

Tribhuvan University

Advocacy for Freedom in Salman Rushdie's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*

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by

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the thesis entitled "Advocacy for Freedom in Haroun and the Sea of Stories" is my original work carried out as a mater's student at the Department of English at Ratna Rajya Campus except to the extent that assistance or in presentation style, and linguistic expression are duly acknowledged.

All sources used for the thesis have been fully and properly cited. It contains no material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree at Tribhuvan University or any other educational institution, except where due acknowledgement is made in the thesis.

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Letter of Approval

This thesis, entitled “Advocacy for Freedom in Salman Rusdie’s *Haroun and the sea of Stories*” submitted to the Department of English by Maya Nagarkoti been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Abstract

The study on Salman Rushdie's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* explores the severe oppression faced by the characters like Haroun, Rashid, and Soraya and their longing for freedom. How these characters experience existential crisis and what they perform to release them for their meaningful living in the autocratic sphere, wherein reason does not work is the primary objective of this investigation.

Employing existentialism as a theoretical tool, the research imparts knowledge on human advocacy for freedom depicted by Haroun. Represent the existential theorists like Paul Sartre advocate human freedom in the absurd world, wherein the regime controls social mechanism to retain hegemony in the narrative. Rashid, a storyteller is deployed for political benefits of the political class. However, he is not aware of how he has been exploited. Haroun, the protagonist endeavors to emancipate his relatives for the collective existence.

Contents

Declaration	ii
Letter of Approval	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Abstract	v
Chapter One: Introduction	1
Human Spirit and Existential Crisis	1
Chapter Two: Advocacy for Independence in <i>Haroun and the Sea of Stories</i>	14
Chapter Three: Conclusion	44
Human Deprivation from Expression in Oppressive Society	44
Works Cited	47

Chapter: I Introduction

Human Spirit and Existential Crisis

According to *Advanced Oxford Learners' Dictionary*, existentialism is the theory that states that "humans are free and responsible for their own actions in a world without meaning" (531). This philosophy regards the world to be without meaning and it sees men to be engaged in struggles to discover meanings.

Likewise, *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* embodies the concept of existentialism as "Existentialism" is a term that belongs to intellectual history. Its definition is thus to some extent one of historical convenience" (67.) Jean-Paul Sartre overtly adopted the word as a self-description, and through the wide distribution of the postwar literary and theoretical output of Sartre and his associates, notably Simone de Beauvoir, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Albert Camus-existentialism became identified with a cultural movement that flourished in Europe in the 1940s and 1950s. Among the major philosophers identified as existentialists were Karl Jaspers, Martin Heidegger, and Martin Buber, Jean Wahl and Gabriel Marcel, the Spaniards José Ortega y Gasset and Miguel de Unamuno, and the Russians Nikolai Berdyaev and Lev Shestov. The nineteenth century philosophers, Søren Kierkegaard and Friedrich Nietzsche are precursors of the movement. "Existentialism was as much a literary phenomenon as a philosophical one. By the mid 1970s the cultural image of existentialism had become a cliché, parodied in numerous books and films by Woody Allen.

In this way, according to *Glossary of Literary Theories*, Existentialism is a philosophy that views each person as an isolated being who is cast into an alien universe, and conceives the world as possessing no inherent human truth, value or meaning." Thus, Kaufmann defines, "Existentialism may be defined as the

philosophical theory which holds that a further set of categories, governed by the norm of authenticity, is necessary to grasp human existence. To approach existentialism in this categorical way may seem to conceal what is often taken to be its "heart" (12), namely, its character as a gesture of protest against academic philosophy, its anti-system sensibility, and its flight from the "iron cage" of reason. The major existential philosophers wrote with a passion and urgency rather uncommon in our own time. The idea that philosophy cannot be practiced in the disinterested manner of an objective science is indeed central to existentialism. The themes popularly associated with existentialism are dread, boredom, alienation, the absurd, freedom, commitment, nothingness, and so on which find their philosophical significance in the context of the search for a new categorical framework, together with its governing norm" .

Among these different themes, this thesis explores how Rushdie's novel, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* projects a young boy, Haroun who suffers fear and repression. The novel projects the boy who is doubly victimized by society forces due to being poor and secondly because of being socially deprived of opportunity for sound health, education and expression of desires. The text highlights the issue of unhappy and depressed caused because of imbalance in psychological and social structure that cultivates disparity between the rich and the poor. The research employs existentialism as a theory to study how the characters suffer fear and repressions.

The narrative surrounds Haroun and his quest to heal his father's lost gift for storytelling. Haroun lives in an ancient city that is so sad and serious that its people have forgotten its name. Haroun lives in this disheartened place with his father, Rashid Khalifa, a professional storyteller better known as Rashid the Ocean of notions or more insensitively as the Shah of Blah. Rashid's wife Soraya runs off with their

dour neighbor, the unimaginative Mr. Sengupta, who is far too sensible to see the value in fiction.

Haroun and Rashid represent the human individual's attempt to develop, and preserve, a being, the central features of existential present in Rushdie's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*. Haroun and Rashid are not only the protagonist and antagonist of the novel, but also represent two sides of the spectrum of existential. While they share similar backgrounds and characteristics, Haroun stands for an ideal being with additional qualities that Rashid does not. While Rashid aims in life to overcome nonbeing: to achieve immortality. Haroun proves to be the more insightful individual. He accepts the existential facts of death, freedom, and love, whereas Rashid, Haroun's father distances himself from them, dedicating his life to achieve immortality.

Even within the fictional world, Haroun and his father are juxtaposed in their attitudes to these existential given. Existentialism is a branch of psychology that looks at how existence determines the human's sense of self and thus affects the way human beings lead their lives. Existence means the ability to know that is there and can take a stand with reference to that fact. It means to be aware of one's presence in both space and time and to know that one is responsible for this existence. According to Eugene Taylor, "Ludwig Binswanger and Martin Heidegger were the early voices of . . . the existential-analytic movement in psychology and psychiatry" (168), and the majority of the concepts within this psychological movement therefore stem from Heidegger's theories. By focusing on the individual's existence, "existential analysis was able to widen and deepen psychoanalysis" (Dahlbäck, 268).

Rollo May has been a pivotal figure, who, according to Taylor, "chose to embark on an earlier historical comparison of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche and the relation of their ideas to psychoanalysis" (269). May argues that, since existential has

its basis in existentialism, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche are to be considered its founders. May concludes, "almost all the specific ideas which later appeared in psychoanalysis could be found in Nietzsche in greater breadth and in Kierkegaard in greater depth" (Taylor, 270), that provides the basis for his theories.

However, McDonald's observation of existentialism is a bit different. He states, "Existential psychology and psychotherapy is a movement within the field of psychology that engages in a dialogue with philosophy, namely existentialism" (52). Kierkegaard and Nietzsche's existential theories, combined with Freud's psychoanalysis, and Heidegger and Binswanger's existential analysis, form an existential psychological perspective that highlights the psychological effects of the human's awareness of his/her existence, and the need to preserve it. Being should, according to May "be understood [...] to mean potential, the source of potentiality; being is the potentiality by which [...] each of us becomes what he truly is" (Discovery 97).

When connecting the human capacity with that of the notion of conventional existentialism theorists, the ability to exist in the world – not "the capacity to see outside the world, to size it up, to assess reality; it is rather [the] capacity to see [oneself] as a being in the world" (103-4), one has the ability to fulfill one's true potential. Thus, to be a complete and ideal requires to completely fulfilling one's true potential, and each person is alone responsible for whom they become. The process of becoming, of learning accepts one's existence and everything that it entails as it the key to fulfilling one's potential to become an ideal being. If the being is lost and nonbeing is entered, the ability to fulfill one's potential is lost: one is no longer a being who can achieve everything that one could be.

This project demonstrates how one's being is explored through the conflicting characters Haroun and Rashid. Haroun loses his mother at a young age, which awakens him of his existence. His awareness of existence is enhanced when he experiences nonbeing, through the loss of others, and are therefore more aware of what it means to exist. In addition to sharing similar qualities, Haroun and Rashid share similar pasts, and an awareness of death. This indicates that they have rather equivalent foundations on which they build their selves. They therefore serve as prime examples of how an individual can succeed and fail in the attempt to develop, and preserve, their being.

Indeed, Haroun and Rashid are from similar backgrounds. However, their actions, and motives reveal significant differences. Within the fictional world, the protagonist Haroun represents the ideal being, while his father represents the unsuccessful attempt to fulfill one's potential. Besides, the human sense of being is connected with the questions of love, hate, anxiety.

