

## East, West

*S. Rushdie*

July 31 - August 1, 2010

This is a collection of rather inconsequential short stories which no doubt have appeared in various magazines. Some of them have rather topical themes, like the free radio given out to those that voluntarily have themselves made infertile. The most interesting ones are those that have some auto-biographical connection. Others, as in 'The auction of the Ruby slippers' are written in a rather ponderous prose, which seems the lazy mans version of poetry. Suggestive, evocative, but without discipline and structure, a veritable verbal porridge, stirred self-indulgently. Some of them are down-right embarrassing such as the phantasy about Hamlet. 'The sexual appetites of the males decline, while those of the female continue to grow'. Columbus wooing the Catalonian Queen, his last chance for glory and consummation. Sex and power are inextricably related, and of course there is a special allure when the power is undividedly belonging to the woman, rendering the man an abject creature, following the trail of his dwindling lust on the pain of death. In fact this very threat of death supplants the original erotic feeling, and becomes identical with it. Columbus quest for glory, so abundantly rewarded posthumously, is thus nothing but an erotic call, realized through its reification by the queen.

September 13, 2010 **Ulf Persson:** *Prof.em, Chalmers U.of Tech., Göteborg Sweden* ulfp@chalmers.se