Many writers of the colonial period, influenced and encouraged by the postcolonial tenants based their narrative on ideological premises regarding cultural differences. From the perspective of colonized people, colonizers debunked western colonial misrepresentation about themselves. The narratives of the third world writers are designed in such a way to form and change the ideological process of misrepresentations. These writers have made vigorous attempts to restudy, reinterpret and even to rewrite their own history. Postcolonial writers and critics, by subverting the colonial perspective, played a crucial role in reinserting the colonial history. They were concerned about creating/recreating their own history to give the cultural

definition of their own. In the process of developing national history, self meaning of a nation emerged with imagination/writing about the nation. Appropriate definition of a nation was much more complicated in such writing. With reference to concepts of nationalism and new nationalism, Boehmer writes:

The early moment of anti-imperialist rationalist or more accurately, nationalist or more accurately, 'nativist resistance was in many cases a reliability sedate preliminary to the more offer to the more overt libertinism which followed. But it also laid the ideological and strategy bedrock of later developments. As with earlier nationalism, the movement sought, in the first instance an inversion of imperial value, if not of structures. Their messianism drew support from other utopian ideologies of the time. (For example, Marxism, Fabianism, and Versions of Christinity). The message they communicated was distinguished a strenuous defense of the virtues of native culture characterized as reach, pure and authentic (hence the term nativist). The idea was that a people's identity, though long suppressed, lay embedded in its cultural origins and was recoverable intact unadulterated by the depredations of Colonialism (180).

However, since the 1990s, under the pressure of reaction to the Gulf war and the prevalence of debates over post-modernism and modernity, issue relating to cultural diversity and multiculturalism emerged which further challenged a still entrenched monoculturalism. Pluralists such as Henry Louis Gates and Edward said embrace the idea that, I modernity, culture is hybrid and interactive and is therefore never contained clearly in the form of ethnic groups but travels between groups, multiplying and continually mutating.

Radhakrishnan in his book *The Use and Abuse of Multiculturalism* defines multiculturalism as an eccentric field where the spirit of self-consciencization founds all social process. He writes:

Culturalism has to be thought as an eccentric and isotopic field that is not to be mastered by the will to dominance of any one subject. The only way to honor and enter the multicultural field is in a spirit of self-reflexivity, self-consciencization, and submission to that radical alterity that founds all social process in opposition to egocentric ideas of self and other. (34)

Radhakrishnan is of the view that as long as multiculturalism is perceived as a subset of the identity theme and its inevitable entanglement with the binaries of self and other it is doomed to failure. Within the aegis of identity politics multiculturalism can at best tantalize the self with the exotic distance of alterity, all the while making sure that this distance will never be negotiated in the name of Coeval rationality. The only options are to 'eat the other', to use Bell hooks' ringing phrase, become the other though an act of histrionic virtuosity, or just ignore the other as non-negotiable different. All these options are hopelessly locked within the Manichaeism of the identity-difference game. Any honest attempt to embodying multiculturalism as social value and praxis has to step beyond the reified rhetoric of self and other, of identity and difference, in a spirit of de-centered multilateralism. He further adds:

Multiculturalism could be developed along the lines of social justice, egalitarian democratic participation, and the ideological yet multilateral production of social consensus and dissent. On the other hand, multiculturalism could be commoditized and aestheticized and packaged as an exciting consumable collage: brown hands holding yellow hands holding white hands holding male hands holding female hands holding back hand in a spirit of post-historical contemporaneity. (40)

The meaning of multiculturalism is far from transparent. It is indeed a contradictorily coded term that, depending upon how and from what point of view it is articulated, stands in for a range of contradictory social phenomena. Multiculturalism promotes the insidious belief that all the different groups occupy an even playing field, encourages historical amnesia, and by creating an immanent spectacle conceals the actual center of power that remains external to the constitution of the college and thereby controls and directs the representational politics. It is only by rigorously insisting on the politics of representation that we can steer the culturalists debate towards such dire social issue as equality, distributive justice, and reparation and compensation for crimes and injustices of the past, and the ongoing influence of the past on the present. For it will not be enough to say that a collage style de-territorialization has already enable the 'multi' to speak and to believe that such speaking has rendered absolute relationship that each different culture has to itself representatively and representationally. The symbolic alterity that is doing, all the interpellation of the college is accessible differently and differentially to the brown hand, and the black hand, and the yellow hand and the white hand. But Radhakrishnan thinks "the culturalists form as college misreads both the egalitarian ideal that underlies distributive justice and the recognition politics undertaken in the name of difference" (42). Radhakrishnan further adds:

If the college model of culturalism is erroneous, what indeed is the right model? I would like to advance the thesis that multiculturalism cannot be in complicity with business as usual, and that there are something to be taught and learned here, and something to be corrected and rectified. Rather than run away in fear from the very term 'correctness' radical theorist of multiculturalism need to align 'correction' with 'persuasion' ethnical as well as epistemological, historically and contingently with the idea of realizing 'common ground' among identities, groups and constituencies by

reformulating the very nature of 'interest' and 'its inherence in the politic of perspectives. (42)

Culturalism needs correction with persuasion, ethnical as well as epistemological with the realization of common round among groups, identities by recreating the very nature of interest based on hybridity and Diaspora.

