

I. *The Enchantress of Florence* as a Non-Western Fiction

The Enchantress of Florence being a non-Western text highlights the issues of diaspora, cultural hybridity and identity crisis. Through different imaginary and fictionalized characters and settings the text intrigues the readers with the question of mysticism, sensuality and religious tolerance and homosexuality. Moreover, the text challenges the Western stereotypical attitude towards the East. The Western literary canonicity has the tendency to undermine the Eastern literacy tradition. Especially the Eastern literary text written by Chinese, Indian, and Arabic writers are taken for granted that they are insignificant, molded with the issues of mysticism and superstitions. As it is thought that people of the East are irrational, subjective, superstitious and illogical and the texts written by them are insignificant in the literary history.

The Westerners or the Europeans who have created the discourse about the orient that is known as Orientalism. The Orientalist with the concept of superiority of the west began to indulge them in the problem of Othering. With the ungratified paranoia of superiority they continue to impose their paranoic ego on the orient. They are proud of their rational and legal expertise, they have greater concept of law and injustice, sanitation and sensuality. Being proud of such legacy, they are always urged to other the orient, essentialize the orient, reduce the orient, inferiorize the orient. In this regard, oriental people are mostly regarded as spiritual beings as having no sense of creativity and rationality. On the contrary Rushdie with the help of magic realism where the magical elements are blended to create a realistic atmosphere that accesses a deeper understanding of reality blurs the oriental gaze of superiority and rationality through the text *The Enchantress of Florence*. Moreover, through the fictionalized version of Akbar the Great, the famous sixteenth century Mughal emperor who

championed religious tolerance and reason Rushdie counter strikes the oriental discourse that inferiorize the East. Hence, the objective of this research is to challenge the Western mode of knowledge which seems to be dominant over the non-West with the application of alternative modernities.

Salman Rushdie who was born in June 1947 in Indian is British novelist and essayist. Much of his fiction is set on the Indian subcontinent. His style is often classified as magical realism mixed with historical fiction and dominant theme of his work is the story of many connections, disruptions and migration between the Eastern and Western world. The postcolonial scenario is beautifully presented in most of Rushdie's texts. The main concern of postcolonial project is the project of subversion. It helps to subvert the colonial discourse or discourse of Orientalism. Non-western writers through their texts try to represent their culture and history with a view to counter the way Orientalists conceived. Rushdie's many texts have helped to heighten the postcolonial hangover and facilitates him to deal with the issues of diasporas, hybridity, identity crisis and fake stereotypical representation of orient people, culture, tradition and religion in his texts. Rushdie is expert in combining fantasy, philosophical rumination, comic and mysterious aspects with the historical facts which intrigue the reader while reading his texts.

Diaspora is the striking issue Rushdie has dealt in most of his texts. The diasporic people voluntarily and forcibly leave their homelands and are lost into the new regions. While they cannot assimilate themselves fully to the foreign culture in the new regions they feel forlorn. They start looking back to their culture which is tied up closely with their identity. Consequently, the frequent haunted sense of loss makes like a pendulum since they can neither uphold the foreign culture as their own nor they can return to their homeland which they have already left. Ultimately, it results in

a sense of displacement and restlessness. Similarly, cultural hybridity is another strong issue Rushdie raises in his texts. The diasporic situation gives birth to cultural hybridity. As diasporic people forcibly and voluntarily leave their homelands and migrate to foreign land, they are influenced by the foreign cultures, and at the same time they feel difficulties in assimilating themselves fully in the foreign culture.

Identity crisis is the next issue that Rushdie never forgets to raise in his texts. The hybrid position of the immigrants gives rise to identity crisis. One's identity is embedded in his/her own culture and cannot be separated from it. So, the immigrant people who are away from their own culture face identity crisis. The emigrants with the swinging identity like pendulum neither can assimilate themselves fully to the foreign culture nor they can return to their homelands. Ultimately, they are haunted with the questions like "Who am I?" and "Where do I belong?" Rushdie finds the Western movies, TV serials and documents filled with the stereotypical representation of the West. They are sickened with the discourse to other the 'orient' and present them as savage, superstitious, mystic and irrational. To resist such fake superstition Rushdie suggests non-Western writers for the politically aware writing.

Salman Rushdie was born in Bombay, India on June 19, 1947 and educated at Cambridge University, where he studied history. After he graduated in 1968, he worked for TV for sometime in Pakistan. He was championed in raising the postcolonial hangover in most of his texts. Most of his texts are successful to get popularity among readers and critics. *Grimus*(1974), *Midnight's Children*(1981), *Shame*(1983), *The Satanic Verses*(1988), *Luka and the Fire of Life*(2010), and *Imaginary Homelands*(1991) are famous and well read texts of Rushdie.

Rushdie's first publication was *Grimus*. His next novel *Midnight's Children* which won the Booker Prize in 1981 is an allegory of modern Indian. It tries

to recall everything about his birthplace India but could not recall everything precisely because of his fragmented nature of memory. But even his fragmented memories are valuable for him which resembles his fragmented mentality as well as identity. His next novel *Shame* depicts the political turmoil in Pakistan basing his characters on Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq. This novel won France's Prix du Meilleur Livre Etranger (Best foreign Book) and was a close runner-up for the prize. His fourth novel *The Satanic Verses* encountered a controversial reception. This book aroused the ire of Muslims, who considered it a blasphemous attack on the Koran, and the Islamic faith. Muslim community leaders were outraged and the book was banned in India, Pakistan, South Africa, Egypt and Saudi Arabia. In 1989 Iran's spiritual leader Ayotallah Khomeini publicly condemned the book and issued a 'fatwa' against Rushdie. During this period violent protest in India, Pakistan and Egypt caused several deaths.

Despite the standing death threat, Rushdie has been continuously writing. He produced *Imaginary Homelands*, is the collection of essays in which he addresses the postcolonial scenario. The essays in this collection deal with the issues of diaspora, hybridity, identity crisis, representation and commonwealth literature.

Salman Rushdie being a diasporic writer valorizes the non- Western culture, tradition, norms and values in most of his texts. His texts aim at reflecting the changing faces of non- Western society. The representation of the cultural background from which those texts supposed to emerge, Rushdie reveals their assertive tone. All the non- Western texts assertively represent the indigenous culture. Similarly, Rushdie's representation of indigenous culture in his text, in fact, counters response to the deep-seated stereotypical assumption that the European culture is superior to the non- Western culture. Moreover, Rushdie's famous novel *The Enchantress of*

Florence brings the concept of cultural hybridity. Non culture is superior and inferior; rather it has its own value in its locality. Most of the significant characters in the novel cross the liminal zone. Through the characters like Qara Koz and Vesspucci he shows the transmission of culture and each culture is good in itself. Every culture is acceptable in its own time and space. As the place and the people, so is the culture. Culture is relative as Rushdie opines. Hence, Rushdie attempts to show the renewed concept of cultural relativity in most of his texts.

As a non-Western writer and critic Rushdie focuses on the issues like hybridity, diaspora, identity crisis racism in most of his texts. Rushdie is especially concerned with plight of diasporic writers. The diasporic people/writers are those who have forcibly or voluntarily left their homeland and have moved to the foreign lands where they suffer from the sense of loss of their homelands. Rushdie too like other diasporic writers has an experience of sense of loss of his real homeland that's India. Rushdie uses the technique of magic realism as he is a diasporic writer and he has to write through the memory. Mostly he uses this technique combine reality and fantasy. The realistic narrative is mixed with fantastic facts. Supernatural elements are added to the factual details in this technique. Although the idea of fantasy and fact do not go together, the presence of magical element is highlighted and it gives intensity to the understanding of real life experience as in the novel *The Enchantress of Florence*.