The juxtaposed approaches of Haroun and Rasid help to understand concepts and perspectives of existentialism such as nonbeing, freedom, and love. The thesis explores that, love, and freedom and the way Haroun and Rashid deal with each other affects their approaches to existence and their beings. Employing the concepts of Kierkegaard Nietzsche, Sartre, Jaspers, Heidegger regarding existentialism, this study explores how Haourn is victimized in the city. Moreover, through the depiction of the different theorists of existence, the project analyzes the text.

The theoretical tools of Kierkegaard's existentialism pictures how Haroun plans to tackle the difficulties for his survival in the novel. The existentialists maintain that the question "what is man?" must wait upon an answer to the problem of explaining what it means to say that man is. How can we search for essence before we have even

explained the existence of the thing we seek the essence of?"(Morris, 306).

Existentialists view man as pure existent devoid of any essence whatsoever. He is not bound to any forerunner human nature but is completely free to determine his own nature. In this sense, existentialist philosophers emphasize the principle of indeterminism opposed to various deterministic theories of nature and human behavior. If man has an essence, it is factually his freedom from essence and his resultant freedom to choose and become what he wills. To be a man is to be undetermined, to be free. Man can choose which way he will take and this freedom to choose distinguishes him from all other phenomena in the universe.

The notion of existentialism propounded by Kierkegaard that views man not as species but as an obtainable individual. Kierkegaard says that everyman must be assumed in essential possession of what fundamentally belongs to being a man. He says, "Man is spirit". But, what is spirit? Spirit is the self. But what is the self? The self is a relation which relates itself to its own self or it is that in the relation (which account for it) that the relation relates itself to its own self" (9). Man is his existence and existence denotes that he is alive, moving, becoming and striving- striving to become what he wills to be. He believes in subjective existence of man in the world and his inner involvement in life. For Kierkegaard, man exists in a state of usual crisis and the foremost task before him is to become subjective. For this, he must have to choose, to act for himself without ignoring his contingency. However, man does not have within himself the declaration of his crisis, but he has the possibilities of raising the query of his crisis and of feeling the significance to himself of his own emergency.

As this study focuses on the role-played Haroun performs the good aspect of human nature, the concept of existentialism employed to analyze the human existence is useful. Man is a free entity having freedom of choice. He even makes choice when

he chooses not to make any choice. Man can become whatever he wants to become through his choices, but at the same time, he cannot avoid the consequences of his choices. Thus, he cannot escape desolation. Only the true Christian, who has genuine relation with God, can escape hopelessness.

In this way, Nietzsche views man in a peculiarly personal and nihilistic form. According to him, the nature of man is exceedingly problematic. He is the most unsafe animal holding in his hands the most dangerous power of blowing himself but at the same time the most courageous and will be able to survive even after killing God. Nietzsche believes that death of God has led to arousal of a new situation, which would see the emergence of a new man whom he called "Superman". The Superman is one who will not surrender himself to rules, who refuses the will of the community or the common good; he is the individualist, the conqueror with the courage to describe his own ethics and values in his own interest. The concept of Superman as expressed by Nietzsche is relevant in analyzing the character of Haroun whose contribution for the family is no less than that of a divine figure. He sees him a Superman beyond ordinary good and evil.

Actually, Nietzsche appreciates the width and depth of human nature. He holds that "man is a rope stretched between the animal and superman a rope over an abyss. Man is not an end in himself, but a bridge to an end higher than himself" (Reinhardt, 97). Similarly, Jaspers explains man whose essence reflects in his freedom because freedom is his highest dignity. Freedom comes through the act of choice and man recognizes his true self that can be obtained through freedom. Jaspers discusses this notion of human nature that only in those moments when he exercises his freedom is he fully himself. Only in his free acts does he have the certificate of absolute being. Man can become aware of himself in the source of his origin, across history, in eternity and if

he does, he is sure of being not just a natural and historical product. Man is more than he can know himself. Man is an object as the other things of the world as well as a subject by realizing his 'inner self'. "Man finds himself determined in his concrete environment in his nation, in mankind, in life on earth, in the universe - and in this growing awareness of being finite, he comes to share in infinite. . . being finite, he is all to speak" (Fischer, 72). Man is that being who is not but who can be and ought to be and who, therefore decides in his temporality whether he is to be perpetual. To Jaspers, every man is a unique individual having a unique composition of attitude, aptitude, physique, interest, and psychology.

Likewise, Heidegger conceptualizes man as 'Dasein', which is his name for man. The conception of Dasein holds that man is just there (present, awake). "Dasein signifies mere existence, brute fact of being and consciousness something being opposite to the self within itself" (Ralph, 75). It means that man is competent of reflecting his real self to his self. Man cannot be (in his essence) what he is not. He can be what he is already (his existence). Heidegger finds man as not a definite object with a fixed nature. Man is a field or a region of 'Being'. He is a creature of distance: he is always beyond himself; his existence at every moment is opening out toward the future. Heidegger adds that man's being constitutes priority of existence over his essence and his 'ness'. Man's being therefore can be defined by his existence as well as by his self-concern. Man is factual as well as existential. Overall, this man is a combination of self-projection, depression, and decline. Man projects himself in the world and finds himself finite because he experiences restricted of 'being' due to his 'being there' i.e. being in the temporal globe. His moods, his care and concern, his anxiety, guilt and conscience are directed by time. Everything that makes up human existence needs to

be understood in terms of man's temporality. When man finds himself finite, he is doomed to nothing. Nevertheless, by his free choice he can overcome his nothingness.

Heidegger's existentialism is a philosophy of radical human finitude, because it is death as the immanent possibility of human existence appears to be the most fundamental ontological structure, which constitutes the totality of Dasein. While human existence defined as being-in-the-world is, according to him, a mindful presence to itself, to other beings and to the world, it is finally interpreted as being-towards-death, since death, in his existential analysis of Dasein, is understood as a necessary determinant of the relationship of Dasein to Being. On the one hand, man is creator of his own experience and on the other; he is subject of his experience. If man accepts the responsibility for developing his own being then he has true human aspects in his personality.

The discussion above clarifies that all existentialists assume that man is an incomplete and open reality. His nature attaches him strongly and necessarily to the world and other men in particular. This double dependence is assumed in such a way that human existence seems inserted into the world, so that man at all times not only faces a determinate situation but also is his situation. On the other hand, they assume the special connection between men gives existence its peculiar quality. Man is beyond any interpretation. The essence of man is his existence; his nature or essence can be found only in his concrete, lived experience.

My dissertation on Rushdie's *Haroun and the Sea of stories* explores the nature of human behavior depicted by Haroun. His life is desolate and confusing. His search for wholeness of self remains incomplete despite numerous efforts. The reason behind this entire fatalistic situation is indeed the clash in the society. Human beings as

portrayed by the positive characters in the novel abide by morals and regulations that they suppress their desire and other wants. There is always a kind of struggle between these two but they are helpless before the entire society. The society stands as a barrier on the path of their romantic life that they want to have and fulfill their desire. Many scholars have interpreted and analyzed *Haroun and the Sea of stories*. The novel can be analyzed by employing new criticism as well. Rushdie accomplishes something close to magic on the printed page by the selective use of detail that arouses the sense and makes things real. Sad names of objects and physical characteristics and activities of people are coupled with economical description of sights, sounds, and smells, so that a culture alien to most of us becomes vivid and the reader becomes an inhabitant of the tale. Therefore, Alison Lurie has offered a new critical reading to *Haroun and the Sea of stories*. He observes:

Haroun and the Sea of Stories is a lively, wonderfully inventive comic tale with an updated Arabian Nights background. It follows the classic folk tale in which the hero travels to strange lands to lift a spell on his native country or cure his father of a fatal ailment. In the course of the story he is aided by supernatural companions and confronts and defeats a wicked magician. (12)

This criticism appreciates the narrative pattern employed in the novel. Its coverage of the space is Arabia and the flavor is magic realism. This scholarship focuses the supernatural elements embedded in the narrative of the text. Similarly, Christiane Bongartz and Esther Gilman Richey in their critical essay on *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* discuss, "The analysis of the characters shows that there are two parties of characters. The first is the one who love stories; the second is the one who hates stories. Haroun Khalifa and Rashid Khalifa represent the first in this analysis;

Khattam-Shud represents the second. Haroun and Rashid love *stories* and they are the two heroes who fight to rescue the Ocean of the Streams of Story to protect the rights to freedom of expression. "Haroun Khalifa," said the Walrus, getting to his feet, still slightly out of breath and holding his aching sides, to honour you for the incalculable service you have done to the peoples of Kahani and to the Ocean of the Streams of Story, we grant you the right to ask of us whatever favour you desire, and we promise to grant it if we possibly can . . ." (*Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, 200). Khattam-Shud hates *stories* and *conversation*. He does not believe the truth of stories and wants to destroy the Ocean of the Streams of Story to foster the Laws of Silence. Mini Chandra's can be expressed:

Rashid's intention in Haroun follows the reasoning developed in Shame of using his imagination, his role as a writer, to retaliate without seeming to be doing anything serious, because the language in Haroun is as powerful as that of legendary storytellers such as Scheherazade. But like hers and Rashid's, who one identifies with Rushdie, language in Haroun is entertaining as well: Haroun often thought of his father as a juggler, because his stories were really lots of different tales juggled together, and Rashid kept them going in a sort of dizzy whirl, and never made a mistake. (16)

The relationship between Haroun and Rashid that is not appreciable is on the spotlight in this scholarship. The villainous temperament of Rashid is observed over here. However, the efforts for collecting stories are remarkable. In an interview with Akbar Ahmed, Rushdie comments:

The desire at the start of Haroun's journey can thus be described as a wish to alleviate his guilt and to compensate for his father's loss: 'My

fault again, 'Haroun thought wretchedly. 'I started all this off. What's the use of stories that aren't even true. I asked that question and it broke my father's heart. So it's up to me to put things right. (27)

Haroun deals with high level of adventure. He is fearless and seems committed to elevating his position as a son in the family. He is endeavoring to revive all the good legacies of the family, which sometimes turn painful to his family members. In this way, paperback review of the novel by Salman Rushdie himself is also very important for this project, which is:

Haroun and the Sea of Stories, though Rushdie himself has resisted such interpretations. Clara Claiborne Park has commented that, *Haroun* has multiple purposes, not all specifiable, but the most urgent being a father's need to reclaim a closeness to his son, a closeness brutally shattered by a difference of opinion about the value of free speech. The importance of language, free speech, and cultural debate is stressed throughout the text. (20)

My project analyzes the dynamism of the free form of real life of the land of being submissive of the then third world ideology. None of these critics focuses on existential aspect of the text that normally deals with fragmented subjectivity. Issues of loss, love, hate, image, and complex ideas are some common themes in Rushdie's novels.

I argue that Haroun is fragmented because of extra-lost story of his father activities and he suffers from the society because of the attraction towards his father, because of the imbalance between loss and intellectuality his self explores. The study shows Haroun who becomes a victim internally in the crooked society.

As the study is from the viewpoint of existentialism, it studies the human psyche in the context of loss and freedom. How Haroun as a boy suffers in the society is the focal point of the study. He represses his desire for his existence in the hostile society. This oppression is because of the socio-economic phenomena. Human freedom is one of the most noticeable forms of suppression. It occurs in all spheres of society and thus the boy is a potential victim.

My research explores the nature of the freedom in the novel by examining the moral justification of freedom that suffers from challenges imposed by society. It portrays the free mind seen as deviant due to the labeling of as socially deviant.

As far as the organization of the project is concerned, the first chapter introduces the entire study with the sufficient reflections on the theoretical tools employed for the analysis of the text. The second chapter is textual analysis, which focuses on the freedom that is imbalanced in existential and social structure. It cultivates disparity of freedom. The third chapter sums up the entire research. Finally, the works cited will be at the end of the research work.

Chapter Two: Analysis

Advocacy for Independence in *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*

Haroun and the Sea of Stories shows its protagonist undergoing various kinds of sufferings due to various causes. The novel begins with the description of the sad city situated in the country of Alifbay where Haroun Khalifa lives with his father, and his mother. The city is described as a strange city that is an industrially advanced but emotionally dry land. The city is bizarre due to its unique quality, that is, sadness. However, the saddest of cities is said to have forgotten its name and this is its identity. The city is sad because the social systems do not function well and the freedom of expressing how one feels like living a life is restricted. It is sad because there is lack of communication amongst people. Likewise, the opening lines of the novel give the glimpses of its major concern. The narrator begins with his comment on the social conditions of the city that lacks freedom and happiness, "There was once, in the country of Alifbay, a sad city, the saddest of cities, a city so ruinously sad that it had forgotten its name. It stood by a mournful sea full of glumfish, which were so miserable to eat that they made people to belch with melancholy even though the skies were blue" (15). The city has a factory, which, that sadness is manufactured. The factories produce air pollution that is only relieved during the monsoon, which also heralds the arrival of pomfret into the nearby waters. People, of whom, thickly populate the city only the lead character Haroun and his parents are ever happy.

Haroun is an only child who experiences a strange circumstance in the city, where there are mostly big families. Haroun leads a middle class life distinct from the rich, poor, 'super-rich' and 'super-poor' people inhabiting a nameless sad city. His home is exceptionally happy. His mother, Soraya, enjoys singing, while his father, Rashid, is a professional storyteller. Haroun often travels around the country, listening

to his father tells stories, "And in the depth of the city, beyond and old zone ruined buildings that looked like broken hearts, there lived a happy young fellow by the name of Haroun, the only child of the storyteller Rashid Khalifa, whose cheerfulness was famous throughout that unhappy metropolis, . . ." (15). Thus, it seems the happy order of this family sustains because of the magical power of stories. Rashid as a character whose essence of life stands on his art of storytelling has employed telling stories as a means of sharing life experiences which releases his mind from the burdens of everyday affairs.

How Haroun leads his life among people of different capacities and skills in the sad city is the existential issue as it implies human's bitter experiences in the industrialized society that is full of hustle and bustle. Human behavior and values are influenced by the existing constraints in life. For the primary ethical purpose of Sartre's philosophy, his concern with how one should live is not to try to ground a set of constraints or prescriptions for behavior. Although he did try to derive such a moral system, the focus of his existentialism is rather the question of how each individual comes to live the kind of life that they live and the difficulties caused by our misconceptions of this.

In this regard, his ethical concern is psychoanalytical rather than moral. Iris Murdoch is right to identify Sartre's *Saint Genet*, a psychoanalytical biography of the poet and professional thief Jean Genet, as the work on ethics that Sartre promises at the end of *Being and Nothingness* as a sequel. She calls this a "paradoxical guise" (676) for a work on ethics.

The narrative of the study reveals that Haroun's father Rashid Khalifa, the Shah of Blah with mythical oceans of notions, often refers to the streams of story water. He drinks to keep up the supply of amazing tales that pour forth from within him.

Rashid's reference to water is concerned with advocacy of free speech. Free flow of water symbolically refers to free play of words without which stories cannot be woven. Rashid's lighthearted reply to Haroun's question illustrates:

...whenever he asked his father this most important of questions, the Shah of Blah would narrow (to tell the truth) his slightly bulging eyes, and pat his wobbly stomach, and click his thumb between his lips while he made ridiculous drinking noises, glug glug glug. Haroun hated it when his father acted this way. 'No, come on, where do they come from really?' he'd insist, and Rashid would wiggle his eyebrows mysteriously and make witchy fingers in the air. 'From the great Story Sea,' he'd reply. 'I drink the warm Story Waters and then I feel full of steam.' (17)

Haroun takes his father's reply as an unconventional statement as it is too complicated for his young mind to understand. Thus, Rashid's flowing answer to his son's important questions suggests the fluid nature of stories and thereby it portrays the importance of imagination and free speech. He puts forward his further questions:

'Where do you keep this hot water, then?' he argued craftily 'In hot-water bottles, I suppose. Well, I've never seen any.' 'It comes out of an invisible Tap installed by one of the Water Genies,' said Rashid with a straight face. 'You have to be a subscriber.' 'And how do you become a subscriber?' 'Oh,' said the Shah of Blah, 'that's much Too Complicated To Explain.' (17)

Haroun discovers that the ocean of stories indeed exists, and by that time, he is all set to save it from total annihilation. Haroun's free and happy world is suddenly taken apart when one day his mother elopes with their neighbor Mr. Sengupta, a mean clerk.

Mr. Sengupta dislikes Rashid. He has forever questioned the significance of Rashid's tales. His expression of dislike for Rashid in front of Soraya portrays his evil motives:

The husband of yours, excuse me if I mention,' he would start in his thin whiny voice. 'He's got his head stuck in the air and his feet off the ground. What are all these stories? Life is not a storybook or a joke shop. All this will come to no good. What's the use of stories that aren't even true? . . . Haroun, listening hard outside the window . . . couldn't get the terrible question out of his mind. (20)

Likewise, the seed of skepticism is implanted in the minds of Soraya and Haroun by Mr. Sengupta's skeptic question, what the use of stories is that are not even true. Therefore, this question establishes the framework of the whole story. It initiates the battle between stories and silence i.e. free speech and censorship. This overarching question plays a role to destroy the happy order of the Khalifa family. Haroun's family breaks because Haroun and his mother both question Rashid's storytelling and viewpoint on reality. In the excerpt, Haroun's mother accuses Rashid of having no room for facts in his mind through her letter:

Soraya had left a note full of all the nasty things Mr. Sengupta used to about Rashid: 'You are only interested in pleasure, but a proper man would know that life is a serious bulliness. . .Your brain is full of make-believe, so there is no room in it for facts. Mr. Sengupta has no imagination at all. This is okay by me.'(22)

Rashid loves Haroun and Soraya that turn opposite to him, tell him that his stories are not real, and do not matter. Rashid feels broken when in a fit anger Haroun bursts on his father repeating Mr. Sengupta's criticizing question which causes Rashid to lose his ability to tell stories that turns as a gift in his livelihood and reason for existence.