As such, the correction that is being made is not made in the name of any individual, groups, or constituency that has arrogated to itself the privilege, based on suffering: Jewish, Palestinian, Subaltern, or whatever or omniscience and eternal correctness. All happenings are historically contingent and the perspective that initiates the correction is itself not invulnerable to error and oppression. No perspective has a monopolistic hold over the ethnic's political concept of humanity. Rather, the correction is made in the name of a transcendent human principle or value that is more worthwhile and precious than the egotism or the moral righteousness of any one group. As such, Diaspora, Hybridity and Culture are the essence of the determination of the modern day society's distinctiveness, as no society is free from its impact.

### III. Counter against the Western Hegemony in *East, West*

Rushdie's *East, West* is an anthology of stories covering three different parts of the world, the east, the west and the east, west. The world at the twenty first century is fast turning into a global social order, sans first world hegemony. The rapid development in the field of science and technology and its easy access to the general public has dramatically altered the first world supremacy. Besides, it also has played an important role in bridging the existing gap on culture and traditions between the people of various ethics, religions, societies and nations. It has altogether facilitated people of various culture, religion and belief from the various parts of the world to march towards a common social and cultural order.

Rushdie's *East, West* has articulated an important question in regards of the life of migrant and Diaspora. Diaspora has become a common form of experience, of migration or exile, generating fissured identities and hybridity alongside problems of dislocation and dispossession and a large problem of a lost center. Rushdie explores the universal mystery of being born and puzzled of which one is. Beside these, quest for identity, divide selves, double identity and conflict between good and evil and the most recurring themes of his writing. Multiplicity of thematic patterns and poly-angular perspectives in his writing clearly brings forth the multicultural ethos that forms the basis of his writing. Rushdie, an Indian settled in England is familiar with the East-West confrontation and its outcome as the hegemonic impact. He is aware of the western mentality of observing the eastern people and their culture. However, it also has to do with the eastern way of life and downward way of thinking of the eastern people. *East, West* is a literary magic in which Rushdie brings forth the multicultural ethos.

In the first section 'East', there are three stories. They are all about Indian people, culture and village anecdotes. The first story in the collection, *Good Advice is Rarer than Rubies* presents many oriental stereotypes. Miss Rehana, whose eyes were "large and black

and bright" (5) meets the crook, Muhammad Ali, outside the British consulate. "Muhammad Ali who specialized in advising the most vulnerable-looking the weekly supplicants, found his feet leading him towards the strange, big eyed independent girl" (6). Then Ali asked her. "Please, you allow me to give some advice? Small cost only" (6). As an answer to the Ali's question she replied, 'Good Advice is rarer than Rubies', I can not pay I'm an orphan, not one of your wealthy ladies" (6). In a conversation peppered with proverbs and clichés, Ali tells her what she must do to obtain the coveted visa.

There are people like Muhammad Ali, who in *Good Advice is Rarer than Rubies* make their living by confusing and manipulating the meek people in an attempt to justify that the western people are low and cheat. Similarly, Rehana, an innocent girl who has come to the British Consulate for a Visa Interview to Bradford, England are misguided by their own countryman. It is not the Britons who mislead Rehana, but one of her fellow countrymen, Ali, who, manipulates her as, ". . . the sahibs thought that all the women who came on Tuesdays, claiming to be dependents of bus drivers in Luton or chartered accountants in Manchester, were crooks and liars and cheats" (9). However, the fact is, there is nothing like the sorts being asked in the interview.

Ali, in fact is a broker, who makes his living by making fool of innocents like Rehana. Moreover, there are other people, who willingly would like to contribute for Ali's favor, as they are easily lured into the net spread by Ali. He makes them believe as:

They will ask you how many rooms are in your family home, and what colors are the walls, and what days do you empty rubbish. They will ask your man's mother's third cousin's aunt's step-daughter's middle name. And all these things they have already asked your Mustafa Dai in his Bradford. And if you make one mistake, you are finished. (9)

Furthermore, he also is engaged in fake passport, as he suggests to Rehana that the journey to England would be easily done in the passport available to her by him. He offers her:

His voice fell low-as-low.