The Enchantress of Florence written by a non-West writer Salman Rushdie provides a unique window in the non-Western cultural, social practice and heritages of Mughal India where Akbar the Great is the head of the non-western culture and tradition where Akbar celebrates the importance of art, architecture, literature, religious tolerance and personal freedom as well. Rushdie blending the historical subject matter and his imaginary characters and incidents at the same time valorizes

non-Western culture and tradition. Most of the action takes place in the historical Mughal Empire of India and imaginary place Sikri where the stranger Vespucci is stunned with the golden looking lake. Moreover, the text presents the hidden mysticism, superstitions, and enchanting power of Akbar's great aunt, and lady with Black Eyes or Qara Koz who is gifted with the skills of witchcraft. The emperor Akbar feels that the land of the occident is exotic and surreal to a degree incomprehensible to the humdrum people of the East. In Rushdie's deft reversal the East is often portrayed as more tolerant, philosophical and progressive than Europe.

Moreover, using diverse characters with wide range of backgrounds, settings and circumstances philosophical statements about life are made in the text. *The Enchantress of Florence* talks about the crime, whores, sensuality, cruelty, beauty, fights over throne, and daily realities in search of deeper truths that are beyond every day reality. In this regard the text tries to depict the reality of the then Mughal Empire of India. Further, the novel goes back and forth between Florence and India intentionally crossing the borders. With the journey of Vespucci to India, West meets East and with the journey of Qara Koz to Florence, she crosses the borders between East and West. And certainly the crossing of the border between East and West by this magnificent character Qara Koz and Vespucci manifest the cultural transmission. They embody the cultural hybridity. The culture and tradition of East is transmitted to West and vice-versa. In this regard through these characters Rushdie explores the issues of non-western text.

In the core of novel, two significant characters, mysterious lady Qara Koz and Vespucci leave their homeland voluntarily. In the new region they suffer from the sense of loss of their imagination with the help of their memory as Vespucci does in the novel. As Rushdie is frequently haunted by the memory of his real homeland, he

suffers from the sense of displacement and restlessness. To overcome that with his imagination he creates the imaginary setting and characters blending with history all through the novel.

A yellow-haired stranger wearing a coat of colors becomes the main storyteller when he arrives at Akbar's court and claims that he is blood kin to the royal family. This tale of his family history which is filled with legends about Akbar's family keeps him alive so that he can integrate himself with the king. This plot merges with that of Florence when some of the characters mentioned in the Mughal section become main characters in the Florentine section. As Rushdie opines the emigrant writers have to face identity crisis. One's identity is embedded in his/her own culture and cannot be separated from it. And when one is away from his culture, his/her identity swings like a pendulum. They are haunted by a question "Who am I? And "Where do I belong?" Similarly in the text three friends, Ago Vespucci, Niccolo il Machia and Nino Argalia experience different kinds of lives under different kinds of rulers. In this regard they are facing the identity crisis. Then Rushdie ties this theme with the individual's research for identity within society which reflects the sense of non-Western text.

Since the publication of *The Enchantress of Florence* by Salman Rushdie, it has been responded in various ways. Some have looked at the level from fictionalizing history, some have witchcraft and sensuality. Focusing on the romantic fictionalization Justin Neuman asserts:

In the term of genre, *The Enchantress of Florence* is a globe – traversing prose romance about the vicissitudes, love, power and storytelling- a romance dressed in the guise of an impeccably researched novel.(675-82)

Newman's criticism takes *The Enchantress of Florence* as the globe-traversing prose romance dealing with the issues of love, power and storytelling. In his opinion this historical novel is fictionalized with the decoration of love, mystery and power politics. Aamir Hussein says:

Many readers will be haunted, at the end of a dense and intricate epic novel, by the magic of the image of this man with one foot on the precipice of the modern; with his imagery wife, a city that dies of thrust, and a religion that fades away into allegory along with its founder and its adherents. Even his erotic encounters with his wife are self-pleasuring fantasies. But this lament for failed dreams is also a testament of the immorality of dreams. (1)

The critic Hussein views the text from perspective of immorality and fantasy. This text is the perfect blending of fantasy which evokes the immorality of the people in the then society.

Akbar has the imagery wife with whom he has erotic encounters in self-pleasuring fantasy but this erotic dream of him leads him towards immorality of dreams. Focusing on the fusion of history and fantasy Simon Baker avers:

The Enchantress of Florence melds history with fantasy. The real Akbar (1542-1605) was an intelligent ruler for his religious tolerance. He fictional one shares this but has some Rushdian additions. For example, he employs a servant to compliment him (a man who' proudly held the rank of Imperial Flatterer First Class, and was a master of the ornate, old-school style known as cumulative fawning'). (1)

Akbar also conjured his favorite wife, Jodha, from his imagination into reality, a fact which understandingly makes Jodha worry about the strength of her tenure on earth. Our ability to create fact from desire is a constant theme in the novel. A painter deliberately imagines himself to death when he falls in love with Qara Koz, his subject. Qara Koz is treated as a commodity by man, but in fact she is powerful, since she has control events with her mind; at one point she saves Argalia's life by striking his pursuer down with flatulence. One laughs at the absurdity of all this, but it is worth reflecting that none of it is markedly more absurd than the things which may accept as factual today; Rushdie's novel reminds us that, when it comes to supernatural occurrences, 'fantasy' and 'history' are still divided by consensus rather than by a rigorous assessment of likelihoods.

Simon Baker takes *The Enchantress of Florence* as the fusion of history and fantasy. In the text the real king Akbar who was famous for his religious tolerance is fictionalized with some Rushdiean addition. Imagination is changed into reality when Akbar conjures his favorite wife Jodha, which makes Jodha worry about her tenure on earth. With the magical power blend with desire creates the fact which is the theme of the novel. Qara Koz has such enchanting beauty that even a painter wishes for his death to get through she is mere subject for him. Although Qara Koz is treated as commodity by man she is powerfully controlling events with her mind. Once she saves Argalia's life. One may laugh at this absurdity like this but on the contrary nothing is more absurd than the things which may accept as factual today. When there is a supernatural occurrence in the novel the readers divide history and fantasy by their consensus rather than paying great attention to the details how something is likely to happen. Focusing on the real use of enchantment Ursula K Le Guin asserts:

The brilliant, fascinating, generous novel swarms with gorgeous young woman both historical and imagined, beautiful queens and irresistible enchantresses, along with some whose and few quarrelsome old wives all stock figures, female perceived solely in relation to the male.

Women are never treated as unkindly by the author, but they have no autonomous being. The enchantress herself, who turns everyone into puppets of her will, has no personality at all, and exists-literally-by pleasing men. Akbar calls her a “woman who had forged her own life, beyond convention, by the force of her will alone, a woman like a king.” But in fact she does nothing but sell herself to the highest bidder, and her power is an illusion permitted by him. (5)

Ursula K Le Guin’s interpretation on the text focuses on the real uses of enchantment especially by the female characters. The attractive and beautiful women, both historical and imagined, alluring queens, with the power of enchantment and a few troubling old wives who has been taken merely in relation to the male makes the novel fascinating and unique. Although women are free to enjoy the male they have no absolute authority over them. The beautiful enchanting women who are able to seduce male have no personality and they are only limited in pleasuring men. Although Akbar compares women as a king who is beyond convention guided by her own will, in fact she is just forgetting her dignity and power being illusioned.