Without his stories, Rashid finds that he has no way to lead his life. This functions as a serious attack on his personal freedom of speech, "what to do, son, and 'Rashid pleaded piteously. 'Storytelling is the only work I know.' When he heard his father sounding so pathetic, Haroun lost his temper and shouted, 'What's the point of it? What's the use of stories that aren't even true?' Rashid hid his face in his hands and wept" (22). Haroun immediately realizes that he has packed down his father and broken his spirit. He thinks he should not have said that. The question "What's the point of stories that aren't even true?" is the central issue in *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*. Stories are in fact means of learning, and they work with adults as well as children. The stories do not need to be true in order to make a point. Stories are what cultures constructed of and cultures are the forces, which unite people into a community. Thus, stories are means of control. Rashid represents the protector of culture, here.

My study comments on Haroun's quest that is to reclaim his father's storytelling gift. Haroun's pursuit is not just an adventure to return Rashid's stories to him, but also a son's journey to give meaning to his father's life. Mr. Sengupta's motive symbolizes the motive of the colonizers to create a discourse suitable to fulfill their selfish intention of exploiting or taking advantage of their innocence. The time when Haroun's mother leaves with her upstairs neighbor, Mr. Sengupta is also remarkable. Haroun finds it hard to concentrate on anything for longer than eleven seconds do and Mrs. Sengupta thinks that the eleven seconds is significant when Haroun's mother has left. Rushdie relates to this, "When Rashid told Miss Oneeta about Haroun's wandering attention; however, she spoke firmly and with certainty. 'Eleven o'clock when his mother exited,' she declared. Now comes this problem of eleven minutes" (23). She diagnoses his problem as located in his "pussy-collar-jee." Rashid decides to take his son with him on a story-telling job

for some politicians. Politicians often hire Rashid for pleasing stories about them so that they will win their elections. They go to the Town of G, which "is not so special", to tell the stories. There is another moving situation Rashid faces, as he again finds no words to tell his story:

Then the thing happened, the Unthinkable Thing. Rashid went out on to the stage in front of that vast jungle of a crowd, and Haroun watched him from the wings- and the poor storyteller opened his mouth, and the crowd squealed in excitement- and now Rashid Khalifa, standing there with his mouth hanging open, found that it was as empty as his heart. 'Ark.' That was all that came out. The Shah of Blah sounded like a stupid crow. 'Ark, ark, ark.' (26)

The politicians are angry and tell him that he must go to the Valley of K and tell stories there or else they will cut out his tongue. Haroun knows he must do something because this is his entire fault. The story of Haroun's love for his father becomes the overarching narrative in the novel. The monologue below explains Haroun's love and sympathy for Rashid, "My fault again," Haroun thought wretchedly. "I started all this off. What's the use of stories that aren't even true? I asked that question and it broke my father's heart. So it's up to me to put things right. Something has to be done." The only trouble was, he couldn't think of a single thing" (27). The novel revolves around Haroun's quest to get back his father's storytelling gift. Haroun's resolution is closely related to Rushdie's desire for free speech. Advocacy of freedom manifests not only in the projection of postcolonial element but also in the use of the narratives, closely associated to a fairy tale world where there is obviously no restriction of communication and expression.

Freedom relies on the magnitude of consciousness, one has. The more conscious humans become the greater extent of freedom they seek, which makes existence meaningful. In Sartre's interpretation of this idea, consciousness is not to be identified with a thing, a repository of ideas and images of things. Rather, consciousness is nothing but directedness towards things. Sartre finds a nice way to sum up the notion of the intentional object, "If I love her, I love her because she is lovable" (4-5). Her lovable-ness is not an aspect of image of her; rather it is a feature of her towards which consciousness directs itself. The things noticeable about her (her smile, her laugh) are not originally neutral, and then the idea of them is interpreted as 'lovely', they are aspects of her as lovable. The notion that consciousness is not a thing is vital to Sartre. Indeed, consciousness is primarily to be characterized as nothing.

In the similar way, Rushdie presents a clash of the fairy world of fairies with that of modern science fiction. On the other hand, most of the characters who represent the non-western world are shown rather irrational than rational in nature. By forwarding a fantastical world that join a fairyland and a science fiction world and by presenting funny, talkative, and irrational characters.

Rashid as a storyteller often travels from place to place in course of storytelling. Haroun always accompanies his father and he enjoys travelling much. The emphasis on making journeys or travelling also poses the novel in favor of promoting freedom. When Haroun grabs Iff the Water Genie's disconnecting tool, Iff is ready to take him on an instant daring journey to an unknown land accepted by Haroun as he is in an urgent need to do something for his father. Rushdie mentions the following conversation to create a situation that demands making a journey, "Okay," said the Water Genie. 'You've got me bang to rights, it's a done deal. Let's make tracks, scram, vamoose. I mean: if we're going, let's go.' Haroun's heart sank rapidly towards his toes.

'You mean,' he stammered, 'now?' 'Now,' said Iff. Haroun took a deep breath. 'All right, then,' he said. 'Now'" (60).

In his emphasis on travelling, Rushdie glorifies the role of journey, which is a great source of knowledge. Travelling broadens the mind. It brings humans face to face with newer ideas and thoughts. Travelling gives people newer perspectives on their conditions, which facilitate the process of resolving the complexities of daily life. Haroun goes on a quest to find his home and to restore order to the world. While on the journey, he faces frequent challenges that threaten to disaster him and his journey. The journey motif is expressed in the descriptions of the challenges faced by Haroun during his travelling. Haroun's dangerous journey reflects:

Haroun had the feeling that they were floating on a sea of silence that a wave of silence was lifting them up, up, up towards the mountaintops. His mouth was dry and his tongue felt stiff and caked. Rashid couldn't make a sound either, not even ark. 'Any moment now', Haroun was thinking - and he knew that something very similar must be in the mind of each passenger - 'I am going to be wiped out, like a word on a blackboard, one swoosh of the duster and I'll be gone for good.' (38)

Rushdie makes use of imaginative language to create and veil the novel's magical world. By creating fantastical language, Rushdie is also creating something that went without a name before. This is the power of story. It is able to bring meaning where, before, there was none. His defense of story revolves his advocacy of free speech.

The playfulness helps to create the fantastical world to which Haroun travels. It also helps the reader note that the setting for this story is not the same real world that the reader inhabits. It is, instead, a world that closely resembles the reader's world. In

this way, the novel can be classified as a work of "magical realism". This aesthetic style blends fantastical and magical elements of a story into a realistic setting. *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* transcends boundaries of narrative technique set by earlier works of fiction. This projects the free will of the narrator. The plot design is a merge of both the worlds of reality and fantasy and succeeds to capture all aspects of human life. It unfolds the nature of human existence that keeps on freely playing or fluctuating between reality and dreamlike situation. Combination of eastern mysticism and western technology shows the magical existence of the world. Both worlds stand on freedom because these worlds break restrictions. The political situation in Kashmir is also fictionalized. Mr. Snooty Buttoo represents the authoritarian government that currently rules Pakistan. This government, Rushdie suggests, manipulates the people in order to stay in power. Rushdie explores this theme of cultural manipulation further in the novel. He wants to manipulate Rashid's happy and praising stories as the means of turning the voters in his side. In this regard he says, "My enemies hire cheap fellows to stuff the people's ears with bad stories about me, and the ignorant people just lap it up like milk. For this reason I have turned, eloquent Mr. Rashid, to you. You will tell happy stories, praising stories, and the people will believe you, and be happy, and vote for me" (47). Rushdie comments on the nature of the political leaders by commenting on Snooty Buttoo and says, "Snooty Buttoo flew into a rage. 'Nonsense, nonsense!' he shrieked. 'Terms of your engagement are crystal clear! For me you will please to provide up-beat sagas only. None of your gloompuss yarns! If you want pay, then just be gay'" (49). In this extract, Snooty Buttoo forces Rashid to tell only happy stories to the audience although Rashid argues that best stories are not always the happy stories. Haroun sees that Rashid is so sad that it has brought the Mist of Misery and Mr. Snooty Buttoo is so full of hot air that he has brought a

boiling wind. The waters begin to rock and the oarsmen cry out. Taking reference from his father's stories, Haroun saves the boat from sinking, "Just do one thing for me," Haroun called to his father. 'Just this one thing. Think of the happiest times you can remember. Think of the view of the Valley of K we saw when we came through the Tunnel of I. Think about your wedding day. Please'" (50).