'Miss Rehana, it is a British passport. Completely genuine and pukka goods. I have good friend who will put your name and photo, and then, hey-presto, England there you come!' (11)

So, there are two sets of people, who defy the western obsession by their shrewdness, to earn their living. And, there are like Rehana, who defy the western obsession falling in trap to such cheaps like Muhammad Ali.

Rehana, was nine when she was engaged with a thirty-year-old man and what she had of him was just a photo. She had no memories of him and little she knew about him beside the photo was his voice, which, now she may not recognize. Besides, the charming beauty she also possessed the gut to defy the English attraction to Bradford, and her wannabe husband. Unlike most others, she is more than happy that her visa has been cancelled. As Ali, notices that he had never seen such a lady who was extremely happy on being rejected the visa. Her happiness knows no boundary as she says to Ali:

'Now I will go back to Lahore and my job. I work in a great house, as ayah to three good boys. They would have been sad to see me leave. [. . .] Her last smile, which he watched from the compound until the bus concealed it in a dust-cloud, was the happiest thing he had ever seen in his long, hot, hard, unloving life. (15-16)

So, the mentality of the colonized nation's people is dwindled in the mask of duality. They are often lead by common notion of greed and selfishness, represented by Ali. On the other hand, there are characters like Rehana, who are hard bent to break away from the charm of the western sorcery.

As a writer hailing from a colonized country, he seems to affirm that to be on the side of the human and life, against exploitation of the weak, and violence. The encounter between the dramatically opposite East and the west in the context of human relationships and cultural values constantly engages his attention and gets reflected in his novels. Rushdie himself being the product of both the oriental and the occidental cultures, it is not far-fetched to see in most of his novels, his own experience being filtered. An attempt has been made, in this chapter, to analyze the multicultural issue and cultural encounter in his collection of stories, *East West*.

Muhammad Ali told her the difficulties of getting the coveted visa and the bad nature of the people of Embassy. "She was a sparrow, he told her, and they were men with hooded eyes, like hawks" (9). Thus, he advised her not to go England "I am a poor fellow, and I have offered this prize because you are so beautiful. Do not spite on my generosity. Take the thing. Or else don't take, go home, forget England, only do not go into that building lose your dignity" (12). But she was on her feet, turning away from him, walking towards the gates, where the woman had begun to cluster and the Lala was swearing at them. His experience, he says, has shown him the true character of Indians: "It is the urge of our people, he yelled. We are poor, we are ignorant, and we completely refuse to learn" (12). All the stereotypes that Rushdie carefully builds up are demolished when Miss Rehana chose to fail the test and remain in India. "Now I will go back to Lahore and my hub. I work in a great house, as ayah to three good boys. They would have been sad to see me leave" (15).

In *The Free Radio* another story in the collection is about a Rickshaw-wallah, Ramani after several unfortunate attempts of being a movie star. The narrator takes Ramani, as a cheerful man wrapped in un-fateful incidents, as:

That boy could have had a good life. God had blessed him with God's own looks, and his father had gone to the grave for him, but did not he leave the

boy a brand new first-class rickshaw with plastic covered seats and all? So: looks he had his own trade he had, there would have been a good wife in time, and he should just have taken out some years to save some rupees. (19)

Ramani has good looks and strong body with is own trade of Rickshaw, is attracted by the thief's widow. "But after that Raman, and the thief's widow were seen everywhere shamelessly, in public places, and I was glad his mother was dead because if she had lived to see this her face would have fallen off from shame" (21). Sometimes in those days Ramani came into the street in the evening to meet some friends. They all wore the armbands of the new youth movement. Ramani wore no armband but he went with them because they impressed him, the fool. These armband youth were always flattering Ramani. "Such a handsome chap, they told him, compared to you Shashi Kapoor and Amitabh Bachchan are like lepers only, you should go to Bombay and be put in the motion pictures" (22).

Ramini never know why the armbands groups are flattering him? They flattered him with the dreams because they knew they could take money from him at cards and he would buy them drinks. "So now Ramani's head become filled with these movie dreams" (22). Some days after be was on the way to Bombay and came to say farewell to his teacher. "Goodbye, teacher sahib, I am off to Bombay, where I will become a bigger film star than a Shashi Kapoor or Amitabh Bachchan even" (30). After some months and passed, he wrote his first letter to his teacher. The letter was full of his new career.

How he had been discovered at once, a big studio had given him a test, now they were grooming him for stardom, he spent his days at the Sun 'n' Sand hotel at Juhu beach in the company of top lady artistes, he was buying a big house at Pali hill, built in the split-level mode and incorporating the latest security equipment to protect him from the movie fans. (931)

They were the wonderful letters, brimming with confidence. The Rickshaw-walla Ramani now become great artist with a lot of fans and big house with latest security equipment. The story presents unbelievable reversal of fortune.