Many critics have reviewed the text from different perspectives such as crime, sensuality, beauty, cruelty and power conflict. Some interpret the text as globe-traversing prose romance dealing with the issues like love, power and storytelling. Some analyze the text from perspective of immorality and fantasy where female characters are taken as commodity by men. Some have taken the novel as fusion of

history and fantasy. Others say that the text has the real use of enchantment by gorgeous female characters such as Qara Koz. The present researcher partially agrees with them. In fact the text being a non-Western creation valorizes the eastern culture, tradition, norms and values. The Western orientalist's gaze has always interiorized the eastern people as well as their culture, tradition, norms and values. They are sick from the fever of 'othering' the East. The text written by the non-western people are insignificant to the European scholars or critics. They think that oriental people are sensual, savage, superstitious and illogical. They are worshippers of the sensuality. They think oriental people being subjective and superstitious; there is mere manifestation of such cultures, norms and values in their text too. The stereotypical representation by the western people has ever inferiorized the east. But Salman Rushdie being a non-Western critic and writer counterstrikes this fake representation of east by the western people through his text *The Enchantress of Florence*. In the text he raises the issues like cultural hybridity, diaspora and identity crisis. Rushdie in the text by bringing the fictionalized version of Akbar the Great the famous sixteenth century Mughal Emperor of India who championed religious tolerance and reason, wants to depict the good aspects of Mughal Emperor Akbar. Akbar who is granted as a depressing vision of future in which dreams of civility and civilization give way to sectarian violence and hate, finally he is presented as the intriguing hero. He is presented as the brilliant military commander and philosopher king. The novel being playful has a monumental scope, dealing with three civilizations; complex historical connection shown through vividly depicted wars, element of fantasy and magic brings the quality of eastern text. Though the novel deals with three civilizations it shows the uniqueness of each one and there is harmony between them. Rushdie with the help of alternative modernities tries to show the distinct culture, tradition, norms and values

of the east in the text. Rushdie has brought concept of cultural hybridity through his characters like Qara Koz and Vespucci. Qara Koz is sent to Florentine section and Vespucci is sent to India with his culture of Florence by the writer. In this regard, Rushdie attempts to show the cultural negotiation between East and the West rather than inferiorizing any culture and traditions of others. Hence, Rushdie by bringing imaginative character Akbar as the representative of eastern Mughal Empire and other historical details at the same time challenges the western mode of knowledge which claims to be objective and rational with the help of alternative modernities.

The concept of alternative modernities is related to the efforts by postcolonial scholars including subaltern histories to disrupt the conventional grand narrations of Western scholars and to critique the impact of modernity in its discursive form as an element of domination and power. It is a critique of European models of aesthetic and existential response to contemporary social conditions. It highlights the situations of individual and group identities and multiple ways of responding to the global social condition. In this regard, Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar insists on the significance of alternative modernities, “To think in terms of alternative modernities is to admit that modernity is inescapable and to desist from speculations about the end of modernity [.....] Modernity is now everywhere” (1).

Since the birth place of modernity is European land, modernity traveled to the rest part of the world in its colonial form. The process of colonization paved the way for globalization which develops a new concept of global modernity. Global modernity helps to recognize the appearance of alternative or multiple modernities that not only exhibits the contradiction of modernity but also seeks to challenge it by conceding the possibility of culturally different way of being modern. Whereas modernity stands opposition to tradition, alternative modernities seek to reform and

bring the changes in the previously established norms and values. In this sense it is the continuation of traditions with the consciousness of time, it valorizes the premodern ethical and moral values accepting the modern changes. So, is the combination of the past and present which helps to preserve the non-western culture and civilization leaving a space for the minority groups and the victims. Alternative modernities always speak of the marginal groups and the victim as Ziauddin Sardar states “Nandy’s alternative is the alternative of the victims” (215). Thus, it is all inclusive which seeks to bring the changes in people’s all aspects of life not in the universal way but in their way of locality in relation to their social, cultural and religious practices valorizing with the traditional moral and ethical norms and values, to harmony and co-existence among different races ethnic and religious groups from different geographical location.

Modernity refers to break away from the traditional social, political, cultural or orthodox agendas. It always stands in opposition to tradition. Modernity, so, is the condition of being new and innovative which separates itself from the traditional norms, values, standards, beliefs, systems and so on. It is the consciousness of time and space, and self and others that is shared by all human beings in the world. Since modernity destroyed and superseded, it is a radical threat to history and tradition, or past. Modernity can be felt in such an environment that promise us adventure, power, joys, growth, transformation of the world and ourselves. Modernity can be realized by cutting all the boundary of geography. It is the unusual phenomenon that transcends all the boundaries of geography and ethnicity of class and nationality, of religion and ideology. In this sense, modernity is the reflection of the recent historical development.

The Enchantress of Florence written by Salman Rushdie is the novel which deals with the issues like diaspora, cultural hybridity and identity crisis. The text has the complex structure with many characters with multiple names, elements of fantasy and magic gives the glimpse of east. Rushdie being a non- Western postcolonial writer valorizes the norms and values of Mughal India in his text. In the text Rushdie has fictionalized the Akbar, the sixteenth century famous king as the representative of Eastern Empire who has religious tolerance and reason. He is brilliant military commander as well as a philosopher and he is able to preserve his culture and tradition. He welcomes the stranger Vespucci to his palace and shows his hostility to the foreigners. In the text through the different characters like enchanting lady Qara Koz and yellow haired stranger Vespucci, Rushdie shows the cultural transmission from the East to the West and vice versa. Hence, Rushdie bringing historical details and imaginative character Akbar who has the respect towards own culture and tradition and others and famous for religious tolerance challenges the western mode knowledge which claims to be objective and rational with the help alternative modernities.

This research is divided into three chapters. The first chapter presents an introductory outlines of the novel's raising issues, its problems, and a short account of Salman Rushdie's life along with the reviews on *The Enchantress of Florence* by different critics. Moreover, it gives a bird's eye view of the entire works. The second chapter analyses the novel *The Enchantress of Florence* by highlighting the non-Western culture and civilization that counters Eurocentrism. So, this chapter tries to prove the hypothesis of the study in this *The Enchantress of Florence*, Salman Rushdie tries to explore the consciousness of individual identity emerging in the people of non-West as a result of the extreme torture, punishment and domination by

the West upon them. Finally, the third chapter sums up the main points of the present research and finding of the research.

II. Critique on Western Modernity in Rushdie's *The Enchantress of Florence*

In this novel, *The Enchantress of Florence*, Salman Rushdie demands for alternative modernities to valorize premodern ethical and moral values as well as non-Western culture and civilization by critiquing the Western modernist rationality exposing its exclusiveness, individualism, and monolithic vision. While doing so, Rushdie mixes up many genres within a single book and wrestles with the colonial legacy and implication of anthropological knowledge exposing Westerner's interference upon the non-Western ideology. Similarly, he exposes cosmopolitanism and hospitable values which existed in India in Mughal Emperor Akbar's time, and values of non-Western culture and civilization through his own experience. So, *The Enchantress of Florence* is "an example of Rushdie's tendency to unify eastern and western ideas as well as combine fictional and historical world into a thoroughly enjoyable literary masterpiece" (Gates 8).

In this novel, Rushdie shows that the East and the West are not merely two antipodes. The following quote, which was taken from an online interview between Rushdie and James Mustich, illustrate this:

It was certainly one of the big light-bulbs moment. When you read the *Baburnama*, you realize that the kind of thinking about power that's going on it is very, very similar to the thinking in *The Prince*. You can actually almost transpose sentences and paragraphs between the two books. I found it wonderfully strange that these two worlds coincided in that way; that was one of the genesis moments of the book, the recognition that there were these two worlds which were not communicating with each other in any way, and yet here are Babur and Machiavelli coming to the same conclusion. (36)

It shows that, in *The Enchantress of Florence*, Rushdie is looking for a common denominator and for things Eastern and Western mode of modernity by searching the common denominator of Eastern and Western values.

Western modernity is an inaugural moment bringing a conclusive break from the traditional norms, values, standards, belief system and so on. It always stands in opposition to tradition. Marshall Berman in his "Modernity- Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" defines modernity as follows, "There is a mode of vital experience- experience of space and time, of thyself and other s of life's possibilities and perils that is shared by men and women all over the world today. I will call this body of experience modernity" (15). It is a tendency that shows how the people experience the change in different field of life during the epochal period of history. Modernity is the universal phenomenon that transcends all the boundaries of geography and ethnicity, of class and nationality, of religion and ideology. In this sense, modernity is the reflection of the recent historical development.

