Texts within Text: An Intertextual Study of Elif Shafak's *The Forty Rules of Love*

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Abstract

This qualitative research critically explores the intersection of multiple historical, socio-cultural and political discourses in *The Forty Rules of Love*. For this purpose, the current study has been conducted through the theoretical perspective of postmodern historiographic metafiction with the analytical method of intertextuality. Early on, the novel has been studied with respect to fascination for Rumi and spirituality. However, the current research tends to analyze the novel in the light of postmodernism that encourages the syncretic mixing of innovation and tradition, and past and present into a unified whole, through the lens of intertexuality. The researchable issue is to investigate how the writer blends history into fiction and what sorts of techniques she employs to formulate historiographic metafictional nature of the text by intermingling of various other texts/discourses leading to a unique blend of multi-layered meaning residing in a single text. The study focuses on the contribution of the form of the text towards the production of meaning in terms of plurality and the elicitation of ideological discourses underlying the main schema. Specifically, this study aims to ascertain the outcome of intertextual fusion of historical and postmodern narrative in the novel and its important role in the elicitation of multi-tiered meanings, beliefs and underlying ideologies embedded in the text of the novel. This study finds that, as an amalgam of multiple voices and discourses, *The Forty Rules of Love* is a critical commentary not just upon a historical faction of Sufi tradition, but also on the ideology of Islam as a peaceful religion, promoting religious tolerance and giving liberty of righteous thoughts and actions.

Keywords: *postmodernism, historiographic metafiction, intertextuality, historical, socio-cultural and political discourse*

Introduction

Owing to its comprehensive and inclusive nature, the term intertextuality can be used to re-contextualize the gamut of corpus, such as, literary, non-literary, operative, informative, expressive, fictional, non- fictional, historical, anterior, posterior, visual, verbal and written text. The definition of intertextuality is highly elusive because of its tendency to incorporate and evolve with new trends, amalgamations and innovations. Simply put, it can be compared to a collage as a work of art and in terms of literature; it is better known as a discourse of multiplicity and plurality of meaning, ideas, beliefs and realities. In this regard, Kristeva (1980) believes that the text is a recurrence of prior discourse and that authors are not the master minds behind their work. Instead, they owe their work to previous texts. She defines text as "a permutation of texts, an intertextuality in the

space of a given text in which several utterances taken from other texts intersect and neutralize" (Allen, 2006, p. 35).

Barthes (1975) defines intertextuality as "the impossibility of living outside the infinite text" (p. 36). The coinage of intertextuality is to the credit of Kristeva (1980) who is believed to have borrowed the idea of intertextuality from Bakhtin' s views on "polyphony or heteroglossia- the co- existence and interplay of several types of discourse reflecting the social or class dialects and the different generations and age groups of society" (Haberer, 2007, p. 57). Both Bakhtin and Kristeva share a common ground that texts are drawn from the broader cultural and social context. Kristeva (1980) states that textual structures consist of certain ideologies and societal frictions emanated through discourse. She introduces a new terminology for the text or word as an *ideologeme* due to its existence as a spot of tremendous social and historical tensions and conflicts.

In keeping with multi-faceted views on intertextuality, the text of the postmodern novel, *The Forty Rules of Love*, has been analyzed in light of postmodernism to decipher the hidden beliefs and ideologies. The theory of postmodernism involves the paradigm of last few decades of the twentieth century that stands witness to a plurality of forms, pastiche, multiplicity of tastes, rootlessness of belief systems, irrationality, skepticism about universal truth values and indeterminacy of power and knowledge. Multiplicity, plurality, decentralization, unfoundationality, arbitrariness, non- accumulative structure of knowledge are also some complementary terms which portray the postmodern practices and constitute the discourse of postmodernism (Holub, 2005) and description of literature as an eclectic blend of innovation and tradition and past and present. Sarup (2001) maintains that in postmodernism, the emphasis is switched from content or subject matter to style or form, from reality to illusions, and from periodic continuation to fragmentation. Moreover, this movement tends to quantify the nuances of knowledge, for instance, philosophy, sociology, history and so on.

Research Questions

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. How does the intertextual form of the novel *The Forty Rules of Love* contribute towards the production of meaning in terms of plurality and the elicitation of certain ideologies underlying the text of the novel?

2. What historical, socio-cultural and political discourses are interweaved in this postmodern novel *The Forty Rules of Love*?

Intertexuality

Intertextuality is considered a part of archeology and history by Halliday (2003) who defines intertextuality as links of a chain of a textual generation. To him, each text is created in relation to history and every text becomes a part of textual history. Arguably, history is not merely the past of a text, rather a productive chain of texts. Furthermore,

the past of a

discourse or words lies in their instantiations rather than in linguistics or grammar. Widdowson (2004) also defines intertextuality but from a different viewpoint of linguistics. Although he believes in significance of intertextuality in analyzing literary texts, yet he finds it hard to locate the intertextual elements of previous texts in the current intended text.