'The Prophets Hair' is another story to the collection East where a prophets hair in a silver phial bring about the stunning reversals of fortune to two unsuspecting Indian families. In this grown up fairy tale, tragedies become blessing where blessing are hexes in disguise. The hair which "sits to his day in a closely guarded vault by the shores of loveliest of lakes in the heart of he valley which was once closer than any place on the earth to paradise" (57), provokes tragedies as it's possession forces those who retain it to comfort hidden truths. The attempt to escape from these tragedies led to further trauma. Human's encounter with the thief, for instance, is a reliving of her childhood nightmare:

She saw ailing a gray-haired giant down whose left cheek ran the most sinister of scars, cicatrices in the shape of the letter sin in the Nastaliq script. She was gripped by the insupportably nostalgic notion that the bogeyman of her childhood nursery had risen up to comfort her, because her ayah had always forestalled any incipient acts of disobedience by threatening Human and Atta: you don't watch out and I'll send that on the steal you away-that Sheik sin, the Thief of Thieves. (40)

This Thief of Thieves turns out to be an old man who, "with a parent's absolute love, had made sure that (his four sons) were all provided with a life long source of high income by crippling them at birth, so that, as they dragged themselves around the city, they earned excellent money in the begging business" (53). When, by the miracle of having been in he same house as the hair for a few minutes, the discovered they could walk, the son were 'very properly furious' (57) because they had lost their manner of making a living.

Rushdie as a postcolonial writer deals with the change and continuity strangeness and familiarity, characteristic of our increasingly complex multicultural world. Most of his literature, his creative writing and criticism outline the pivotal themes of trans-cultural situation. That's why his second section 'West' in the Collection *East, West*, deals with the story of western people and culture. Rushdie, focusing upon the localization creates a novel east, west where the rudimentary ideas about nation and identity are blurred. Nation and identity are supposed to be defined within strict national and cultural borders. But *East, West* by Rushdie focuses upon the identity, which keeps on shifting due to the changing locality. To be clearer, Rushdie envisions a nation where national and cultural boundaries are blurred. By merging 'East' and West in a single collection of stories, Rushdie is focusing upon multiculturalism.

'Yorick' is the first story of the west section, where the story of Hamlet is said in the style of *Tristan Shandy*. This story is a retelling of Hamlet from the lips of the disgruntled court jester.

Hamlet plots-that king Claudius must be accused of his brothers' murder, and Yorick's execution must be shown to be the camouflage, the arras behind which the truth was hid-so Murder's specter is invoked a second time, and Hamlet, in his mother loving passion, sees it walk the battlements of Elsinore.

(82)

Rushdie's treatment of this story, is based on fantasy. It makes us clear that the well known events of western literature and history are beyond revision or exempt from fantasy. The positional strategy that defines the relationship between East and West are subverted in this text. Rushdie's purpose is clear and his irony explicit, as he presents for instance:

Yorick's saga, of course: that same ancient account which fell, near enough two hundred and thirty-five years ago, into the hands of a certain-no, a mot

uncertain-*Tristram*, who (although yseult) was neither triste nor ram, the farthest, most heady shady of a follow . . . Truly, a voluminous history which! It's my present intent not merely to abbreviate, but in addition, to explicate annotate, hyphenate, palatinate and permanganate- for it's a narrative that richly regards the scholar who is competent to apply such sensitive technologies. (64)

Thus, Rushdie depicts the eastern notion, or the Diasporic notion of the Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. In doing so, he is helping in the fall of the popular supremacy of the east to that of the west.

Similarly, another story under the West section is *At the Auction of the Ruby Slippers*, which contains a diatribe on the relationship of fantasy to reality and the blurred boundary that totalitarian state, fiction is feared because if further thought by furnishing alternatives to accepted assumptions and creeds, rendering ways to escape imposed reality. Fictions are dangerous the alarmed consumerist narrator warns, because "we may simply float way from our desires and see them a new from a distance, so that they seem weightless and trivial" (102). He further reflects that:

This permeation of the real world by the fictional is a symptom of the moral decay of our post-millennial culture. Heroes step down of cinema screen and marry members of the audience. Will there be no end to it? Should there be more rigorous controls? Is the state employing insufficient violence? We debate such question often. There can be little doubt that a large majority of us opposes the free, unrestricted migration of imaginary beings into an already damaged reality, which resources diminish by the day. After all few of us would choose to travel in the opposite direction (though there are persuasive

reports of an increase in such migrations of an increase in such migrations lately). (94-95)

The narrator of this story is conscious of the omnipresence of fiction in his life. Needs the ruby slippers, themselves a fictional creation, to bring back the woman he loved? This dream, he sees is a reality that may have been inexorably turned into fantasy. "I am aware that, after all these years of separation and non-communication, the gale I adore is not entirely a real person. The real gale has become confused with my re-imagining of her, with my private elaboration of our continuing life together now be beyond our grasp, ineffable" (96). The overlapping of the two worlds results in the inability to separate them: there is equivalence between the reality of woman he loved and the necessary fiction he has had to create to keep her alive for him.