As soon as they think of the most pleasant thoughts they know as Haroun tells, the waters calm and the "malodorous mist" breaks. Haroun now knows, "that the real world is full of magic, so magical worlds could easily be real". This blending of the fantastical and the real allows the author to explore the deeper meaning of reality. The journey to the Valley of K reminds Rashid, who is also the substitute authorial figure in the novel, of Khattam-Shud, an ancient concept that means silence. Elaborating the term, Rushdie writes:

Khattam-Shud," he said slowly, 'is the Arch-Enemy of all Stories, even of language itself. He is the Prince of Silence and the Foe of Speech. And because everything ends, because dreams end, stories end, life ends, at finish of everything we use his name. "It's finished," we tell one another, it's over. Khattam-Shud: The end. (39)

Khattam-Shud is the antagonistic force represented as a concept larger than a single character. Similarly, Khattam-Shud is explored in many different angles through the novel. Rushdie was fatally condemned for his representation of Islam in his book *The Satanic Verses*. In 1989, the leader of Iran, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini issued a death fatwa against Salman Rushdie that forced Rushdie into an extended protective isolation. Rushdie takes this as not simply a matter of condemning or criticizing a work of art but instead an act of dictatorial control through a total silencing of an author and artist. "Rashid" is a very close anagram to "Rushdie", a crafty nod that

Rushdie is himself the storyteller that has had his heart broken and his gift taken from him.

Rashid, the surrogate figure of Rushdie repeatedly refers to Khattam-Shud as the main culprit who brought misfortunes to his life by crushing his freedom of expression and by attempting to push him into a total silence. Khattam-Shud is the antithesis of story; it is complete silence. It is a term that refers to the colonial force that tries to totally annihilate the original cultural heritage of the aborigine people. It also symbolizes the reality of violence directed against Rushdie for his fictional work by Muslim leader of Iran, Ayatollah Khomeini. Just as every good story in the *Ocean of Stories* is likely to be polluted by an anti-story, every good discourse is misinterpreted or criticized by those who want to suppress their voices. It is used against the cultural manipulation through which they gain control over people.

In many places, the novel alludes to elements of popular culture in the "real" world. The Walrus and the Eggheads allude to the Beatle's song, "I Am the Walrus". Rushdie even comes close to quoting a line from the song when he gives the full name "I.M.D. Walrus". Like the novel itself, the song is an example of musical absurdism. The names of the Plentimaw Fish, Goopy and Bagha, are also the names of the heroes in a movie by Middle Eastern director Satyajit Ray. These examples demonstrate Rushdie's combination of absurd and surrealistic popular culture into his art.

The allusions to different works relate *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* not only to the mechanics of stories but also to the importance of free interaction between ideas and thoughts, that is, free speech for establishing a society with harmony between speech and silence. In this case, Haroun becomes part of an adventure tale through the mechanism of a dream while also being a part of another quest tale in his non-dream life. The following extract shows how Iff, the Water Genie draws the boy hero to the

land of free speech and imagination through a dream mechanism, "Haroun had just dozed off when he was woken up by a rumbling and a groaning and a mumbling; so his first thought was that his father hadn't found the turtle any easier to sleep on than the peacock. Then he realized that the noise wasn't coming from the Turtle Room, but from his own bedroom"(54).

Haroun's adventurous journey to Kahani, is obviously fantastical event created through dream mechanism, which evokes the theme of advocacy of free speech as individuals are completely unrestricted in such situations. Haroun's journey to Kahani, a dreamlike land with the aid of the magical creature, Butt the Hoopoe, where he must fight Khattam-Shud replicates the journey made by the character, Alice in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Rashid describes the telepathic abilities of the vehicle creature in this conversation:

'But but certainly, "answered the Hoopoe. 'Also I am communicating with you telepathically, because as you may observe I am not moving my beak, which must maintain its present configuration for aerodynamic reasons. "How are you doing that?"demanded Haroun, and back came the inevitable answer, quick as a flash of thought: 'By a P2C2E. A Process Too Complicated To Explain.' (66)

The setting of the novel shifts to Kahani, the earth's second moon, and source of the Sea of Stories. Kahani is where all of earth's stories originate. The moon travels at the speed of light. Butt the Hoopoe lands in the middle of the Ocean of Stories with thousands of currents of stories so that by drinking Wishwater from the sea, Haroun's desire for Rashid's storytelling to return can be accomplished without having to see the Walrus. The water images recur as Hoopoe tells Haroun about the Ocean of Stories and the Wishwater, "Look for patches of the Ocean that shine with extra

brightness.' But the Hoopoe added. 'That's Wishwater; use it properly and it can make your desires come true'" (69). Water symbolizes liquidity that is essential for making new stories. Liquidity allows free interconnection of ideas. Stories are narratives meant for oral practice. Therefore, drinking water and making a dream come true symbolically refers to going through the abundant currents of the older narratives and inventing newer narratives. Thus, Rushdie's use of symbols of water clearly suggests free play of words or advocates free speech. Rushdie further elaborates on the nature of the Ocean of Stories, "And because the stories were held here in fluid form, they retained the ability to change, to become new versions of themselves, to join up with other stories and so become yet other stories; so that unlike a library of books, the Ocean of the Streams of Story was much more than a storeroom of yarns. It was not dead but alive" (72). Haroun takes a swallow from the Ocean of Stories that symbolizes his attempts to gain freedom from the problems regarding storytelling that is lack of spontaneous speech. Nevertheless, he has difficulty making his wish for his father come true. Instead of his father, Rushdie writes, "the image of his mother insisted on taking over, and he began to wish for her return instead, for everything to be as it had been before . . . and then his father's face returned, pleading with him, just do this one thing for me, my boy, just this one little thing" (70).

Likewise, he cannot fully ponder on the wish. After eleven minutes, his concentration is broken. Haroun's lack of concentration is projected as the characteristic of the non-western people. However, Rushdie dismantles their notion that the third world people are rationally inferior to the westerners. Iff dips into the Ocean and produces a golden cup with a story inside. Haroun drinks the water and finds him looking through the eyes of a young hero in a land crowded by monsters

and strange things. Drawing suggestion from classic heroic narratives, Rushdie describes Haroun's dream adventure:

What Haroun was experiencing, though he didn't know it, was Princess Rescue Story Number S/1001/ZHT/420/41(r)xi; and because the princess in this particular story had recently had a haircut and therefore had no long tresses to let down (unlike the heroin of Princess Rescue Story G/1001/RIM/777/M(w)I, better known as 'Rapunzel'), Haroun as the hero was required to climb up the outside of the tower by clinging to the cracks between the stones with his bare hands and feet. (73)

Likewise, Haroun's adventure in the princess rescue story is a reference to another classic tale of "Rapunzel", an example of the framing narrative in which a story is framed within the narrative of another story. This is a technique used in many classic folk tales including One Thousand and One Arabian Nights. Haroun experiences that halfway up the tower, the hero begins to turn into a spider and when he reaches the top, the princess begins to hack away at the horrible creature until the hero falls to the ground. Haroun wakes from the story and tells his friends of the awful ending. Thus, the stories of the Ocean have been changed and horribly deformed. This is represented as the sign of stories being destroyed by despotic forces. Rushdie satirizes this as pollution:

'It's pollution,' said the Water Genie gravely. 'Don't you understand? Something, or somebody, has been putting filth into the Ocean. And obviously if filth gets into the story, they go wrong. – Hoopoe, I have been away on my hands on my rounds too long. If there are traces of this pollution right up here in the Deep North, things at Gup City must

be close to crisis. Quick, quick! Top speed ahead! This could mean war.' (75)

Hence, pollution signifies distortion of stories. Stories have remained the learning tools of generations. What causes civilizations to break apart is their manipulation or destruction. Iff tells Haroun that the Ocean has been polluted by the leader of the Land of Chup, Khattam-Shud"on the Dark Side of Kahani." So, he must hurry to the origin of this pollution and they speed along the Ocean of Stories on the back of Butt the Hoopoe. Iff tells him just what Rashid, his father had told him about: Khattam-Shud is,"the Arch-Enemy of all Stories...the Prince of Silence and the Foe of Speech" (79). This universal notion persistently refers to the Land of Chup, the Dark Side of Kahani as the regime that is suffocated by the authoritarianism and despotism of its cruel ruler. Besides, it cannot be rejected that the overarching conflict between 'story' and 'silence' in Haroun and the Sea of Stories symbolizes, in the real world, the conflict between Salman Rushdie, and Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the Islamic leader of Iran.