On account of unoriginal, derivative, dependent and multi- dimensional and non-linear nature of the text, Barthes (1977) states that text cannot be circumscribed to a line of words emanating singular connotation but a multi-dimensional realm in which a plenty of derivative and unoriginal writings clash and blend. Bakhtin also supports the dialogic "clash and criss- crossing of differently oriented social accent in the small arena of a word" (Morris, 2009, p.12). Kristeva (1980) redefines this dialogic collaboration of words as an intersection of texts lying in vertical and horizontal dimensions and leading towards intertextuality. Intertextuality lays emphasis on the operational role of reader eliciting countless meanings from a particular text. It disrupts the notion of sole ownership by single author. In this regard, Eco states, "it is not true that works are created by their authors. Works are created by texts, all together they speak to each other independently of the intentions of their authors" (as cited in Plett, 1991, p. 93). Authorial ownership is, first of all, challenged by Barthes (1977) who maintains that "the text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the numerable centers of culture . . . the writer can only imitate a gesture that is always anterior, never original" (p. 146).

Bazerman & Prior (2004) maintain that the text can rely on previous texts for the permeation of meanings to be employed directly. This phenomenon takes place whenever one particular text borrows combination of words from another text authoritatively and reiterates such direct information for the sake of new text. Moreover, the text can be gravitated towards obvious social conflicts of previous citations involved in discussion. Sometimes, texts categorically make use of other citations as backdrop, contrast and support. Texts can depend upon statements, ideas, beliefs and issues with which readers are usually familiarized. The readers could inscribe the text to a particular source or grasp the material just as common information. By utilizing certain indirect and identifiable type of languages, genres and phrasing, each text invokes social spheres where such languages, dialects and discourses are practiced, generally, to recognize that particular text as an inseparable part of those social worlds. Texts depend upon the available forms of language without taking into account the interext and remain part of the culture of the periodic times.

Historiographic Metafiction and Intertextuality

Hutcheon (2004) contends that historiographic metafiction is one of the postmodern perspectives to study such works in which historical setting, accounts and voices are presented in such a far-fetched and fictional way that nothing can be extracted as absolute or final truth except for the infinite voice of fiction, that is, metafiction. Metafictional voices reverberate through ages reflecting historical discourse and, thereby, giving
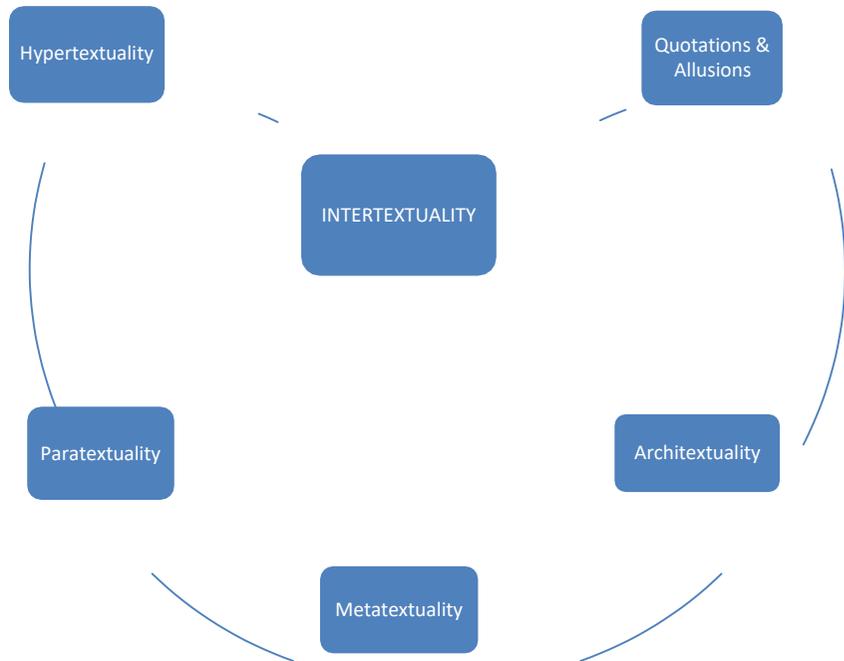
rise to historiographic

metafiction. Although grounded in history, yet paradoxically, historiographic metafiction is ahistorical due to the submission of historical backdrop to fictitious situations. In this type of work, fiction and history are intertextually linked to bring together worldly wisdom and literary aspects. If a postmodern novel inscribed as histriographic metafiction is considered, it does employ and install the techniques and traditions of history as well as fiction but not without confusing, abusing, subverting and denying such traditions. Despite the influence of historical intertexts to revive the past, ironical imitation, for instance, serves to create a difference between past (history) and post (literature). Therefore, historiographic metafiction is self- contradictory in the sense that it relates to history but simultaneously subsides its historical connection by incorporating artistic subtleties. In other words, archival facts cannot be separated from artistic acts of imitation.