When we look forward to the history of modernity, it is taken as a Western invention. Berman divided it into three phases. In the first phase, which goes roughly from the start of the sixteenth century to the end of eighteenth, people were just beginning the experience of modern life, they hardly knew what has hit them. The second phase begins with the great revolutionary wave of the 1790s to the nineteenth century. With the French revolution and its reverberation, a modern public abruptly comes to life. This public shares the feeling of living in a revolutionary age, an age that brings explosive change in every dimension of personal, social and political life. In the twentieth century, which is third and final phase for him, the process of modernization expands to take in virtually the whole world and the developing world culture of modernism achieves spectacular triumph in art and thought.

In this way, the term 'modern' appeared and reappeared exactly during those periods in Europe when the consciousness of a new epoch formed itself through a renewed relationship to the ancients. The concept of modernity is closer to the human consciousness or rational power. The concept of Enlightenment and Orientalism are taken as a major sources of European modernity and the credit for modernism goes to them.

The Enchantress of Florence is an enthralling work of fiction written in Rushdie's favorite genre of 'magic realism' and ingenuously merging two cultures, namely renaissance Italy and the Orient, more specifically the sixteenth century Mughal Emperor Akbar. This is the story of a woman attempting to command her own destiny in a man's world. It brings together two cities that barely know each other- the hedonistic Mughal capital, in which the brilliant emperor wrestles daily with questions of belief, desire and the treachery of sons, and the equally sensual Florentine world of powerful courtesans, humanist philosophy and inhuman torture, where Argalia's boyhood friend Niccolò Machiavelli is learning the hard way about the true brutality of power. These two worlds turn out to be mysterious alike, and the enchantment of woman hold influence over them both. So, we can say that through the fictionalized version of the famous sixteenth century Mughal emperor in India who championed religious tolerance and reason, Rushdie counterstrikes the oriental discourse that inferiorize the East. Rushdie challenges the Western mode of knowledge which seems to be dominating over the East.

Rushdie accepts that modernity is the Western invention. It has close allies with the scientific invention, industrialization development, societal advancement and urbanization those are inaugurated from the western. So, modernity is especially Western mode of thought which directly opposes the tradition. But he critiques it by

placing the Eastern modernity within it. He views East and West dichotomy from a different perspective, a different angle. Newness is replaced by "sameness". Instead of looking for the different elements of which people and especially immigrants are made up, he is looking for common ground as Ramadan describes it, " Muslim can show, reasonably and without polemics, that they share the essence of the values on which Europe and the West are based and that their own religious tradition has also contributed to the emergence and promotion of those values." (84)

Time changes and demands a different approach, and perhaps Rushdie have voiced this best in *The Enchantress of Florence* when he states that:

Reason was a mortal divinity, a god that died, and even if it was subsequently reborn it inevitably died again. Ideas were like that tides of the sea or the phases of the moon; they came into being, rose and grew in their proper time and then ebbed, darkened and vanished when the great wheel turned. (98)

In this way, Rushdie accepts the changes in the society and literary scenario too. It does not mean that he has completely discarded the theme he uses before. In *The Enchantress of Florence*, the focus is no longer on identifying the various part of the self, but on discovering what these various parts have in common, in other words, how they overlap. His novels have become a quest for searching for ' sameness' and ' interconnectedness' since 9/11.

In Western trend of thought, Enlightenment is taken as the seeds of modernity. It is an intellectual movement in the Eighteenth century Europe that celebrated human reason and scientific thought as the instrument of liberation from the superstition and ignorance inherited from the past. Reason is at the heart of the movement. Kant, the dominant figure of this movement, talks about private and public use of reason, and

says only the proper use of free reasoning makes them enlightened. He argues; " The public use of one's reason must always be free, and it alone can bring about enlightenment among men" (16). For him, enlightenment is a philosophical attitude of the self towards the present reality or modernity. Hence, Kant introduced the concept of 'modernity' for the first time.

Max Weber, German sociologist and philosopher takes the 'rationality as Western phenomenon for the base of western civilization with the modern empirical sciences, autonomous arts and theories of morality and law grounded on principles, cultural spheres of value took shape which made possible learning processes in accord with the respective inner logics of theoretical, aesthetic, and moral and practical problems. Max Weber takes up the "problems of universal history as the questions why outside Europe, the scientific, the artistic, the political, or the economic development [...] did not enter upon that path of rationalization which is peculiar to the accident?" (qtd. in Habermas 1). Weber depicts not only the secularization of western culture, but also and especially of the development of Modern society from the viewpoint of rationalization.

In this novel, *The Enchantress of Florence*, Rushdie talks about the Western rationality in brief but he also tries to valorize the Eastern mode of rationality. "One device Rushdie uses in his attempt to do away with the Western feeling of cultural superiority is downsizing its cultural and geographical peaks" (44). By downsizing Western culture, he is able to equate it with the culture of the orient .By valorizing Dashwanth's power of intuition, Rushdie writes:

Its power of enchantment needed to explanation and everyone who saw that first painting realizes that Dashwanth's exceptional power of intuition were revealing the hidden princess as a born enlightened one,

who instinctively knew what to do to protect herself, and also to conquer men's heart, which so often turn out to be the same thing (150).

It shows that no civilization or nation holds a monopoly on universals and on the good. No political and social system is perfect. So, one should respect towards others because we should be convinced that their richness and achievement can be beneficial to us. Rushdie says “We think of the High Renaissance as a time of noble culture, of great sophistication and philosophy, of enlightened humanism and blah-blah-blah, when actually it was a street . . . it was a wild kind of place” (Mustich 54).

The Westerners are in power technically, academically and economically. Power creates some certain knowledge or truth, and that truth functions as a discourse in the network of power. As Foucault says, representation, power and truths are involved in discourse. They create certain discourses basing on their knowledge and power to rule over the orient. Orientalism is a discourse created by the West about the non-West; Said opines the same views as:

Without examining orientalism as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage and even produce the orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post- enlightenment period. (3)

To understand the essence of Orientalism, it should examine as a discourse. Basing on the Foucauldian notion of discourse, Said clearly show how the Westerners by using their power create some certain effects of truth and represents the orient. Though it is mis- representation, it becomes truth because of power.

Like Orientalism, Modernity is a European invention, the product of their knowledge and power and alone they become a discourse. Modernity which exists and functions as a discourse within such power network, cannot be an exception, rather tends to serve their colonial modernity. As a discourse, it is a constructed truth which cannot include the truths of other cultures, geographical location and traditions such as morality, co-existence, ethics, hospitality and so on. So, modernity is a discourse which functions as a grand narrative, being embedded with such power politics which cannot include equally the other marginal voices i.e. blacks, females backward people even in the west so, it seems exclusive even in case of European land as well as the other part of the world.

In this novel, *The Enchantress of Florence* Rushdie is able to equate it with the culture of the orient by downsizing Western culture when the Mogor tells the emperor about the new "heliocentric model of the universe", something which could still lead to your death in Renaissance Florence, the emperor Akbar responds with. "This has been known for hundreds of years [...] how backward your reborn Europe seems to be" (194). Additionally, the Grand Mughal's invisible wife states:

When the emperor showed her the pictures the western missionaries brought with them of their mountains and valleys she thought of the Himalayas and Kashmir and laughed at the foreigner's paltry approximations of natural beauty, their vaals and aals half words to describe half things. Their kings were savages, and they had nailed their god to a tree. What did she want with people as ridiculous as that?
(59)

The emperor in *The Enchantress of Florence* states in response to the thoughts of his invisible wife that were quote above: the place Sikri was a fairyland to them just as

their England and Portugal, their Holland and France were beyond her ability to comprehend.