This story offers the dispiriting spectacle of the world where the only firmly held values seems to be those of the market place on the one hand and religious fundamentalism on the other, as all bidders compete for a piece of Hollywood memorabilia. The fundamentalists have openly stated that they are interested to buy the magic foot wear only in order to burn it, and this is not, in the view of the liberal auctioneers, a reprehensible program as narrated, "Next week there is another auction. Family tress, coats of arms royal lineage will be up for sale and into any of these one may insert any name one chooses. One's own or one's beloved's Canine and Feline pedigrees will be on offer too: Alsatian Burmese saluki, Siamese, Cairn terrier" (103).

Further provisioning of the positional strategy is evident in the third story, in which he presents the travails of the Italian Columbus in the Spanish court, an account that positions the westerner as one of those foreigners who among other things. "Forget their place. Given time, they begin to think of themselves as our equals" (108). Rushdie further adds:

Foreigners can be dogged. And can also, on account of language difficulties, fail to take a hint. They again, let us not forget, it is considered derring to keep a few foreigners around. They lend the place a certain cosmopolitan tone. They are often poor and consequently willing to perform divers necessary but dirty jobs. They are moreover, a warning against complacency, their existence in our midst reminding us that there are quarters in which (hard to accept) we ourselves would be considered foreigners, too. (108)

The final section present the new order Rushdie envisage, in which the East and the West are fused, presenting us with the intricacies of a world that explicitly eliminates the possibility of their separation. This fusion of the East and West suggests a corollary in literature. The traditionally opposed East and West are not so different after all, Rushdie seems to argue. This seeming contradiction must be accepted, Rushdie claims, because it is a faithful reflection of life and history. If history created complexities, let us not try to simplify them. He states in *Imaginary Homelands*, adding "history is always ambiguous" (25). The author, experiments with the fusion of opposites, unveils the fantasy behind the real, and demonstrates that the West is in fact only part of the East.

He attempts to combine the facts of history; biography and autobiography challenge the frontiers of fantasy. Rush die's narrative ideology gives rise to a particular use of genre, in which each genre defuses the other, and the mythic/romance mode defuses itself. Rushdie's use of myth and fiction liberates him from Western hegemonic strategies of containment, at the same time, by using the comic/surreal mode to defuse myth; he is able to avoid historical petrification. Through the stories collected in this section, Rushdie attempts to establish human relationship with other individuals and through them with community and humanity; a multicultural perspective that widens and enlarges the frontiers of thought, an important literary characteristics.

“East, West,” one of the last stories is a powerful depiction of falling of the cultural ethos through different characters like Khan, Merry, Mixed-up, etc. 'The Harmony of the Spheres' explores Eliot crane's struggle to be a writer. He is befriended by Khan, a skeptical Indian in 1960s Cambridge who was "suffering from the disharmony of my personal spheres . . . and beyond it a number of difficult question about home and identity" (139).

As an immigrant he suffers form existential as well as cultural problems. Thus, he feels alienated and dominated in the alien world. By depicting the cross cultural scenario, he is further supporting the idea of multiculturalism, which is the bitter reality of the world. The line from the text supports these points:

But in Eliot's enormous generously shared mental storehouse of the varieties of 'forbidden knowledge' I though I'd found another way of making a bridge between here and there, between my two otherness, my double unbalancing. In that world of magic and power there seemed to exist the kind of fusion of world views, European Amerindian Oriental Levantine, in which I desperately wanted to believe. (141)

Rushdie ruptures the traditional notion of nation and identity, and brings forth the notion of nation and identity, which are multicultural. Ushdies presents the identity of Khan by crossing the borders of nationality. Thus, identity is not constant things. It keeps on shifting, due to the changing locality.

The last story of the collection the semi autobiographical, 'The Courter' definitively demolishes the East/West boundaries. Here, because of an Asians inability to pronounce English properly, an apartment building porter becomes a 'courtier' and the Indian immigrants at Waverly House resident fluctuate between identities and cultural loyalties:

English was hard for certainly-Mary, and this was a part of what drew damaged old mixed-up towards her. The letter p was a particular problem,

often turning into f or c, when she proceeded through the lobby with wheeled wicker shopping basket, she would say, going shocking, and when, on her return he offered to help lift the basket up the front ghosts, she would answer, 'yes, fleas'. As the elevator lifted her away she called through grille: oe, Courter; thank you Courter. (176)

The character Mary, in the last section 'The Courter', is an Indian who has migrated to England. She has a difficult life over there. She has a language and cultural problems. She can not cope up with the British. Thus, she feels alienated, dominated in the new world.