McLaren & Kincheloe (2007) argue that postmodern critical theory is grounded in the idea that meaning making is the outcome of continuous interplay of signifiers. Rue (1994) contends that absolute truths or objective values no longer exist in postmodernism. However, localized values and truths keep spawning but not as a final verdict. The universe has ceased to interpret things like what is true, beautiful or good. Now the charge of interpretation has been shifted to individuals variously.

Furlanetto (2013) believes that in *The Forty Rules of Love*, Shafak utilizes "Orientalist strategies in the ways in which she positions the east as being instrumental to the west. Her narrative succeeds in creating a form of transatlantic cultural kinship between Turkey and the United States" (p. 201). She delineates the "universal spirituality" as a platform of unity with the firm belief on the power of love as a binding force between east and west. It is this centripetal force of love that attunes all music "to the one symphony and unity is realized" (Anjum & Ramazan, 2014, p. 1).

Intertextual Method of Analysis

In order to examine what type of metafictional voices and historical, socio-cultural and political discourses are embedded in the postmodern novel, *The Forty Rules of Love*, and what sort of intertextual practices and techniques play a vital role in "semiotics of productivity", that is, the production of meaning, the text of the novel is analyzed as per the analytical model of intertextuality proposed by Genette (1997). Genette has proposed a systematic analytical framework christened as 'transtextuality' which might be styled as 'intertextuality'. Transtextuality is, in fact, Genette's promulgation of intertextuality which refers to "a relationship of copresence between two texts or among several texts and the actual presence of one text within another" (Genette, 1997, pp. 1–2). Intertextuality is further classified into five specific sub-divisions as demonstrated by the following flow chart:

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                                              Quotations &
   Hypertextuality                              Allusions




                         INTERTEXTUALITY




       Paratextuality                                Architextuality




                          Metatextuality
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Intertextual Analysis of *The Forty Rules of Love*

In accordance with the given parameters of intertextual model recommended by Genette (1997), the text of "The Forty Rules of Love" is intensively and extensively analyzed in order to find out what sort of intertextual techniques does the author, consciously or subconsciously, rely on. Once fragmented by intertextual analysis, the production of historical, social, cultural, religious or political ideologies and meanings sustained as a potential meaning in this postmodern historiographic metafictional novel has been unearthed.

Intertextual analysis comprises five basic parts which are enlisted as follows: quotations and allusions about Quranic chapters, Persian folklores and socio-cultural revolutions; architextuality built around generic mixing, figurative language, a variety of historical, feminist and cultural discourses and language mixing; metatextuality based on parables without the revelation of their sources; paratextuality consisting in peritext and epitext and, eventually, hypertextuality comprising hypertext and hypotext.

1. Quotations and Allusions: Quotations and allusions regarding Quranic chapters, Persian folklores and socio-cultural revolutions are explored in the following paragraphs.

1.1 *Quranic Chapters*: The inculcation of Quranic chapters with discursive interpretations epitomizes intertextuality in the guise of quotations in the novel. For example, the two different versions of surah Al-Nisa are quoted in the novel. According to the first one, "Men are the maintainers of women . . . and (as to) those on whose part you feel desertion, admonish them, and leave them alone in the sleeping places and beat them . . . "(Shafak, 2011, p. 196). And the second version reads like "Men are the support of women . . . As for women you feel are averse, talk to them persuasively, then leave them alone in bed (without molesting them) and go to bed with them (when they are willing) . . ."(p. 196). These disparate interpretations voiced by Shams in the novel signify the idea that Islam, as a religion of equality, takes into account the due rights of women and ordains courteous treatment towards them. It is only in the hands of some extremists and fundamentalists that Islamic messages are distorted for vested interests and Islam is projected as a suppressing rather than liberating religion. The second interpretation, in particular, also affirms the existential feminist belief that women cannot be forced to sustain an unfavorable marriage. Instead, they are free to exercise their right of living independently as per their choice. Thus, by drawing the comparison between two interpretations of the same verse and siding with the more liberal version, the writer bestows women with a voice.

Another Quranic chapter, named al Kahf and translated as 'the cave', is also quoted in the novel with respect to a parable about the prophet Moses and Khidr. Through the citation of this parable, Shafak (2011) intertextually relates the spiritual connection between historical legends, Khidr and Moses, to that of the thirteenth century's Shams and Rumi and, finally, to that of the postmodern characters Aziz and Ella. In addition to direct quotations, Shafak (2011) makes allusions to the Holy Scriptures by mere mention of the legendary characters, Cain and Abel, who can be commonly located in holy books of Muslims, Christians and Jews such as Qur'an, Bible and Genesis respectively. Curiously enough, in Shafak' s novel, a killer named Baybars is portrayed as recalling Abel and Cain twice to excuse his horrendous acts of killing. Prone towards violence and negativity, he is misled to believe that waging wars is the innate nature of human beings ever since.