The most distinguishing part of existentialism is the idea that no general account of a human's existence can be made since that meaning is decided through the action of existing itself. Essentially, contrasting other entities that are defined by whom they are, human beings are decided by what they become. To exist constitutes one's identity whereas the nature and culture's effect on identity is less pronounced. This leads to the argument of existence preceding essence. What does essence mean? What does it mean to exist? The most important thought for the individual is the fact that they are an individual; an independent and conscious being (existence) rather than the labels or stereotypes that society has categorized the individual in (essence). Jean-Paul Sartre explains, "If God does not exist, there is at least one being in whom existence

precedes essence, a being who exists before he can be defined by any concept, and that this being is man, or as Heidegger says, human reality" (345). The impetus of the existential assumptions forwarded by the existentialists reflects in the narrative of the study.

Thus, the thirst for freedom reflects in Rushdie's free will projected through free play with the propensity of language of representing fantastical beings and events in a dreamland. Everyone in Gup City goes to the Lagoon, "a beautiful expanse of multicolored waters." There are huge buildings all around, including the P2C2E House. When they reach the Gup City, the entire land is preparing for war. One of the most humorous allusions is the explanation of the Guppee army, or "Library". Just as in Alice the Queen's army is made of cards, here the Guppee army represents the propensity for story and speech. The members of the army are dressed as pages with stories written on them:

In the Pleasure Garden, Haroun noticed large number of Guppees of an extraordinary thinness, dressed in entirely rectangular garments covered in writing. 'Those,' Iff told him, 'are the famous pages of Gup; that is to say, the army. Ordinary armies are made up of platoons and regiments and such like; our pages are organized into Chapters and Volumes. Each Volume is headed by a Front, or Title, Page; and up there is the leader of the entire "Library", which is our name for the army — General Kitab himself.' (88)

The Guppees discuss and decide on the issue that the Chupwalas have stolen Princess Batcheat from Gup. In addition, they have polluted the Sea of Stories so that many do not make sense anymore. Prince Bolo, General Kitab, and the Walrus announce their plans for war to the Pages of the Guppee Library.

Meanwhile, a spy is brought, with a hood over his head. When the hood is removed, Haroun sees his father. The story of love between father and son continues. The plot of *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* is framed by this love story and once again, Haroun struggles hard through the crowd and reaches the palace balcony where his father is being questioned in charge of spying against the Guppees to free his father from the wrong charge. As Haroun calls out his father at his top voice, he finds that, "Every single Guppee stared at him in amazement, and Rashid Khalifa looked no less surprised. 'Oh, goodness,' he said, shaking his head. 'Young Haroun. You surely are the most unexpected of boys.' 'He's not a spy,' Haroun shouted. 'He's my father, and the only thing wrong with him is that he's lost the Gift of the Gab'" (98). The technique of magical realism pervades the novel. The writer merges reality and magical powers. Rashid says that he arrived to Gup through certain dietary procedures while Haroun listens to him with disbelief:

'I have learnt that particular foodstuffs, properly prepared, will (a) induce sleep, but also (b) carry the sleeper wherever he may wish. It is a process known as Rapture. And with sufficient skill, a person may choose to wake up in the place to which the dream takes him; to wake up, that is to say, inside the dream. I wished to travel to Gup; but owing to a slight directional miscalculation, I woke up in the Twilight Strip, dressed only in this inappropriate garb; and I froze, I confess it freely, I froze half to death.' (100)

The excerpt demonstrates the feelings and struggles of Salman Rushdie while in his protective hiding due to the fatwa that kidnapped his freedom of expression as a writer and tried to push him to total silence or death. Although Gup and Chup both

fall on extreme ends of a range of speech, Rushdie is careful not to let these lands fall at the extreme ends of a spectrum of good and evil. In his carefulness to save the existence of free speech and expression, Rushdie maintains such a balance that he does not treat the two worlds as absolute opposite counterparts. When Blabbermouth, a Page escorts Haroun away to the Throne Room where Prince Bolo, General Kitab, the Speaker, and the Walrus are gathered around Rashid., he finds the Pages in the palace have familiar, yet altered, stories written on them: "'Bolo and the Wonderful Lamp'...'Bolo and the Forty Thieves'...'Bolo the Sailor', 'Bolo and Juliet', 'Bolo in Wonderland.'" (99) This shows that the Royal members have manipulated the stories to their cause. Though they favor complete freedom, their own Eggheads at P2C2E House create an imbalance in light that leaves the Chupwalas in perpetual darkness against their will. This is a contradictory behavior of the Guppees, "Thanks to the genius of the Eggheads at P2C2E House,' Butt began, taking pity on Haroun, 'the rotation of Kahani has been brought under control. As a result, the Land of Gup is bathed in Endless Sunshines, while over in Chup it's always the middle of the night" (80).

The questionable reasoning for casting darkness over Chup in *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* implies that Gup is not the embodiment of goodness or the land of perfectness. Actually, any land that participates in war cannot be entirely benevolent and good. Rushdie's genius of playing with concepts can be seen in the the geography of the adventure land, Kahani. The land is diametrically divided into two hemispheres. The Land of Gup is always in Endless Sunshine. In Chup, where Khattam - Shud resides, it is always the middle of the night. The Twilight Strip and the invisible Chattergy's Wall divide the two. The meaning of the Old Zone and the Twilight Strip are both important concepts in the novel. The Old Zone, which is said

to be the source of all stories, symbolizes the oldest source of all stories-religious writings. Clarifying the concept of the Old Zone and how it has been overlooked:

. . . that the Old Zone in the southern polar region of Kahani was an area to which hardly anybody went any more. There was little demand for the ancient stories flowing there. 'You know how people are, new things, always new. The old tales, nobody cares.' So the Old Zone had fallen into disuse; but it was believed that all the Streams of Story had originated long ago in one of the currents flowing north across the Ocean from the Wellspring, or Source of Stories, that was located, according to legend, near the Moon's South Pole. (86)

This Old Zone lies in the Twilight Strip, directly in between Chup and Gup. It becomes the easiest place for corruption by Khattam-Shud. The defenselessness of the area is described in the words of Rashid:

'In the Twilight Strip,' Rashid Khalifa was saying, 'I have seen bad things, and heard worse. There is an encampment there, of the Chupwala Army. Such black tents, wrapped in such a fanatical silence! – Because it's true what you have heard rumours of: the Land of Chup has fallen under the power of the "Mystery of Bezaban", a cult of Dumbness or Muteness, whose followers swear vows of lifelong silence to show their devotion. (101)

This is again a biographical element in the novel. The encampment of the Chupwalas refers to the process by which the religious dogmatists have captured the meanings of the religious doctrines for their own use. Similarly, the holes made in the Chattegy's Wall refer to the damage made to the ancient religions allowing the censoring dictators to fulfill their evil desires. The competing lands of Gup and Chup symbolize

the tension between silence and story. Gup is Hindi for "gossip" or "nonsense". This represents the fact that the Guppees exist in one extreme spectrum of the propensity for speech. They talk so much that their talk begins to lose its effectiveness and meaning, "As you correctly guessed, all Guppees love to talk,'Iff said in an aside. 'Silence is often considered rude. Hence the Plentimaws' apology.'-- 'They seem to be talking okay to me,'Haroun replied. -- 'Normally, each mouth says something different,'Iff explained. "That makes plenty more talk. For them, this is like silence" (85).

On the other extreme of the range is Chup, which is Hindi for "quiet. In Chup, silence has been ordered. Some of the Chuwalas are forced to such an extreme that their lips are sewn together and sacrificed to Bezaban, ". . . a colossus carved out of black ice, and stands at the heart of Khattam-Shud's fortress-palace, the Citadel of Chup. . . .the idol has no tongue, but grins frightfully, showing its teeth, which are the size of houses" (101). Rashid further reports the extremities of the Chupwalas:

In Chup City the schools and law-courts and theatres are all closed now, unable to operate because of the Silence Laws. ---And I heard it said that some wild devotees of the Mystery work themselves up into great frenzies and sew their lips together with stout twine; so they die slowly of hunger and thirst, sacrificing themselves for the love of Bezaban . . . (101)

When Blabbermouth copes with the balls in the air, it "reminded him of the greatest performances given by his father, Rashid Khalifa, the Shah of Blah" (109).

Blabbermouth tells Haroun not to "judge a book by its cover" (114) as he observes the army. In this case, the saying has a double meaning since the army is constructed in pages, chapters, and volumes just like a book. Another example is Haroun's use of the

phrase, "out of the frying pan and into the fire"(117). This is an example of an idiom whose meaning is not predictable from its general meaning. In this case, Haroun is saying that he has gone from one bad situation into something even worse.