She got her sari struck in the jaws of the machine, and as the escalator pulled at the garment it began to unwind. She was forced to spin round and round like a top, and scream at the top of her voice. O BAAP BA2PU-RE; BAAP-RE-BAAP-! It was mixed up who saved her by pushing the emergency stop bottom before the sari was completely unwound and she was exposed in her petticoat for the entire world to see. (156)

This accident happened when she couldn't read 'unzip a banana.' Time and again, she becomes the victim of alien world. The Indian way of life, language and cultures are completely different from that of British. So the immigrants like Mary suffer. Then she decides 'I need to go home' (208). Suddenly she decides to go home because she is being attracted by heart disease. The narrator thinks, the heart trouble may be the result of homesickness. "So it was England that was breaking her heart, trouble may be the result of homesickness: breaking it by not being Bombay and Mixed up? I wondered was the courtier killing her, too, because he was no longer himself' (209). Mary's heart trouble was the consequence of not being in India England was breaking her heart.

Mary's dream about England and life style suddenly trampled like a fragile glass. Then she asserts "god knows for what all we came over to this country [. . .]. But I can no

longer stay" (209). Then she returned to India, the land of her root. "As it happened she was right about the homesickness. After her return to Bombay she never had a day's heart trouble again: and as the letter from her niece Stella confirmed, at ninety-one she was still going strong" (210). Rushdie's depictions of England as well as India via character Mary certainly pave the way to multicultural ethos.

The story of Chandani is of similar kind. She too, is the victim of double identity. She can not cope with present or with past, as:

Chandni was eighteen month older than me, and so sexy it made you sick. She was training to be an Indian classical dancer, 'Odissi' as well as Natyam, but in the meantime she dressed in tight black jeans and clinging black polo-neck jumper and took me, now and then, to hangout of Bunjie's, where she knew most of the fold music crowd that frequented the place and where she answered to the name of moonlight, which is what candni means. (188)

Chandni, the cousin of the narrator is an Indian girl of eighteen, living in England. Though this character also Rushdie brings forth his multicultural ethos. Being an Indian, she is interested to Indian classical dance 'Odissi' and 'Natyam' but because of her upbringing. She dressed in tight black jeans and bank polo neck jumper and hangout at bunjie. By depicting the Indian culture and British society in one canvas, Rushdie is focusing upon multiculturalism.

The question of choice between east and west is the ground for a battle that will wage within the immigrants. Mary suffers from an unidentified illness, until the narrator realizes that it was England that was breaking her heart. And Chandni suffers from her hybrid identity. They cannot choose between past or present. The question of choice is an irrevocable one but the narrator faced with the choice rebels. To choose seems tantamount to losing something, because until he chooses, he may remain in the comfortable limbo of

oblivion "But I, too, have ropes around my neck. I have them to this day, pulling me this way and that, East and West, the nooses are tightening, commanding, choose, choose [. . .] I refuse to choose" (211).

Rushdie's stories are made significant by his ability to build pluralistic worlds, mediated reality stretched to the frontiers of fantasy, in order to present the cultural destiny of the immigrant. The creation of palimpsests, of cultural and generic constructs that constantly cancel each other out to reveal new versions of the same, permits entrance into an alternative universe where the boundaries between east and West, disintegrate. Rushdie uses the intervention of fiction to make the implausible plausible. Fabulation, then becomes a medium or the writers to cross the conventional frontiers. The question he poses seems to be whether or not the accepted difference between east and west east as such. His stories imply that the classical boundaries between the entitles have been eradicated, shown to be mere invention. As though to remind us, as bill shrift has said that 'hybridity is the primary characteristic of all postcolonial and immigrant text' (185). Rushdie presents us a world of amalgamation, in which the old ways of reading and seeing do not apply, in which plurality of vision provides the means for comprehension.

The theme of conflicts and reconciliation of cultures has often been a repeated issue in the indo-English novel. Rushdie too has treated this complex issue in his writings through the vivid character portrayal against the backdrop of specific socio-cultural milieu. In the *East, West* chapter of the novel, the protagonists are alienated from society, from families, from parents and from their country. They are unable to communicate and to identify themselves with the people around. Unable to relate themselves with the milieu they drift into their own sequestered world where they spin their dreams, which never materialized. It is their sense of alienation and a hunting past that motivates them in their quest for identity, for a meaningful present. And Rushdie analyzed the complex negotiation between cultures via various

characters. By depicting various cultures values norms and spirit, Rushdie brings forth the multicultural ethos. In the collection of stories *East, West*, the first section is about Indian culture then, second section is about western people and culture and the last is the merging point of east and west, India and Britain. By merging Indian and British stories and cultures, he is creating a multicultural nation, which is inclusively democratic and respects individual dignity. Structurally also the novel which is divided into three sections "East" "West" and "East, West", is supporting the idea of varying culture.