Shafak (2011) also alludes to the Quranic tale of Yusuf and Zuleikha along with some other tales procured from Persian sources. The agony of unrequited love of Zuleikha is intertextualized with that of Kimya insofar as Kimya, also at one point, like Zuleikha, attempts to lure Shams in order to consummate their marriage but her efforts become futile at the end because Shams does not reciprocate her advances. Consumed by her passion for Shams, Kimya, resultantly, loses her life out of grief. In the same way, the desire of Zuleikha for Yousuf can be

interlinked to that of Ella for Aziz when she comes close to the point of yielding her body to Aziz but he comes back

to his senses and pulls her away to spare her from any sense of guilt and regret afterwards.

1.2 *Persian Folklores:* Allusions to the Persian romantic legends about Farhad, Shirin, Layla and Majnun characterize intertextual feature of incorporating the historical art of story- telling in the formation of the genre of postmodern novel. Shafak (2011) merely implies to "Farhad and Shirin" (p. 311) and briefly describes Layla's encounter with the then Abbasid caliph, Harunar- Rashid. She narrates how the emperor feels intrigued and anxious to see Layla whose name has been buzzing around the city and whose ravishing beauty has turned a sensible man named Qays into a madman. Finally, before long, Layla is brought to the caliph's palace. But when Harunar- Rashid faces her, he feels disillusioned to see that Layla appears like any other ordinary lady in the city with no exceptional beauty. Disappointed at her sight, the emperor wonders if she has anything special about her and why Qays has gone insane for this woman with plain beauty. Getting his point, Layla smiles at him and reveals that she is Layla, but the emperor is not Majnun. She points out that the emperor has to see her with the eyes of her lover in order to solve the mystery of love.

The intertextuality among all these sacred and historical tales as well as the postmodern narrative of Aziz and Ella lies in their shared concept of the ethereal passion of love. When lovers are tested in the grueling crucible of love, they go through a trail of hardships and tribulations. Eventually, because of their epiphanic experience of love and spiritual awakening, they become strong and self-actualized enough to identify and reach the 'True Spirit of Love, Wisdom and Knowledge'.

In addition, Shams' first rule of love, intriguingly, alludes to the intertexual idea that the whole universe is like a one being and that everyone and every atom is interconnected via an invisible and intangible web of tales. Moreover, human voices are interminably deposited in an infinite space. Shams' historic idea, indeed, prophesies the postmodern idea that the world has turned into a global village through a digital network of 'world wide web'.

1.3 *Social and Cultural Revolutions:* Shafak (2011) remotely alludes to the revolutions taking place in 1960s in an epistolary email from Sufi Aziz to Ella. She reveals that in 1960s the world presented quite a "scene of student demonstrations, hijackings and revolutions" (p. 212). However, such slight and allusive revelations are sufficient to trigger the readers' memory for delving deep into the significant political and socio-cultural revolutions which ensued in 1960s such as Chinese cultural revolutions and American social revolution.

 American social revolution fumed in the early years of nineteen sixties when American masses elected John Kennedy as their president. For the American nation, the youthful president was an icon of hope and optimism. In nineteen sixty-three, when Kennedy was assassinated, many felt their morale down and their hopes doused, particularly, the youth and

minority classes. A great deal of Americans protested to bring an end to the

unjust treatment meted out to the black citizens. Many others agitated to put an end to the conflict in Vietnam. And some protests were intended to claim equality and fair treatment for women. In the midst of the nineteen sixties, newly elected President, Lyndon Johnson, frequently faced protesters demonstrating against the Vietnamese war and, eventually, renounced his presidency. The point of curiosity is that besides, President Kennedy, two other outstanding Americans were assassinated during the nineteen sixties. The champion of Civil rights, Martin Luther, also known as, King Junior was shot dead at Tennessee, in nineteen sixty-eight. Soon afterwards, John Kennedy' s brother-- Several weeks later, John Kennedy's brother -- Robert Kennedy -- was shot dead at Los Angeles in California when he was busy campaigning to earn presidential nomination. The two horrific murders lead to disorder in various states across the country (Watson, 2012).

The impact of American social revolution and hippie culture was felt all across the globe and, particularly, in Europe. This fact is intertextually evident by the portrayal of Aziz in the novel. Shafak (2011) depicts how Aziz is victimized by the hippie culture of drugs, night clubs and debauchery prevalent back then in nineteen sixties and seventies. Aziz himself confesses of being lost "in a circle of addicts, becoming a regular at all night parties and dance clubs in Amsterdam" (p. 226). He also becomes addicted to drugs like cocaine, marijuana, acid and hashish and regrets at becoming a night creature, befriending the wrong people and waking up in strangers' beds.

2. Architextuality: Architextuality entails generic mixing, the employment of figurative language, discourse mixing and hybridization of languages.