Rushdie projects Haroun who finds a sense of beauty in the darkness of the land. Rushdie questions exactly how much free speech is too much, and whether too much free speech can become counterproductive or even useless noise. Referring to "Abhinaya", an ancient Gesture Language, Rushdie writes, "It's the hand movements.' Rashid answered, showing considerable restraint at Bolo's burbling. He has been using the Language of gesture. As for what he said, it wasn't "murder", but Mudra. That's his name. He's been trying to introduce himself! Mudra. Speak Abhinaya. That's what he has been saying" (130). This dance shows Haroun that darkness, and the evil that Haroun believes in represents is not always meant to oppose light or goodness. In this sense, darkness and light do not cancel each other. Instead, they complement each other. Night becomes as valuable as day, and darkness contains its own intrinsic value.

True evil is projected as the hatred that Khattam-Shud has towards the Land of Gup and the Stories of the Sea. Rushdie favors the Land of Gup and the light that creates its present stories and freedom of speech. However, Rushdie indicates that both Gup and Chup are two sides of a whole. Each must exist in balance with the other to create a median existence. This is evident in the Guppees' own contradictory behavior; though they favor complete freedom, their own Eggheads at P2C2E House create an imbalance in light that leaves the Chupwalas in perpetual darkness against their will.

The novel assumes that free speech may become a dangerous thing when it becomes so free that it produces nothing but nonsense. In its quest for complete

freedom of speech, Gup subjects Chup to complete darkness and silence, a reminder that freedom can sometimes be oppressive to others when not checked with responsibility. This also implies that all societies have some tendency to censor others. As the Guppee army sails towards Chup, Haroun is stunned that there could be such open uprising and questioning of authority in the ranks, "Haroun watched the Pages jostling and arguing and shaking their fists in the air and tripping each other up, just to be awkward, and remarked: 'It doesn't seem like a very disciplined army to me'"(114). This is another example of how an irresponsible freedom of speech can become a root for chaos and not freedom. Unlimited freedom of speech is likely to be counterproductive and Rushdie denies absolute freedom of speech risked by extremity. He seeks for a sustainable freedom. He does not want freedom to fall into the bog of any kind of absolutism or extremity. So, he stresses on free speech balanced by fear of silence. The Guppees are so talkative that their lengthened babbling during their war with the Chupwalas that put their victory at a risk. They talk so much that they produce nonsense or unproductive speech that hinders the purpose or efficacy of free speech itself, "Haroun was rather shocked. 'That sounds like mutinous talk to me,' he suggested, and Iff, Goopy, Bagha and Mali found that very interesting indeed. 'What's a Mutinus?' asked Iff, curiously. 'Is it a plant?'Mali inquired" (118). The Guppees fear defeat and incompetence due to their inability to censor their criticisms and gossip. This speech is unproductive speech.

Though Rushdie clearly opposes censorship, his novel skillfully explores the balance needed in a society between the control and expression of speech that, actually facilitate the cause of defending and preserving free speech for long. On the other hand, Butt the Hoopoe is found to be emphasizing freedom of speech accounting on the power that speech can have, "'But but but what is the point of

giving persons Freedom of Speech,' declaimed Butt the Hoopoe, 'if you then say they must not utilize same? And is not the Power of Speech the greatest Power of all? Then surely it must be exercised to the full?'" (119). This contention between use of speech and that of silence goes on all through the novel in different forms. Rushdie's contemplations on the beauty of darkness also propose that goodness and evil do destroy each other. Rather they are supplement to each other. Evil has its role to play in preserving goodness as well. What is needed is the relation of trial and balance between the two.

The shadow, the combination of darkness and light, properly exists only when it is in connection to the person or thing that casts it. This example of magical realism, when a shadow detaches itself from its owner, means that the balance of darkness and light has come undone. Due to the separation of shadows from their substantial self, difficulty has occurred to recognize the real and the illusion. Rushdie records this as:

. . . it's no longer possible to tell which is Khattam-Shud's Shadow and which his substance Self—because he has done what no other Chupwala has ever dreamt of—that is, he has separated himself from his Shadow! He goes about in the darkness, entirely Shadowless, and his Shadow goes wherever it wishes. The Cultmaster Khattam-Shud can be in two places at once!' (133)

The possible problem of error of judgment may occur when human reason loses the power to relate cause and effect. In such cases, free speech is valueless and truth is deformed. This is Rushdie's contemplation on the bad sides of shadow. However, Rushdie is aware of the importance of shadow to create importance of light. Haroun first gets a glimpse of the Chupwala viewpoint of shadow as he watches Mudra's

shadow warrior dance. He notes that the dance of the warrior and the shadow is beautiful and graceful:

. . . in the Land of Chup, a shadow very often has a stronger personality than the Person, or Substance to whom or to which it is joined! So often the Shadow leads, and it is the Person or Self or Substance that follows. And of course there can be quarrels between the Shadow and the Shadow and the Substance or Self or Person; they can be opposite directions . . . but just as often there is a true partnership, and mutual respect. (132)

Mudra, the Shadow Warrior attempts to explain the unrest and evil in the Land of Chup. The shadow and the self represent two sides of a coin: the self symbolizes the personhood and autonomy of the individual. The shadow represents the forces of culture and society, such as politics or religion, with which the self is engaged. These two sides can often conflict with each other, such as when religion causes a person to undertake unjust acts like suicide bombing.

Mudra's shadow represents the culture and tradition joined to a person as though it were a separate kind of substance from the person; culture has a life of its own. Mudra's conflict is that he and his fellow Chupwala's no longer trust their shadows. There is beauty in these social and cultural forces when they work together towards the freedom of the self. Haroun confuses Perpetual Darkness with the hull of Khattam-Shud's ship. This implies that there is little difference between Perpetual Darkness and the work of Khattam-Shud:

He had just seen that the wall of night, which he had thought to be the beginning of the Perpetual Darkness was no such thing. It was in fact a colossal ship, a cast ark-like vessel standing at anchor in the clearing.

'That's where they'll be taking us,' he understood with a sinking heart.

'It must be the flagship of the Cultmaster, Khattam-Shud.' But when opened his mouth to say as much to Iff, he found that fear has dried his throat and all that came out of his mouth was a strange croaking noise:

'Ark' he croaked, pointing to the dark ship. 'Ark, ark.' (148-49)

As Khattam-Shud has ordered the Cult of Muteness or Dumbness in the land, speech is hardly possible to be used. The environment is such that Haroun is overcome by fear and he is unable to utter words freely. Khattam-Shud's land is the representative of a closed or controlled society where free speech. The abilities of consciousness of the people are totally ignored. The despot to the state of Perpetual Darkness or Death suppresses voices opposing the despotism. Therefore, Rushdie's principal intention is to disclose how the authoritarian rulers impose their despotic rule upon people through restriction on the use of language. Haroun is shocked even more at his confrontation with the Cultmaster, Khattam-Shud, who, Haroun finds, is seemingly ". . . a skinny, scrawny, measely, weasely, sniveling clerical type . . ." (153) of figure. He expresses his preference of 'facts' over 'stories' and repeats the haunting question of Mr. Sengupta, ". . . You'd have done better to stick to Facts. But you were stuffed with stories. You'd have done better to have stayed home, but up you came. Stories make trouble. An Ocean of Stories is an Ocean of Trouble. Answer me this: what's the use of the stories that aren't even true?" (155).

Rushdie emphasizes on the power of language to show the complex relation between reality and dream if it functions freely in its natural state. The Cultmaster's ambitions are revealed one by one to Haroun. He intends to destroy all the systems that produce stories, which survive on free speech that Rushdie relates, "He went on

with his terrifying explanations: 'Now the fact is that I personally have discovered that for every story there is an anti-story. I mean that every story-and every Stream of Story- has a shadow-self, and if you pour this anti-story into the story, the two will cancel each other out, and Bingo?' (160).

Haroun questions why he would want to take fun out of the stories. He replies by telling Haroun that the world is not for fun, the world is made to control which is a condemnation on the political, social, and religious powers of the Middle East that seek to control societies by strictly regulating actions and beliefs:

'Stories are fun . . ."The world, however, is not for fun,' Khatam-Shud replied. 'The world is for controlling.'"Which world?' Haroun made himself ask. 'Your world, my world, all worlds,' came the reply. 'They are all there to be ruled. And inside every single story, inside every Stream in the Ocean, there lies a world, a story-world, that I cannot Rule at all. And that is the reason why.' (161)

Ultimate control does not come from military might or authoritarian tactics. The final control is the result of the control of narrative. By controlling narrative, a person's imagination is able to be co-opted. Their abilities for independence and freedom are removed. *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* opposes the evil motives of the colonial power that seeks to brainwash the weak societies to support their own cause, that is, to bring the colonized people under the continued hegemony gained through cultural manipulation.