The narrator, after twenty years of his life in England, is unable to identify himself as a British though he has citizenship. Consequently he learns to withdraw, to keep things to himself, to be aloof that exacerbates his loneliness which ultimately make his quest for identity and attempt to give meaning to the meaningless. The narrator's culture and alien birth made him lose confidence and hope in England, as:

I became a British citizen that year I was one of the lazy ones, I guess, because in spite of that chess game I had Dodo on my side. And the passport did in many ways set me free. It allowed me to come and go to choices that were not at once my father would have wished. But I, too, have ropes around my neck, have them to this day, pulling me this way and that, East and West, the nooses tightening, commending, choose, choose. (211)

Immigrants are always treated as soother and inferior, how long they spent their time in alien world. Though the narrator got British citizenship, he can't be sure of his right and respect. Thus, he becomes confused either to choose his past or present, where he lives.

Diasporas are always haunted by their past is their efforts to trace their history-a hidden motive to establish identity and to overcome Diasporic feeling. Mary, a close relative of narrator, is haunted by the image of homeland time and again. Consequently she is being attacked by sickness, as:

Mary's heart trouble turned out to be mystery, unpredictable, it came and went. She was subject to all sorts of tests during the next six months, but each time the doctors ended up by shocking their heads; they could not find anything wrong with her physically. She was right as rain, except that there were these periods when her heart kicked and bucked in her chest like wild horse in *'The Misfits'*, the ones whose roping and typing made Marilyn Monroe so mad. At the beginning of the summer, Mary made an announcement. I know what is wrong with me, she told my parents, out of the blue. I need to go home. (208)

Diasporic people are compelled to think themselves inferior in this way or that. Neither they can understand new culture and language nor assimilate with the situation. They can't be happy with present or forget their past. They are in the border of two cultures, unable to choose. In this situation, they feel alienated and want to create the home of their mind, which is free from prejudices. Mary's heart trouble is also a symbolic manifestation of their desire to be in home. Here illness was not physical but psychological. She was ill because she is not in India. Britain was breaking her heart.

Language is generally known as the symbol of identity and culture. But, when we cross the frontiers, we have to cope up with new language and culture. Obviously, the phenomenon of assimilating with different language and culture is difficult and may lead to a bitter situation. Here, in this collection, the narrator's father becomes the victim of linguistic varieties.

I did nothing he said, standing there in the hall with the pharmacy bag in the other hand and a face as pink as Mecer's rubber gloves. I just went in with your list. The girl seemed very helpful. I asked for baby compound, Johnson's powder, teething Jelly, and she brought them out. Then I asked did she have any nipples, and she slapped my face. [. . .]. Here they call them teats. (183)

Because of the linguistic differences, the narrator's father was slapped by a seventeen years girl. This slap made him discomfort able in front of his children along with physical pain. He had never thought of being slapped while asking for nipples in pharmacy. This all happens due to cultural and linguistic differences. As a son, the narrator take this incident as legendary in the following manner, "I remember this story with delight because it was the only time I was saw my father so discomforted, and the incident become legendary and girl in the pharmacy was inc\stalled as an object of our great veneration" (185).

In a similar way, dislocation in a different sense is also a feature of all Diasporic writing. Many postcolonial texts acknowledge the psychological and personal dislocation that result from this cultural denigration, and it is against this dislocating process that many modern decolonizing struggles are instituted. Mary as a symbol of pain and anxiety faced by the Diasporas, certainly, moves through the path of dislocation, she hangs like pendulum between east and west:

So it was England that was breaking her heart, breaking it by not being Indian. London was killing her, by not being in Bombay. And Mixed-up? I wondered, was the counter killing her, too, because he was no longer himself? Or was it that her heart, roped by two different loves, was being pulled by both east and west, whinnying and rearing, like those move horses being yanked this way by Clark Gable and that way by Montgomery Cliff, and knew that to live-she would have to choose? (209)

Mary is divided within herself on her bid to achieve assimilation or acculturation, which is the only option left to her in order to survive among cultural schizophrenia. It is a state of mental illness that causes the sufferer to act irrationally leading her to estrangement from social relationship. This state leads to a divided identity-divided by culture, history and

circumstances. As cultures cut across and intersect natural frontier, individual like Mary feels dislocated.