2.1 *Generic Mixing:* The homogenized, yet unconventional, mixing of genres in the structural skeleton of the novel is an evidence of architextuality. For example, the inclusion of poetry, email correspondence between Ella and Aziz, anecdotes, legends and historiographic novel, *Sweet Blasphemy* within the narrative account for architextual form of the novel. For instance, Rumi's verses are quoted as "let us choose one another as companions! Let us sit at each other's feet! Inwardly we have many harmonies—think not... that we are only what we see" (Shafak, 2011, p. 42). In her email correspondence with Aziz, Ella goes like this, "Dear Aziz Z. Zahra. It seems like you believe that love is the essence of life and that nothing else matters" (p. 44). Responding to her, Aziz types, "even a speck of love should not go unappreciated, because, as Rumi said, love is the water of life" (p. 54). Like an omniscient narrator, Shafak (2011) depicts the beautiful image of moon, and relates that "bright and plump, the gorgeous full moon resembled a massive pearl hanging in the sky" (p. 97).

Hence, all of the above quoted instances demonstrate how generic mixing results into a new type of genre, that is, intertextuality.

2.2 *Figurative Language:* The architextual structure is also built into the use of figurative language in the novel. The figurative language

involves the employment of literary techniques, such as metaphors, symbols,

similes, paradox, oxymoron and allegorical dreams. For instance, a metaphoric expression of wine is considered from the novel, "The wine of love made our heads spin gently, and I realized with glee and gratitude that the wind no longer whispered despair" (Shafak, 2011, p. 247). Wine is always associated with social and religious taboos in Islamic culture, therefore, the metaphoric expression of the "wine of love" attributed to the Muslim scholar, Rumi, is so defamiliarizng to the readers. But, on the other hand, the same metaphor is so welcoming in European Christian culture where wine is considered as an essential part of living. Hence, the symbol of wine acts as a uniting agent between Muslims and Christians and also accounts for the popularity of Rumi's poetry in Turkey's neighboring countries.

The symbolism of number forty is also discussed in mystic ways. In an email to Aziz, Ella reveals her fortieth birthday, believing that she has achieved a milestone in her life by turning forty which is a defining moment, particularly, for women. She considers forty to be heralding for more wisdom and awareness. However, in a responding email to Ella, Aziz claims that in mystic ideology the number 'forty' signifies the ascent to a higher level and spiritual awakening. The importance of the symbol of forty is emphasized by various arguments, for example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) "was forty years old when he received the call to become a prophet. Buddha meditated under a linden tree for forty days. Not to mention the forty rules of Shams" (p. 115). By showing relevance among these prophets with respect to the symbol of forty, Shafak (2011) urges on coexistence among different religious communities.

The name of a harlot, Desert Rose, also carries some symbolic significance. Her patron nicknames her "Desert" to refer to her sterility and adds "Rose" to insinuate her charming beauty. Besides reflecting beauty, the symbol of rose indicates Kimya's sexual desire for Shams as well. Shams compares her willingness to consummate their marriage to the opening of a rosebud to the rain. Some other flowers which are metaphorically employed by the author are sunflowers and lotus flowers. For instance, Rose' flowing blond hair are depicted as bright and beautiful as sunflower. When Shams faces upwards with both of his hand wide open, his face looks like a sunflower in quest of the sun.

2.3 Discourse Mixing: Architextuality becomes manifested owing to interaction among multiple discourses. For example, historical discourse, socio-political discourse, feminist discourse, and cultural discourse which are discussed in the following paragraphs:

2.3.1 *Historical Discourse*: Shafak (2011) refers to the historical discourse of destruction of Asian states and decline of Muslims wrought by crusaders as well as Genghiz khan and his allied Mongols in thirteenth century which was a tumultuous time in Anatolia. She chronicles that "in the West, the Crusaders, on their way to Jerusalem, occupied and sacked Constantipole, leading to the partition of Byzantine Empire" (p. 20).

Similarly, "in the East, highly disciplined Mongol army swiftly expanded

under the military genius of Genghiz Khan" (p. 20).

Genghis Khan was known as a young barbaric chiefton and a nomadic sovereign among Chinese and Muslims for his formidable victories. After the retreat of the Kara-Khitans, the Mongols under the command of Genghis Khan sought a frontier with Khwarezmia, ruled by Shah Ala ad- Din Muhammad who was a progeny of Turkish born slave. In Mongol narrative, Khan was virtually intrigued to trade with the Khwarizmian Empire and did not intend to invade unless Shah exasperated him by slaying Mongol merchants and ambassadors. However, Shafak (2011) suspects the narrative of the act of killing of ambassadors. Some people also believe that Genghis Khan himself conspired into getting his diplomats killed so he could wage this massive war campaign under some pretext. Whatever the case was, Genghis khan saw the execution of diplomats as a serious affront because he thought of ambassadors so much sacred as inviolable. This incident led Genghis Khan to invade the Khwarizmian Dynasty. He swore to seek vengeance upon Shah and dispatched his army across the mountainous range of Tien Shan, trespassing in the Shah's empire. Eventually, one of the mightiest rulers and greatest conquerors, Shah of Khwarizmia was defeated and discovered in such a miserable and impoverished condition that his companions could not even get him a shroud and, thereby buried him in his shabby clothes on a deserted islet where he died of pneumonia in winter.