Like Gabriel in *The Satanic Verses*, the emperor is a dreamer. He dreams of and would like to create another kind of world or as Rushdie states; he would like to “conjure a new world, a world beyond religion, region, rank and tribe” (53). On top of this the emperor is ridiculed for “his megalomania fantasies of creating a joint global empire that united the eastern and western hemisphere” (92). That there is a common denominator between East and West is also pointed out by Tariq Ramadan, who states that:

West's curricula must also be reassessed (especially in history but also in literature, philosophy etc) to become more representative of a shared history and includes its wealth of remembered experience. The west must start a dialogue not only with the “other” but also with itself: an earnest, profound, and constructive dialogue. (6)

In this way, Rushdie’s novel is a novel which creates another world in the field of literature. He examines that West will also realize its follies and not only start the dialogue with the other but also with their own heart too.

Horkheimer and Adorno contest Kant and the positivity of Enlightenment in their *Dialectics of Enlightenment*. For them, there is a continuity of the age of myth within Enlightenment and modernity in general. Modernity fulfills what myth always wanted to. So, for Adorno and Horkheimer, what was promised to us in the age of Enlightenment was never an honest one; now it is nightmares. For them:

Enlightenment, understood in the widest sense as the advance of thought, has always aimed at liberating human beings from fear and installing them as masters-Yet the wholly enlightened earth is reliant

with triumphant calamity. Enlightenment's programs were the disenchantment of the world. It wanted to dispel myths, to overthrow fantasy with knowledge. (1)

After the Enlightenment, man becomes master of nature. The mind does not conquer nature, rather, there is a "happy match" between two. What goes on in the mind matches well with nature once man has become a master of it and for the most part, himself? The mastery of nature is a confirmation of said happy match. Thus making mastery something we are totally fine with. It's no coincidence then, that the enlightenment is connected to the scientific method: what there is place for everything that has yet to be thought and conquered in this happy match between mind and matter. We are bound to ourselves.

In this way, Adorno and Horkheimer are opposed to what Kant defines about enlightenment and modernity. Instead of it, they purpose alternative enlightenment or modernity, they try to make happy match between mind and matter. It means, as Kant, they do not argue on mind rather connect it with matter too.

In this novel *The Enchantress of Florence*, Rushdie highlights the concept of critique modernity introduced by Adorno and Horkheimer. It talks about the crime, sensuality, cruelty, flight overthrown, daily reality in search of deeper truth that are beyond everyday reality.

The Westerners, with their scientific and technological advancements, create the hierarchical boundary between themselves (West) and others (non-West) as rational/emotional, civilized / barbaric, advanced / backwarded and so on. They, then, place themselves in the top position of such hierarchical ladder and others at the bottom, in the colonialism which was the fertile zone to exercise the Western modernity in its form- colonial practice, to dominated and rule over them. But, even

after decolonization, due to the impact of colonial legacy and its hegemonization the people from high class who had directly get connected with Britishers had started to impose their power and superiority upon the lower class people in various ways that of westerners.

There is no doubt that the motherland of modernity is basically the European land. But the rest of the land received or is receiving modernity in two ways: directly (hegemony) and indirectly (influential). The process of colonization paved the way for globalization of the culture. Those colonized countries not only adapted or imitated the western European culture fully but they also preserve their certain inherent communal quality in their local space. So, the notion about 'glocal culture' begins to be practiced. Globalization is the mixed stare of global and the local.

Robertson writes:

Capitalist modernity does involve an element of cultural hegemonization for it increases the levels and amount of global coordination. However, mechanism of fragmentation, hegemonization and hybridity are also at work. It is not a question of either hegemonization or heterogenization, but rather of the ways in which both of these two tendencies have becomes features of life across much of the late- twenty century world. (qtd. in Barker 27)

Robertson is of the views that heterogenization, homogenization and hybridity all are the mechanism to be globalization of culture. Due to the globalization of culture and spontaneous attraction towards culture on the one hand and strong sentiments towards cultural nationalism on the other we live always somewhere in the middle.

The idea of the local specifically what is considered to be local is produced within and by globalizing discourse. Globalization involves the dynamic movement of

ethnic groups' technology financial transaction, media images and ideological conflicts. European cultural modernity is evident through language, sports, architecture, music, food, painting, film TV and the general sense amongst the whites that European culture presents high culture. Nevertheless, the impact of external culture influences is more complex than the idea of simple cultural imperialism. Ideologically, not only non-western cultures are influenced by the west rather west itself is under the influence of non-west in some or the other way.

No novelist understands the possibilities and perils of globalization more accurately than Salman Rushdie. At its best, his fiction always denies any fixed geographical vantage, there is no them and us to it. The ongoing discourse between the East and the West has been his biography, his obsession (and for a decade his death sentence). In this *The Enchantress of Florence*, he goes back to the first distant inklings of the cultural exchange that formed him.

In this novel, *The Enchantress of Florence*, Salman Rushdie draws us into his story as it unfolds during the global moments that anticipate and prefigure the modern era. In Florence, the renaissance is in full swing in India, the Mughal empire is at its high under Akbar the Great: Elizabeth I is Akbar's contemporary; the Ottoman Empire is at its most expansive; the safari empire is established under Shah Ismail; and the New world is discovered, mapped, and named by an Italian Mapmaker named Vespucci. Due to the impact of globalization no nation remains as an independent nation. So, all states have some kinds of relation with one another. In other words, no states in the modern time can avoid the involvement in the international affairs, and this involvement must be systematic and based on certain principles. In this novel, too, India, Britain and Italy have some systematic relation. They establish their embassy in respective countries. The Mogor dell' Amore, also known as Viccello di

Firenze, or Niccollo Vespucci, the blond-haired, counterfeit, "English ambassador" who arrives at Akbar's court by virtue of his tales of wonder and also compelled by his determination to deliver the Akbar, "one in particular, a story which make his fortune or else cost him his life" (10).

There was an inescapable hybridity and productivity to all this world great movement of people, ideas and knowledge brought about through violent conflicts and conquest but also by trade, alliance, and pilgrimage. This was a moment of great beauty, art philosophical advancement and wonder facilitated and made possible by movement / migration. Rushdie seamlessly and sensuously connects tale and historical worlds by personalizing moments of exchange and encounter, situation interpersonal relationship against the historical backdrop and inventing fictional characters and fictional relationships between historical characters as intermediating devices- personalized agents of diffusion, discussion, hybridity - migrant across time and space.

In the era of globalization new concept of modernity emerges as global modernity. It refers to the new form of modernity from the 1980s onwards. Arif Dirlik uses the concept of global modernity in order to understand the contemporary world. It also helps to recognize the appearance of alternative or multiple modernities that exhibit the contradiction of modernities. He views as:

These differences and the appearances of 'alternative' or 'multiple' modernities, it suggest are expressions, and articulations, of the contradictory of modernity [...] if we are to speak of alternative or multiple modernities, which presently valorize the persistence of traditions and civilization legacies, we need to recognize that the very language at alternatives and multiplicity is enabled historically by the

presupposition of a common modernity shaped by a globalizing capitalism. (275).

Whereas, modernity stands in opposition to tradition, alternative or multiple modernities always valorize the persistence of traditions and civilization legacies. Traditions are based on ethical, moral and religious values which are the most necessary things for contemporary men and women to follow are carried only by alternate modernities in this age of globalization.

Globalization, as it has focused upon the continuous integration of contradictory societies within it, draws in a considerable portion, the consciousness of self and individuality. Now, every society and culture has started shifting their interest from the very hegemonizing concept of modernity and globalization to their own typical, social, cultural tradition pattern. Thus, it has now led globalization towards global modernity. Dirlik writes:

Important transformation in global relations over the past three decades calls for a re- conceptualized modernity [...] as global modernity. Re conceptualizing modernity [...] has been the goal of much scholarship during this same period, cutting across ideological and methodological divides. The efforts to overcome Euro- centricism and to bring into modernity voices, experiences and cultural legacies of others. (276)

For Dirlik, this new idea of global modernity has the capacity to be plural to incorporate multiple ideas and to give different and typical and genuine sense of identity to all social classes in this world. it has now become a local concept as it has left Eurocentrism.