Similarly, Diasporic situation articulates hybrid identity. This hybrid situation fosters a sense of ambivalence, scattered amongst the people of both, east and west. In today's global scenario, it is a growing phenomenon. The narrator's cousin Chandani in *East, West* is only one example, where she encounters the charm of east and west, but finally finds solace in the eastern soil, in the flavor of her own feelings and people. "Chandni was eighteen months older than me and so sexy it made you sick. She was training to be an Indian classical dancer, Odissi as well as Natyam, but in the meantime she dressed in tight black Jeans and a clinging black Polo neck Jumper" (187). These lines depict the hybrid ness of the character Chandni. She cannot forget her culture completely nor adopt in the western society. She is interested in Indian classical dance but at the same time wore clinging black neck jumper as the imitation of British people.

In the same manner, we would be ridiculed when we couldn't pronounce and speak correct language. This is very common problem every diasporic people has to face, which create a kind of hatred towards that language. Surely, at that moment, every one are compelled to remember their own past where they were free and had not gone through such irritating circumstances. Rushdie's *East, West* clearly shows such an incident the immigrant has gone through, as:

It was not just certainly Mary and my parents who had trouble with the English language. My school fellows filtered when in my Bombay way I said brought up for upbringing (as in where was your brought up?) and thrice from three times and quarter plate for side plate and macaroni for pasta in general.  
(185)

The narrator, who is an Indian migrated to England, faces the language problem, too. He can't speak correctly and become the subject of laughter. Though these lines seem hilarious at first reading, is full of angst of Diaspora people.

Mary's dream about England and its life style suddenly trampled like a fragile glass. Then she says: "God knows for what all we came over to this country. But I can no longer stay" (21). After some days, she returned India. "After her return to Bombay, she never had a day's of heart trouble again" (210). Thus it is the magic of the eastern flavor that lessens the pain of Mary, who once left east for a better dream to the east. However, it could not be materialized. Chandni's decision to come back to India and her being relived from the heart disease is the fall of western passion.

Thus, it is not only Mary's case but through it Rushdie in *East, West* depicts the fall of world order, hegemonized by the west. It is the mark of the coming of a new era, where people, communities and nations are free of such absurdities created in the name of supremacy and thereby, power. It is again the beginning of the east coming to the forefront of international politics. All thanks go to the trend of Diaspora and the intermingling of culture thereby in creating a hybrid world scenario.

#### IV. Fall of Western Obsession

This thesis base on the Rushdie's anthology of stories *East, West* depicts the fall of western hegemony imposed on the present third world and the once colonized nations and its territories. Postcolonial era is increasingly accompanied by the facts that the present society is fast falling from the traditional dynamism of race, ethnicity, culture and heading towards a free and liberal global social order. The declining status of western hegemony in literature and other trends of social and economic factors are due to the worldwide rise in the rate of migration and mixing of the people from different clans and culture.

Rushdie's collection comes at a very crucial phase of a troubled international politics when, migrants, especially, from the Indian sub-continent nations are fast making their presence felt in the global scenario. These people are not only migrating physically, but are also taking their culture and traditions which are increasingly making their impact to the western based people and society. Rushdie, who belongs to a hybrid bringing up – born in Bombay, India reared in Lahore, Pakistan mingles this feature in his writings. As seen in *The Harmony of the Sphere*, Rushdie depicts life in the west, as, despite all the material possession there is a need of someone, who can understand each other. In absence of someone to feel and share the inner most feelings life becomes lone and avoided.

In today's world every person has his/her way of living and thinking in conception of society is seen as complex and sum total of comportsing discourses that are produced frequently in the course of time. The ideas which are drawn out of these compelling discourses are negotiated. To understand nation as a transcendental or ideal one is the culture of European modernity. Modernity always creates 'we' and others. But *East, West* ruptures the idea of transcendental nation. Here, Rushdie tries to impart the idea against 'totalized' national cultures which create binary opposition and envisages multicultural utopia where no binaries remain.

To assess the cultural hybridity of the present world the falling aspect of cultural ties are to be taken in consideration, which Rushdie does in the present collection. Every sections of the anthology contains happening based on lamentation and woes of the general people, from the east to the west and the vice-versa. The first section, set in his native India, consists of simple village anecdotes and stories about Indian people and society very minutely and realistically. On the contrary, the west section set in England presents a retelling of hamlet in the style of *Tristram Shandy*, a futuristic auction of Dorothy's Ruby Slippers, and such which are again the counter to resist the western authoritarianism. The last section mingles the east with the west, to predict the coming of a new world order.

Thus, through *East, West*, Rushdie hints to the approaching of a new generation of culture and custom, which will be sans the traditional concept of western hegemony.

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