The revolting saga of ruination of Muslim Asian states and genocide of Muslims that began with the destruction of Khwarizmian Empire continued even after the death of Genghis Khan who inherited his legacy of annihilating Muslim states to his sons and grandchildren. All the shahs and sultans had to yield to Mongols's dictatorial decisions in humility. As if it was not enough to humiliate Muslim rulers, Genghis' s son, Hulagu Khan demanded that Caliphate of Abbasid Dynasty in Baghdad be eliminated and Caliph pay tribute. Upon Caliph's refusal of submission, Hulagu's forces invaded Baghdad, the capital of Cliphate, and routed Caliph's army. For a week, the town was plundered; the mosques were set alight with fire; and the inhabitants were butchered. In the end, the Caliph, Mustassim, was trampled to horrible death by hooves of Mongols's horses. Thus, "in 1258, Baghdad fell to the Mongols. The one city that prided itself on its fortitude and glamour and claimed to be the center of the world suffered defeat" (p. 343).

Once Caliphate was destroyed, Mongolian victories knew no bounds. Afterwards, the Mongols turned Syria and Mesopotamia into ruins. Only those towns that promptly yielded to Mongols were spared. Only those royal families were allowed to survive who paid tribute to Mongols. However, Aleppo, when refused to surrender, was pillaged and sabotaged for about five days and its inhabitants were butchered. Fortunately, the neighboring state, Dmascus was left intact because the prince of Damascus did not display any resistance and, therefore, he was appointed the

governor as a reward. Hence, the historical sprinkling of thirteenth century's discourse of death and degeneration of Muslims and their territories added to the twenty first

century' s postmodern setting provides architextual basis for the novel, *The Forty Rules of Love.*

2.3.2 *Feminist Discourse:* Feminist discourse calls for re-inventing the man-made perceptions about women. Feminism encourages women to dismantle the binary of self / other in which men are supposed to occupy the privileged position of the 'self' while women are treated as "other". Once women become self-actualized about their social, moral, intellectual and financial rights, they claim their identity in the male dominated cultural space. Thereby, rejecting the othering attitude of manly society, women become able to reverse the binary of self and other as an endorsement of feminism. The current study demonstrates how some female characters in the novel, *The Forty Rules of Love,* such as Ella and Desert Rose are oppressed by men and how both of these characters raise their voices against female exploitation and establish their identities as equal counterparts of men in their loud approval of feminism.

Ella is portrayed as an unhappy married woman cheated on by her husband. Throughout her married life, her desires, friendships and decisions are filtered by her husband's judgments. Despite being graduated in English literature and aspiring to be a book critic, she has a busy schedule in her capacity of mother, wife and house keeper. Her one passion which she has not abandoned even after her marriage is reading books. However, with the passage of time, she realizes that her children are growing up and have a patronizing attitude towards her, not appreciating her efforts as a mother and wife respectively. The fear of abandonment by her husband and children also haunts her often and like any other ordinary woman, Ella is daunted by male dominated society and is too meek to venture around the globe, not realizing that one day she would come out of her domestic shell. Ella's sense of insecurity prevails her when faced by frigid and frail attitude of her husband whom she often visualizes pampering another woman. Her husband reeks of infidelity that she can smell. In her conflicting situation with the family, Ella waits for the right moment to let out her strangled self. Her mystic's novel reading and abrupt emailing with the novelist, Aziz, enables Ella to retrieve her trust in God. Rejuvenated with her love for Aziz, Ella takes a bold step and decides to relinquish her sham luxurious life style for the mystical experience of love. With jubilant conviction, she becomes determined to do what her heart says and turns out to be an independent and self- actualized woman.

Desert Rose, on the other hand, is a historiographic character delineated as a prostitute living in a brothel. In spite of all the mishaps in her life, Rose aspires to befriend God. In her search for God, one morning she wakes up burning with a desire to hear the great scholar Rumi's sermons. So under the excuse of going to the market, Rose sneaks out of the brothel and reaches the mosque. Spreading the message of equality among men and women, Shams stipulates that all human beings are one and the same in terms of the interconnection among everyone and everything in the universe. He also encourages Rose to start respecting herself for who she is inwardly.

Thereafter, Rose is transformed into a different kind of person. She quits brothel and is welcome in Rumi's house where she gives her pledge that she will not retreat from her journey to truth. Hence, in both cases, Ella and Rose break through the boundaries set by patriarchal society for women and move on making independent decisions in their lives and, thereby endorse existential feminism.