In this novel, *The Enchantress of Florence*, Rushdie explores the shifting concept of the society from the past tradition in the name of modernity. The shift of

the interest of every society and culture has now led globalization towards the global modernity. Rushdie also highlights the bad impact of globalization in the society and also talks about the goodness too. Due to the global modernity, East and West are related to one another.

The Enchantress of Florence talks about crime, whores, sensuality, fights over throne, cruelty, beauty, daily realities in search of deeper truths that are beyond everyday reality. The novel goes back and forth between Florence and India, intentionally crossing borders. With the journey of Vespucci to India, the West meets the East and with the journey of Qara Koz to Florence, she crosses the borders between East and West and, those of gender. Sensuality is one another. As a matter of fact, it is the sensual delirious side of human being that breaks the walls of gender, Social hierarchy and traditions.

Intertextuality is another modernist device Rushdie uses in his novel. What remains is that *The Enchantress of Florence*, like in the *Satanic Verses*, intertextuality is used to underscore culture's complexity and that living in the twentieth century meant that the literary migrant is able to choose his own parents. Additionally, it also underscores that the Indian literary tradition is one to be reckoned with and that it surely is not inferior to western literature. So, in this novel, Rushdie primarily uses intertextuality to underscore similarities, for instance, the fact that Babur and Machiavelli were occupied by the same issues, even though they lived on different continent.

In *The Enchantress of Florence*, the magic powers of Qara Koz recalls similarly gifted women figures. Mogor dell Amore's conversation with Akbar, the emperor's be relationship with his imaginary wife Jodha, etc are the perfect example of intertextuality which is beautiful interwoven in this novel. It remains to be seen

which out of Rushdie's intertextual practice is the more productive. So, it is no doubt to respond that, Rushdie's novel is a significant exploration of the East-West meeting and of cultural pluralism as: "There is no particular wisdom in the East... all human being are foolish to the same degree" (286), or "discord, difference, disobedience, disagreement, irreverence, iconoclasm, impudence, even insolence, might be the wellspring of the goods" (310).

In *The Enchantress of Florence*, he is trying to show a different, more evolved picture of the East, for instance, juxtaposing the ideas of Machiavelli to those of the emperor Akbar in order to show that the East is also a great source of knowledge. He is doing what Ramadan is urging the West to do. Ramadan states that because the "scientific, legal, philosophical, and religious input of Muslim scholars and intellectuals has been overlooked to such an extent [...] that one cannot see this as an ideological choice in the process leading to self-construction" (81). According to him,

"Even Eastern intellectuals who were living in the West and who have influenced the West have been systematically overlooked, and it should be the West's primary goal to reincorporate those Eastern intellectuals and their ideas in the West: [the] West and Europe must come to terms with the diversity of their past in order to master the necessary pluralism of their future". (83)

Akbar the Great, whose realm stretches from Kabul to Bengal, is as mad and melancholic as Hamlet. Despite his many wives, lusts after a queen he dreamed up "in the way that lonely children dream up imaginary friends" (59). Then a Florentine magic man calling himself Niccolò Vespucci arrives in Akbar's court with a yarn about a common relative: a sorceress descended from Genghis Khan, a good witch at the center of a great fable. Qara Koz, a beautiful mysterious princess who bridges

both Asian and European worlds with her powers of enchantment and sorcery becomes war booty.

In one marvelous scene Akbar's wife and mother come to show his imaginary wife Jodha how to release him from the Enchantress's spell, and in so doing are reconciled with Jodha in a moment of hilarious feminine solidarity - but the Enchantress materializes, Jodha vanishes, the women are defeated by the man's obsession. Indeed, the men in the book are as hormone-besotted as adolescents. All their derring-do, their battling for cities and empires, comes down to little more than a desire for a bed with a young woman in it. Machiavelli becomes a disappointed middle-aged lecher whose middle-aged wife "waddles" and "quacks" while he looks at her, of course, with loathing. But then suddenly, for a page or two, we slip into her soul; we feel her anger at his disloyalty, her hurt pride as a woman, her unchanged pride in his "dark skeptical genius" and her puzzlement at his failure to see how he lessens himself by scorning what he has that is treasurable and honorable. For that moment, he glimpsed a very different book, almost a different author. Then it was back to the dazzling play of fancy and the powerful dreams of men.

The essential compatibility of the realistic and the fantastic imagination may explain the success of Rushdie's sumptuous, impetuous mixture of history with fable. But in the end, of course, it is the hand of the master artist, past all explanation, that gives this book its glamour and power, its humor and shock, its verve, its glory. It is a wonderful tale, full of follies and enchantments. East meets west with a clash of cymbals and a burst of fireworks. Salman Rushdie's prose is expansive, lush and full of historical precision. *The Enchantress of Florence: A Novel* is every bit as good as I hoped it would be when I opened the cover; you won't be disappointed.

“The text, a vehicle of imperial authority, symbolized and in some cases indeed performed the act of taking possession”, (4) Ellek Boehmer writes in the opening pages of an important study about Migrant Metaphors that concerns itself with colonial and postcolonial writing (7). She goes on to analyze the way in which rhetoric has literally created the British Empire, with a last chapter dedicated to how contemporary authors have of reinterpreting such a world-shaping conception of language. Colonial literature has long been thought of as a response, voiced from the opposite vantage point, to this bulk of literature. Salman Rushdie has, on the other hand, made a name for himself as one who merges the two – or more – perspectives in order to confuse any opinion, to discard any certainty: the perfect hybrid novelist. The first part of the paper will indeed be concerned with showing with what obsession he has been deemed “hybrid”, and what this meant exactly.

More generally, this paper will discuss this scholarly text, published in 2005 in the light of Salman Rushdie’s *The Enchantress of Florence*. In his novel, Rushdie once more seems to have penned a statement of intent in favor of transculturalism, humanism, the absence of any fixed perspective, the perils of convictions and world-views. Vespucci and Akbar, the symbols of two different, yet similar Renaissances, could be seen to compose a hybrid character, a story-teller used to making East and West meet.

Furthermore, Rushdie reintroduces a distinct and distinctive perspective, something which, after all, was the great esthetic issue of the Renaissance. I shall argue that the encounter of cultures and the ensuing narratives are placed, in Rushdie’s novel, under the sign of a hidden unity, that of the author. Be he reliable or otherwise, he will impose his own voice over the entire novel; the paper shall attempt to pinpoint the various linguistic signs thereof. Hybridity, then, is no longer a

combination of perspectives, but a monstrous association of the same nature as that which had prevailed during colonial times. It is one which tells of the other with one's own words, and through one's own screen. Such a vein will, inter alia, be scrutinized through the prevailing intertext of Calvino's *Invisible Cities*, where an ongoing discourse between Marco Polo and Kublai Khan produces descriptions of cities looking, on the page, like those very places. In *Step across the Line*, Rushdie has praised Calvino's 'multiplicity'.

Salman Rushdie's *The Enchantress of Florence*, shares quite some similarities with *The Satanic Verses*. For instance, like Gabriel in its *The Satanic Verses*, one of the protagonists from *The Enchantress of Florence* is "left to question his memory and wonder how much of his waking life had been infected by dreams" (147). On top of this, Rushdie again uses the story of Hind and how "Hind of Mecca on the battlefield of Uhud had eaten the heart of the fallen Hamza, the Prophet's uncle" (87). However more importantly, *The Satanic Verses*, like *The Enchantress of Florence*, is primarily occupied with religion and even more importantly with the collision between East and West. In *The Satanic Verses*, Rushdie focuses on the migration from the East to the West, and what this means for the migrant's identity. This leads to his notion of hybridity. This notion of hybridity entails that there is a big discrepancy between the East and the West and that the immigrant's identity consists of, at least, two different components. In *The Enchantress of Florence*, Rushdie takes a different approach. He is no longer concerned with newness but travels back in history and searches for a common denominator to show that Eastern and Western cultures might not be as diametrically opposed as is generally assumed, or as the cart driver says to himself while he is transporting the eccentric 'Mogor dell' Amore':

[p]erhaps [the Mogor dell' Amore is] someone to be reckoned with. If he had a fault, it was that of ostentation, of seeking to be not only himself but a performance of himself as well, and, the driver thought, around here everybody is a little bit that way too, so maybe this man is not so foreign to us after all. (7)

However, before an in depth analysis can commence of such a complex work, a short Summary of the novel and its structure will now follow to make reading the remainder of this chapter easier.