The clown noses and funny hats that each side wears represent Rushdie's opinion that any forces that begin war only make themselves look foolish. These lines also represent Rushdie's view of war as an errand of foolishness. Though the Guppee army goes to fight for what seems to be noble causes, the result of war is ultimately a

sad and destructive path. By making the characters wear clown noses, Rushdie compares the armaments of battle to the disguise of the fool. Rashid notes that war creates crudeness out of what seemed refined. It is important to note that these thoughts all come from Rashid the storyteller. Rashid, in this instance, represents the need for story to communicate the real meaning of war. Only stories can explain the intentions of the parties. Wars often are different from what they are claimed to be for at the beginning. This applies to the colonial captures of the third world countries by the Western powers. They put forward the mission of civilizing third world countries as the justification of their colonial motives. However, it is clear that under the cover of the missions of helping the third world develop, the colonizers had their hidden intentions of exploiting the natural resources and ruling over the colonized, thereby restricting their natural freedom.

Rushdie alludes to the concept of suicide bombing when Khattam-Shud's ambassador attempts to blow him and the Guppee leadership up with a bomb, "The faster he juggled, the more complicated the juggling became; and his audience was so completely hypnotized by his skill that only one person in the tent saw the moment at which one extra object was added to the flying cavalcade, a little, heavy, rectangular box out of which protruded a short, burning fuse . . ." (182). The act of suicide bombing, in which a person intentionally takes their own life and those of other innocent people by detonating explosives, was and is a major terrorism issue in Middle Eastern countries such as Pakistan. The characters in the novel deal with this issue of terrorism in the same way that people of the real world deal with it. When the battle commences, Rashid is afraid that the Chupwalas will burn the Pages of Gup, though it does not happen. Because the Pages have talked through everything so lengthily, even to the point of anarchy, their openness creates bonds of unity. On the

other side, the Chupwalas' silence and lack of planning created mistrust and confusion. The Guppees overwhelm the opposing army. Rushdie points that a political society of censorship and authoritarian control can never stand when truly challenged. The description of the end of the Chupwala army in the following extract illustrates this:

The Chupwalas ... turned out to be a disunited rabble. Just as Mudra the Shadow Warrior had predicted, many of them actually had to fight their own treacherous shadows! And as for the rest, well, their vows of silence and their habits of secrecy had made them suspicious and distrustful of one another... The upshot was that the Chupwalas did not stand shoulder to shoulder, but betrayed one another, stabbed one another in the back, mutinied, hid, deserted . . . (185)

Khattam-Shud has silenced the people of Chup. They do not match for the free and talkative Guppees. The Chupwalas symbolize the destructive authoritarian regimes of the Middle East and Asia. Rushdie criticizes this rule as being nothing more than a shadow that will turn against its owner during difficult times. After Princess Batcheat stops singing, everyone sees that the moon of Kahani begins to spin signifying the restoration of the original order of the world of stories, "Look at the sky! Voices were shouting. 'Look what's coming up over the horizon! . . . towards the sun'" (188). The ground shakes and the houses and fortresses of Chup begin to fall.

Rushdie's symbolic representation of the end of the censoring dictators and censorship takes place; peace is declared. Mudra becomes the leader of Chup and invites Blabbermouth to stay and become an official interpreter and ambassador between the two lands. Haroun arrives with his friends and everyone is reunited. Iff is promoted to Chief Water Genie and personally turns on Rashid's story water supply. It

is the fictional fulfillment of Rushdie's awaited wish of restoration of his freedom of speech violated by dictators in the name of preserving religious faith.

Though the clash between free speech and silence is resolved in the final pages, Rushdie does not endow *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* a traditional successful conclusion. The resolution of conflict is only a temporary happiness in the journey of the story, especially when it is a continuing story such as life that is always full of difficulties, fluctuations, and deviations. Actually, Haroun realizes that he can hold onto the value of story without the help of the Guppees of Kahani. He is disturbed that the successful conclusion is synthetic, or unreal, just as was the Khattam-Shud's poison. Rashid receives his Gift of the Gab back.

Both the form and the content of the novel break through all the restrictions in that, in both cases, the novel manifests persistent will to achieve a world of open boundaries. In the new order of the land of Kahani, there is now open and cooperating relation between the land of Gup and that of Chup after the end of the despotic controller, Khattam-Shud. Blabbermouth becomes an official interpreter and ambassador between the two lands. This also suggests towards the establishment of good communication and open interaction between the lands guiding them towards a balanced existence. The citizens of the once sad city, on the other hand, rejoice over their newfound name (Kahani) and water pours from the sky suggesting the lasting happiness. The happiness brought by the power of free speech in Haroun's dreamland and that in his real world parallel each other in that in both worlds it has been achieved through openness, both physical and intellectual. The sad city is said to have remembered its name and achieved happiness because it resumes treating the oral cultures open-heartedly. Rashid's stories have once again become very famous and Soraya has started enjoying her singing. This is Rushdie's suggestion towards the fact

that orality, an important means of contact of ideas and personality since ancient times, stands on the openness of the people.

Chapter III: Conclusion

Human Deprivation from Expression in Oppressive Society

The study sums up the preceding chapters that have analyzed Rushdie's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*. The text emphasizes on open society. By juxtaposing fairy tales and his own life experiences, the writer has projected the importance of free speech in life. Khomeini crushed Rushdie's free speech in the name of rationality. When Rushdie talked about the value of free speech in life Khomeini declared a fatwa, an extreme form of censorship against him. The victims of a fatwa are under a lifelong suffering. After years of suffering, he overcame his obstacles and published *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* that is a fictional fulfillment of his desire for freedom. Rushdie's true motion is the conquest of freedom of speech over oppression. The characters' journey parallels that of Rushdie's real life.

Besides, many of the events from the novel seem like childish parables. However, they are truly metaphors for freedom of speech. In the war between the Guppees and the Chupwalas, the uniforms of both sides include spherical nose warmers. This clown-like attribute is employed to mock the entire conflict between freedom of speech and oppression. To analyze the text, the research has employed existentialism as a theoretical tool that advocates human freedom for leading meaningful life. Without having enjoyed independence, people would stay deprived of knowing one's individuality, which eventually makes them desperate. The very deprivation leads them to suffer identity crisis in society. The entire life seems absurd and thus, they become victims. Rushdie's novel portrays Haroun and Rashid who stand for opposite poles: good and evil respectively in order to discuss human reality. To connect this point with the narrative, Rushdie's motif to regain freedom in the fictional world, he has

constructed this novel. The author shows that freedom of speech is an inherent right of people and ridiculous one has to fight a battle to get it.

Rushdie shows that dissent is an integral part of freedom of speech. Rushdie, in an instance, also indicates that if freedom of speech only includes the right to praise, then it is not a true freedom. The Old Zone is neglected, which gives Khattam-Shud the opportunity to overtake and establish his despotic rule over it. If the world did not neglect the fact that the Koran is also a story, perhaps there would not be such a fundamentalist movement of the Muslims concerning it. By this allusion, Rushdie points to the indifference of the modern people towards the preservation of ancient religious values. The Walrus is in charge of all the complicated processes that spread freedom of speech via stories. Rushdie does not let the lingering of oppression suffocate his imagination. He overcomes it by writing a story that documented his real life suffering through the journeys of the characters. Like Rashid in the novel, Salman Rushdie has bettered the world in which he dwells by overcoming the forces of oppression in his defense of the fundamental human right to freedom of speech.

The mission of rescuing the land of Kahani symbolically represents advocacy of free speech. Haroun's journey is the justification for the importance of story that is Rushdie's equivalent for free speech in the novel. The land under the control of the antagonist, Khattam-Shud has been severely criticized. The despotic power is made to succumb to the all-encompassing power of speech or communication. Khattam-Shud's men shut the place of origin of stories in the Ocean of Stories. However, Haroun releases the source of stories from the captivity, which renders the land with light and open environment. The cult master, 'Khattam-Shud, is sentenced to death as he ruled a world based on extreme control where he crushed freedom of expression under his boots. The victory of the Guppees over the Chupwalas is chiefly the victory achieved

by force of open interaction because the babbling talk of the Pages united them to win the battle. However, although Rushdie clearly and decisively stands in favor of free speech, a superficial reading reveals that Rushdie does not want his reader to mistake free speech for abuse of speech. He wants the balance between speech and silence.

The novel raises the fact that for healthy practice of the fundamental right to expression, an open society is essential. In a closed society or, one which exercise extreme restrictions, danger persists that speech will sink into perpetual silence. Thus, this study concludes that healthy and lasting existence of free speech is possible only in open societies where there is balance between speech and silence, whereas extremely closed and censoring societies suffocate the power of natural communication.

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