2.3.3 *Theological Discourse:*

Shafak's (2011) characters also play the negotiating role of mediators amongst different religions. While navigating through his mystical journey, Shams, for instance, comes across Arab travelers, gypsy musicians, Christian pilgrims, Buddhist priests, Jewish merchants, Persian Artists and Frankish troubadours. He observes that "despite their seemingly endless difference, all of these people gave off a similar air of incompleteness, of the work in progress that they were, each an unfinished masterwork" (p. 109). Similarly, Rumi' s wife, Kerra, who is a convert from Christian to Muslim, notes that "when it comes to the basics, ordinary Christians and ordinary Muslims have more in common with each other than with their own scholars" (p. 178). In fact, Kerra's marriage to Rumi, a Muslim scholar, testifies the possibility of religious tolerance and peaceful coexistence of Muslims with Christians. Quoting some other characters discursively, Ella is a Jew; her daughter Jeannette's hubby, named David is a Christian; Shams and Rumi are Muslims and so is Aziz. Rose is a convert from Christian to Sufi, yet all of these people with discursive religious identities feel gravitated towards love for God and humanity which is also the manifesto of Sufism. Sufis's love for God is simple, nonnegotiable, purge, easy, untainted and nonnegotiable. So, in essence, the people in this postmodern era should see beyond the religious differences and serve humanity irrespective of their religious discrepancies in order to make this world a peaceful place to live in. If Muslims, Christians and Jews seek merely love for God and humanitarianism as a common and mutual ground, there will be no more crusades and wars on terrorism.

2.3.4 *Cultural Discourse:*

The cultural appropriation of thirteenth century' s Konya and Baghdad enables Shafak (2011) to architextually blend the historical cultural norms and ways of living with those ones practiced around the globe in postmodern era for the creation of multicultural and cosmopolitan effect. She chronicles the delicacies which have been popular back then in thirteenth century' s Middle East, for instance, sesame halwa. A historical character, the novice, portrayed by Shafak (2011), shares his cooking expertise when he admits, to preparing spicy relishes and marmalade with "pickle carrots and squash, making sure there is just the right amount of salt, enough to float an egg" (p. 83). When compared with twenty first century's eating habits and culinary skills, the readers find Ella baking "a loaf of whole wheat bread" (p. 63). She is depicted forcing her children to eat wild rice with roast beef, green peas and mustard glaze despite their requests to order pizza, being young generation of postmodern fast food culture. For Ella, cooking skills are like a historical legacy, inherited for ages along with other conventions and customs. In her opinion, cooking

is "about learning the basics, following the instructions, and being respectful of the wisdom of ages" (p. 62). To hone her culinary skills, she joins a 'Fusion cooking center' where the cuisines of various countries are merged together and historical recipes with new minted ingredients and spices are freshened up.

The historical custom of beautification which has always been in vogue among women for centuries is also highlighted by Shafak (2011). The cultural conventions and customs of Guatemala are also imported by Shafak (2011) in her novel. She makes a mention of "the Tree for the Brokenheart" which is a sort of wish tree laden with numerous colorful fabrics with a variety of patterns. In addition, bringing in some historical traces of Sufi culture, Shafak illuminates the spiritual dance known as "sema" performed by dervishes on the rhythm of musical instruments like ney and rebab.

2.3.5 *Language Mixing:* Instead of taking a recourse to the domestication of Persian and Arabic languages, Shafak (2011) foreignizes them for English readers by borrowing typical words. In that way, she architextualizes the foreign languages with English one and, eventually, creates an intertextual medium of communication which consists in myriad modes of enunciation. While importing foreign words, she does explain the meanings of a few words simultaneously, for instance, name of God, like, "al-Jabber—the one in whose dominion nothing happens except that which He has willed" (p. 71). Yet even other names are incorporated as such and unexplained in order to keep their beauty and comprehensive nature intact, for example, "al-Jamal, al-Kayyum, al-Rahman, al-Rahim" (p. 181). The rest of foreignized expressions are enlisted and interpreted at the end of the novel in glossary. For instance, "baqa, permanency that comes after annihilation, a higher state of life with God" (p. 353) and "Insane-i-Kamil, the perfect human being according to Sufism" (p. 353).

3. Metatextuality: Shams' act of storytelling about Moses and shepherd and then commenting upon that story by reaching certain conclusion, that is, not to judge people by their ways of connecting to God, without any particular reference to the source text is located as an instance of metatextuality. The whole tale of which the reader is not certain whether it is drawn from Islamic sources or historical scriptures of Torah is commented as people having their own ways to pray and communicate to God. The given metatextual example also suggests that the novel is a critical commentary upon the ideology of Islam as a peaceful religion giving liberty of righteous thoughts on actions as per the consent of God.

Another parable about Holy Prophet Muhammad's son in law and companion, Ali, probably drawn from Islamic sources, is incorporated in the novel but without considering it necessary to bother with citation. The story is meant for preaching tolerance, however, Baybars, as per his criminal mentality draws a very superficial moral of allowing the infidels to spit in others' faces. One more italicized but non- referenced story about two men carrying a woman across the river is metatextually reviewed in the

novel. To

this silently referred story, the commentary is that people get crushed under the weight of their own biases and fears.