The novel does away with the prevailing East-West dichotomy by comparing a high point of European culture, Renaissance Italy, with a similar period in Indian history, namely the reign of the Grand Mughal Akhbar. It is an intricate story in which a story narrated by the protagonist, who gives himself multiple names, one of which is Mogor dell' Amore, weaves together these two cultures. This Mogordell' Amore travels to India as a stowaway on a Scottish ship to narrate the story of his ancestry in order to show to the emperor that he is his relative, his uncle to be more precise. Being a cunning conjuror, he is able to trick and charm the ship's captain, and by doing so, he is able to steal many of the captain's precious artifacts, as well as a letter directed to the Grand Mughal from the English Queen Elizabeth. This enables him to enter the Grand Mughal's court and to disclose his secret to the Grand Mughal, namely that he is his uncle and son of a lost Mughal princess named Qara Köz. Qara Köz was a victim of strife and warfare and finally found her way to Florence. This is where one of the novels ends part. Part two brings the reader to Renaissance Florence where the story unfolds further. This narrative is regularly interrupted by the emperor Akbar, or by a passage that tells the reader of what is happening in the emperor's city during the narration of the Mogor's story. In this part,

the reader learns of three young Florentines: Niccoló il Machia (Niccoló Machiavelli), Agostino Verspucci and Antonino Argalia. Argalia is the one who, after his parents die from the plague, leaves Florence to become a soldier of fortune. He is the one who wins Qara Kóz's love. The final part can be seen as the denouement. The story is finished by the Mogor and he narrates how Argalia returns home to Florence with Qara Kóz, and how after his death she flees with Agostino Verspucci, relative of Amerigo Verspucci, to the New World, where she becomes pregnant of the Mogor dell' Amore.

Hybridity is a prevalent concept in contemporary post-colonial discourse and is mostly concerned with the place of the post-colonial migrant in the West, but can also refer to the encounter between two or multiple cultures in (formerly) colonized areas. As an aside, it may be useful to contemplate the concept of post-colonialism, from which the notion of hybridity springs. Bhabha himself described post-colonialism as follows:

It bears witness to the unequal and uneven forces of cultural representation [see Chapter I on 'Orientalism'] involved in the contest for political and social authority within the modern world order. [It] emerge[s] from the colonial testimony of Third World countries and the discourses of 'minorities' within the geopolitical divisions of East and West, North and South. [It] intervene[s] in those ideological discourses of modernity that attempt to give a hegemonic 'normality' to the uneven development and the differential, often disadvantaged, histories of nations, races, communities [and] people. (245-6)

From this take on the post-colonial world, which has witnessed an unprecedented influx of migrants from the "Third World countries" talked about in the quote above,

the notion of hybridity has been derived. According to Edward Said, Bhabha “is that rare thing, a reader of enormous subtlety and wit, a theorist of uncommon power [and] his work is a landmark in the exchange between ages, genres and cultures; the colonial, postcolonial, modernist and postmodern” (Bhabha i).

Postcolonial theory and criticism radically questions the aggressively expansionist imperialism of the colonizing powers and in particular, the system of values that supported imperialism and that it sees as still dominant within the Western world. It studies the process and the effects of cultural displacement that inevitably followed colonial conquest and rule and its consequences for personal and communal identity and it studies the ways in which the displaced have culturally defended them. Homi Bhabha, one of the most prominent Postcolonial theorists, has put it this way:

Postcolonial perspectives emerge from the colonial testimony of Third World Countries and the discourses of 'minorities' within the geopolitical divisions of east and west, north and south .They formulate their critical revisions around issues of cultural difference, social authority and political discrimination in order to reveal the antagonistic and ambivalent moment within the 'rationalization' of modernity.(438)

For Bhabha, the postcolonial perspectives has that disruptive potential become the effect of colonialism have in a curious way foreshadowed current poststructuralist views and concerns. Drawing on postcolonial writers, Rushdie's novel deeply influenced the agenda of the study of non-western cultures and their literatures and pushed it in the direction of what post colonialism defines.

So, in the 21st century, instantaneous communication, global economics, and increasing migration of people across continents have drastically destabilized old

views on the formation of cultural identities. In his novels, Salman Rushdie explores these questions which plague the postcolonial and cosmopolitan world—what is the migrant? How can a person survive between cultures? What do those grand ideas of home, culture, or nation even mean?

Magic realism is another important technique in Rushdie's novel. Magic realism is an aesthetic style or genre of fiction in which magical elements blend with the real world. The story explains these magical elements as real occurrences, presented in a straightforward manner that places the "real" and the "fantastic" in the same stream of thought. Although it is most commonly used as a literary genre, Magic Realism also applies to film and the visual arts.

Arjun Appadurai defines magic realism in *'Modernity at Large'* as it relates to the power of the imagination "as expressed in dreams, songs, fantasies, myths, and stories". He describes an important source of imagination as "contact with, news of, and rumors about others... who have become inhabitants of ... faraway worlds" (53). In this context, where Appadurai references more contemporary media influences, Rushdie implies storytelling as the medium for such exchanges of inspirational information. He delegates these two major components of magic realism to two major characters; the Emperor Akbar encompassing the power of the imagination and the foreigner Mogor Amore directly representing the power of storytelling. These symbols seem naturally befitting, as the two characters are respectively interconnected throughout the novel.

Salman Rushdie is often best known for his novel *The Satanic Verses: A Novel*. What many do not know, however, is that he does magical realism in a way that is often not encountered in today's fiction. *The Enchantress of Florence: A Novel* is at once a tale of Renaissance Italy, India, and most of the seas in between. It is a

story of travelers, magical princesses, and the richness of desire and love. Deeply philosophical and profoundly lonely, *The Enchantress of Florence: A Novel* is bound to be one of Rushdie's most popular novels.

Akbar the Great, whose realm stretches from Kabul to Bengal, is as mad and melancholic as Hamlet; despite his many wives, lusts after a queen he dreamed up "in the way that lonely children dream up imaginary friends" (59).

Florentine magic man calling himself Niccolò Vespucci arrives in Akbar's court with a yarn about a common relative: a sorceress descended from Genghis Khan, a good witch at the center of a great fable. Qara Koz, a beautiful mysterious princess who bridges both Asian and European worlds with her powers of enchantment and sorcery becomes war booty.

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compatibility of the realistic and the fantastic imagination may explain the success of Rushdie's sumptuous, impetuous mixture of history with fable. But in the end, of course, it is the hand of the master artist, past all explanation, that gives this book its glamour and power, its humor and shock, its verve, its glory. It is a wonderful tale, full of follies and enchantments. East meets west with a clash of cymbals and a burst of fireworks. Salman Rushdie's prose is expansive, lush and full of historical precision.

In this way, by asserting the rights of magic in the present, Rushdie is also testing the power of the imagination to affect reality. This is his highest theme, his persistent obsession. If so much of what seems magic at first turns out to be the result of art or artifice that is exactly the point. Imagination does have the power to affect reality--personal, social, political. Argalia imagines a fantastic life and then goes out and lives it in the novel *The Enchantress of Florence*.