4. Paratextuality: Paratextuality has been discussed on two levels, the peritext and the epitext.

4.1 *Peritext*: The peritextual aspect of the novel, most important of all, includes the context and the implicit purpose behind writing this mystic novel too. *The Forty Rules of Love* has, indeed, been written in the context of 9/11 attacks on twin towers in the United States of America supposedly orchestrated by some so called Muslims. When Shafak (2011) wonders suspects that it might be Genghis khan himself who conspired into getting his diplomats killed and then put the blame on Muslims so as to wage an interminable war against them, she tacitly and intertextually contextualizes the probability that it might be the American authorities and the then president George Bush himself who had those twin towers destroyed, so they could wage 'crusade' against Muslim states. By doubting Jenghiz Khan's intentions back in thirteenth century, she, probably, suspects Bush's credibility in twenty-first century. The intertextual linkage between both the centuries is corroborated by Shafak's arguing that "in many ways twenty-first century is not that different from the thirteenth century. Both will be recorded in history as times of unprecedented religious clashes, cultural misunderstandings, and a general sense of insecurity and fear of the other" (p. 15).

4.2. *Epitext:* Moving to the epitext, the review of the novel, *The Forty Rules of Love* by an international newspaper "Independent" reveals that Shafak's wrinting style poses a challenge to that of Paulo Coelho (1999). This reviewing statement as an example of epitext encourages the readers to draw a comparison between Shafak and Coelho and infer the meaning that *The Forty Rules of Love* has been written in the traditional manner of *The Alchemist* with spirituality serving as an undercurrent in both of the novels. However, owing to the highly intertextual form of *The Forty Rules of Love*, it can be rated above "The Alchemist". Another epitextual feature, that is, an interview with Shafak by Uddin (2010) explains that *The Forty Rules of Love* is a multi-voiced novel in which reality is indefinite and non-monolithic and that no character can be ascribed as ultimately good or bad. In other words, historiographic voices of Shams, Rumi and other historic characters interact with and neutralize the effect of metafictional voices of Ella, Aziz and other postmodern characters in such an intertextual way that no voice or an idea can be favored as superior or inferior to the other.

5. Hypertextuality: Hypertextuality calls for breaking the text of the novel into two types of texts, hypertext and hypotext. Hypertext is the metafiction revolving around the postmodern narrative mainly about Ella and Aziz. Mostly based on the email correspondence between Ella and Aziz, the hypertext allows for the critical analysis of their life bound experiences, incidents and emotions. Whereas hypotext is the historic fiction derived from *The Autobiography of Shams-i-Tabrizi* (2004) and the *Mathnavi of*

Mawlana Jalal Uddin Rumi (1940). Also known as source or intertext, hypotext provides a basis for the construction of metafictional hypertext of *The Forty Rules of Love*. This fact is evident, for instance, by remarkable resemblance between fictional character, Aziz, and historic character, Shams. Both of them are also portrayed as Sufis. At the sight of Aziz' picture in which his emerald eyes exude energy and passion, Ella is struck with the idea that Aziz bears a striking semblance with Shams of Tabriz depicted in the historic novel and she begins to suspect that both might be connected in a spiritual way. Thus, based on many historical characters, events and incidents, hypotext occupies the major textual space in the form of a historic novel within the novel. Other than the mystic characters of Rumi and his spiritual master Shams, the novel chronicles Rumi's adopted daughter Kimya, his wife Kerra, his sons Alladin and Sultan Walad and the master as well.

Conclusion

To conclude, ranging from the depiction of horror of global war on terror haunting Islamic countries in postmodern era to the savagery of Mongols and Crusaders back in thirteenth century, Muslims are portrayed as suffering somehow. They are maligned as terrorists and discriminated because of religious discrepancies. However, dedicated to dispel the terror of Islam, Shafak (2011) appropriates the moderate version of Islam in terms of Sufism, generally for global and, particularly for the American readers who have been breathing in the atmosphere of paranoia, media disinformation and prejudice against Muslims since 9/11. In this scenario of uncertainty, distrust and grudges against the Islamic world, she deems it fit to disseminate Rumi's message of love, peace, balance and patience for mitigating Islamophobia. Considering that such critical time does necessitate the true religious and cultural representation of Muslims in the post 9/11 world, she revives the brighter and spiritual side of Muslims and Islam in terms of the discourse of Rumi and proclaims peace, coexistence, harmony and universal love for the whole world via *The Forty Rules of Love*.

Nevertheless, as an amalgam of multiple voices and discourses, *The Forty Rules of Love,* is a critical commentary upon the ideology of Islam as a peaceful religion, promoting religious tolerance and giving liberty of righteous thoughts and actions as per the consent of God. It is considered a humble endeavor on part of the writer to promote the humanitarian and peaceful approach of Islam and, also, an underlying critique of the extremists and fanatics who manipulate Islamic teachings and exacerbate violence. Evidently, the current age is an age that harbors two contradictory ambitions. On the one hand, Rumi's poetry and mystic philosophy as a softer image of Islam is endearing to people and, on the other hand, Islam is misrepresented due to myopic views and ignorance. The two opinions about Islamic religion go hand in hand in the postmodern world. Therefore, *The Forty Rules of Love* is written against this kind of controversy over Islam which is nothing more than a religion of love and best uses the blend of myriad of discourses from past and present to

uphold its message.

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