Diaspora is "the movement, migration, or scattering of people away from an established or ancestral homeland or people dispersed by whatever cause to more than one location or people settled far from their ancestral homelands. In *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies*, Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin defines Diaspora as "the voluntary or forcible movement of peoples from their homelands into new regions" (68). Under colonialism, diaspora is a multifarious movement, involving the "temporary or permanent" movement of Europeans all over the world, leading to colonial settlements. Consequently, the ensuing economic exploitation of the settled areas necessitated large amounts of labor that could not be fulfilled by the local populace. This leads to the diaspora resulting from the enslavement of Africans and their relocation to places like the British colonies. After slavery was outlawed, the continued demand for workers created indentured labor. This produces large bodies of

people from poor areas of India, China (and others) to the West Indies, Malaya, Fiji, Eastern and Southern Africa, and Southeast Asia, etc.

Salman Rushdie, being a diasporic writer, valorizes the non- Western culture, tradition, norms and values in most of his texts. His texts aim at reflecting the changing faces of non- western society. The representation of the cultural background from which those texts supposed to emerge, Rushdie reveals their assertive tone. All the non- western text assertively represents the indigenous culture. Similarly, Rushdie's representation of indigenous culture in his text is in fact counter response to the deep-seated stereotypical assumption that the European culture is superior to the non- western culture. Moreover, Rushdie's famous novel *The Enchantress of Florence* brings the concept of cultural hybridity. None culture is superior and inferior, rather it has its own value in its locality. Most of the significant characters in the novel cross the liminal zone. Through the characters like Qara Koz and Vespucci he shows the transmission of culture and each culture is good in itself. Every culture is acceptable in its own time and space. As the place and the people, so is the culture. Culture is relative Rushdie opines. Hence, Rushdie attempts to show the renewed concept of cultural relativity in most of his texts.

Rushdie, being a diasporic writer, deals with the issues of diaspora in the novel *The Enchantress of Florence*. Diasporic people leave their homeland and move to foreign country forcibly or voluntarily. In the core of novel two significant characters, mysterious lady Qara Koz and Vespucci leave their homeland voluntarily. In the new region they suffer from the sense of loss of their imagination with the help of their memory as Vespucci does in the novel. As Rushdie is frequently hunted by the memory of his real homeland, he suffers from the sense of displacement and

restlessness. To overcome that with his imagination he creates the imaginary setting and characters blending with history all through the novel.

Alternative modernities seek to valorize the previously established norms and values in the present with the consciousness of time. Here, Rushdie attempts to search not only for the medieval bonds of human relation, but also to valorize the non-western civilization. In this sense, alternative modernities valorize the non-western cultures and civilizations unlike western modernity. Salman Rushdie is in top form in this historical novel set in Mughal India and in Renaissance Florence. A mysterious Italian shows up at the court of the Mughal Emperor claiming to be his relation. How could this be? He has yellow hair and pale skin. Slowly the story unfolds. Rushdie creates a dreamlike atmosphere in which magic can and occasional does happen but more often humans make their own choices and accept their own fates. It's a meditation on the nature of love, of imagination, of loyalty and friendship and the forces that move history. Among the characters we meet at Machiavelli, the Medici, Botticelli and a mysterious princess -- she of the title -- and her "mirror," a servant almost as beautiful who shares her life, her lovers and her fate. In this way, by showing the tolerance and patience in the eastern people, Rushdie seeks to valorize the previously established norms and values in the present with the consciousness.

When modernity always stands in opposition to tradition, alternative modernities seek to reform and bring the changes in such traditions with the continuation of it covering the spirit of time. Alternative modernities seek to bring the changes in people's lifestyle not in the universal way but in their own way of locality in relation to their religious, social practices, valorizing the traditional (moral and ethical) norms and values. In this respect, many of the Indians have been able to change their way of life.

The Enchantress of Florence focuses on a fictionalized version of Akbar the Great, the Famous sixteenth century Mughal emperor, who championed religious tolerance and reason. Akbar, who is granted a depressive vision of future in which his dreams of civility and civilization give way to sectarian violence and hate, initially seems like an intriguing hero. A brilliant military commander as well as something of a philosopher king, he is given to bouts of loneliness and soul-searching, and worries constantly about whom-among his courtiers and his sons-he can truly trust. In this way, Rushdie critiques Western mode of modernity by highlighting pre modern ethical and moral values as well as non-Western culture and civilization. He also demands for alternative modernities.

III. Western Modernity as a Discourse in *The Enchantress of Florence*

In the multigeneric text *The Enchantress of Florence* Rushdie advocates the need of alternative modernities which includes pre-modern ethical and moral values by critiquing hegemonic Western modernity. In doing so, Rushdie combines many genres within a single text by blurring the modern generic boundary. In this book, he melds travelogue, fiction, history as well as sixteenth century Indian history and his own experiences of the twentieth century.

The novel does away with the prevailing East-West dichotomy by comparing a high point of European culture, Renaissance Italy, with a similar period in Indian history, namely the reign of the Grand Mughal Akhbar. It is an intricate story in which a story narrated by the protagonist, who gives himself multiple names, one of which is Mogor dell'Amore, weaves together these two cultures. This Mogor dell'Amore travels to India as a stowaway on a Scottish ship to narrate the story of his ancestry in order to show to the emperor that he is his relative, his uncle to be more precise. Being a cunning conjuror, he is able to trick and charm the ship's captain, and by doing so, he is able to steal many of the captain's precious artefacts, as well as a letter directed to the Grand Mughal from the English Queen Elizabeth. This enables him to enter the Grand Mughal's court and to disclose his secret to the Grand Mughal, namely that he is his uncle and son of a lost Mughal princess named Qara Kōz. Qara Koz was a victim of strife and warfare and finally found her way to Florence. This is where one of the novel ends part. Part two brings the reader to Renaissance Florence where the story unfolds further. This narrative is regularly interrupted by emperor Akbar, or by a passage that tells the reader of what is happening in the emperor's city during the narration of the Mogor's story. In this part, the reader learns of three young Florentines: Niccoló il Machia (Niccoló Machiavelli), Agostino Verspucci and

Antonino Argalia. Argalia is the one who, after his parents die from the plague, leaves Florence to become a soldier of fortune. He is the one who wins Qara Koz's love. The final part can be seen as the denouement. The story is finished by the Mogor and he narrates how Argalia returns home to Florence with Qara Koz, and how after his death she flees with Agostino Verspucci, relative of Amerigo Verspucci, to the New World, where she becomes pregnant of the Mogor dell' Amore.

Western modernity, which traveled into the non-Western land in its colonial form, caused only destruction of native cultures. Rushdie shows the colonial legacy more dangerous and explosive than colonial practice itself. In this way, Rushdie critiques Western modernity which has affinity with rationalism, individualism, nationalism, colonialism slavery as well as Eurocentrism, exposing with it blind spots and exclusiveness to advocate the needs of the revival of pre-modern antique values.

The story is written in a postmodern style, employing the frame narrative. Every chapter is a story in itself, and each chapter functions as a little piece that belongs to a larger scenario. Instead of narrating the story in a linear unidirectional fashion, where the end of one chapter is the beginning of another chapter, the frame narrative actually engages the reader, as the researcher found flipping back to previous chapters, trying to integrate them with the current chapter, seeing how these pieces of the puzzle fit together in the grand scheme of things. There is also an element of magical realism. Plenty of fantastic and magical things happen in this book. Perhaps that is the charm of Salman Rushdie, as *The Satanic Verses* to be written in a similar fashion, employing magical realism and frame narratives.

Thus, the free flow of traders in Indian arena, and their cosmopolitan settlement around the areas shows the communitarianism, decolonization, inclusive nationalism, ethics of co-existence and hospitality which existed in Indian Ocean

world to counter the European values. Likewise, Rushdie's call for alternative modernities in *The Enchantress of Florence* valorizes non-Western cultures and civilizations leaving the suitable space for the marginalized groups and victims by critiquing exclusive Western modernity.

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