

## **Chapter: - 5**

### **Haroun and the Sea of Stories (1990)**

Salman Rushdie's fifth novel, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* is an extremely amusing, colourful, adventurous and allegorical piece of work. Rushdie who is known as great story-teller of modern times has woven a number of magical events in to the settings of the novel. He has also used a great amount of literary techniques such as alliteration, rhyme, linguistic experiments and fantasy to enrich the novel. The writer has created the most fantastical world to which the hero of the novel travels. It indicates that the setting of the novel is not the real world, but an imaginative one. This aspect of the novel classifies it as a work of 'Magic Realism', the aesthetic style which blends fantastical and magical elements of a story into a realistic setting. This kind of blending of the fantastical and the real allows the novelist to explore the deeper meaning of reality.

Rushdie's use of magic realism in the novel serves a dual purpose; children would enjoy the wonderful journey of the hero and adults would understand the deeper meaning of reality.

The present novel, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* has been viewed by critics as the personal and political struggles that Rushdie experienced during the fatwa issued against him by the Iranian leader, the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini for his novel, *The Satanic Verses*. The fatwa called for the death of Rushdie along with those who were related with the publication of the book as the book was viewed as blasphemous to Islam. The novel, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* was written while the controversy was going on, therefore many critics considered the novel as the writer's poetic license and his protest against the oppression of the writers.

#### **5.1 About the Book:-**

The general impression about Salman Rushdie is nicely encapsulated by Andrew Teverson;

If ever a writer's work lacked primal innocence, it is Salman Rushdie's. It is impossible to write about the Indian born, U.S. Resident, British national, Secular-Muslim, Post-Colonial and the globalised novelist/ polemicist/ celebrity without being controversial. (Andrew: 259)

But, Salman Rushdie's fifth novel, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* (1990) can be considered as the most innocent novel of his literary career so far. In fact, when Rushdie was writing his fourth novel, *The Satanic Verses*, his nine-year-old son Zafar asked him to write novels that could be read and enjoyed by children. Responding to his son's proposal, Rushdie promised him that the next book he wrote would be one that his son and other children could enjoy reading. As per his commitment, he started writing this novel in the summer, 1989 a few months after the fatwa.

Rushdie started to compose the stories for this novel by first telling them to his son during bath time. In an interview with *The New York Times Magazine*, Rushdie pointed out;

The idea for *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* originated in a story I told Zafar my son. It was not so much a bed time story but a bath time story, something I'd tell him when he was in bath, or while I wrapped in the towels. I would have these basic motifs, like the Sea of Stories, but each time I would improvise – not only to please him but to test myself to see if I could just say something and take it elsewhere. (Gerald: 30)

Rushdie has also mentioned in the same interview that it was the fatwa that persuaded him to commit the story to paper.

Basically, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* is an adventure novel written for children, but underneath, this book is for adults to understand the writer's plea for freedom of expression and speech. Above all, it can be said that this novel is partly autobiographical, partly philosophical, partly theoretical, but mostly a fun adventure story that itself relies on the most ancient oral tradition of story-telling. Yes, the book follows the Indian oral

tradition illustrated by the Sanskrit volume, written in the eleventh century, entitled as; *Katha-Sarit-Sagar* which means “Ocean of the Stream of Stories”.

The novel, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, as a work of children’s literature, has been critically well received. J. Bemrose has praised the book as; “an unusually joyous and playful piece of literary invention.” While Rosalia Baena has claimed about the book as,

a modern fairy tale for both adults and children, using the child’s point of view as the narrative focus that centers the drama within the magical tale.

(<http://www.encyclopedia.com/article-1G2-2697700013/haroun-and-sea-stories.html>)

The novel, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* has won ‘The Writer’s Guild’ Award and has been considered as the best book for children. This novel is divided in to twelve chapters with different titles.

## **5.2 Plot Summary of the novel:-**

Rushdie begins the novel in the traditional Indian, oral story-telling style with the narration of a city;

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.

(*Haroun: 15*)

The hero of the novel, Haroun lives with his parents in this sad city. He is the only child of a famous story-teller named Rashid Khalifa and his wife, Soraya. They live quite happily without being affected by the sadness of the city. Rashid is much famous for his cheerful stories that he has received two nicknames. To his admirers, he is ‘Rashid the Ocean of Notions’ and to his jealous rivals, he is ‘the Shah of Blah’. But after a few years, the sadness of the city finally creeps in to their lives.

One day, after returning from his school, Haroun learns that his mother has run off with his upstairs neighbor, Mr. Sengupta who has been a severe critic of Haroun’s father

for his excessive indulgence in imaginative and fantastic world of stories. Haroun's mother leaves a letter in which she accuses Rashid for being careless to reality and for being too fanciful. In utter disappointment and anger, Haroun also attacks his father for the uselessness of the stories. It really shocks his father. On the other side, Haroun becomes a victim of Attention Deficit Disorder and he cannot concentrate on anything for more than 11 minutes. Now, it has become difficult for Haroun to concentrate on his study, so Rashid takes him on a story-telling job which he is performing for some shrewd politicians in the Land of G and the Valley of K, but unfortunately Rashid has lost his ability of story-telling with the elopement of his wife, Soraya. He fails to tell a story and the politicians get mad with the anger.

Then after, Rashid along with Haroun are sent to the Valley of K to tell stories in order to win votes for the politician, Mr. Butto. They board a mail bus to go to the Valley of K. The driver of the bus, Mr. Butt drives very fast on the suggestion of Haroun who wants to please his disappointed father by making it possible for him to see the beautiful natural sights of the Valley K by reaching there before day break. When they reach K, the politician, Mr. Snooty Butto takes them to the luxurious houseboat on the Dull Lake for their stay. But, at night both Rashid and Haroun feel uncomfortable to sleep; hence they exchange their bed rooms. When Haroun has just dozed off, he hears a noise in his bathroom. He peeps through the door and finds an old man with an onion shaped head that disappears as soon as he sees Haroun. But the old man drops his wrench which has been confiscated by Haroun.

The old man reappears to take back his wrench, but Haroun asks for his introduction. So the old man tells him that he is Iff, the Water Genie and he has come to turn off the story stream of his father, Rashid. After a little argument, Haroun begins to believe in what Iff reveals. Haroun becomes ready to return the wrench on the condition that Iff should take him to his head, the Walrus, so that he can request him to continue the stream of stories for his father. Iff reluctantly accepts this condition in order to get back his wrench from Haroun.

Iff takes out many tiny magical creatures and tells Haroun to select any one for their journey to Kahani, the second moon of the universe. Haroun picks up the Hoopoe and Iff

throws it out the window and in to the water where it balloons in to a very huge bird. Then, both of them climb on its back and begin to fly in space. As the Hoopoe looks like Mr. Butt, Haroun names it Butt-the-Hoopoe who can communicate telepathically. They land on the Sea of the Stories so that Iff can give Haroun 'Wish Water' by use of which he may regain his father's story telling ability and thus, he can avoid the meeting with Walrus.

Haroun drinks the Wish water and wishes for his father's story telling ability to return, but he cannot focus strongly as he is disturbed with the thoughts of his mother. He loses his concentration and the power of Wish water disappears. He gets disappointed, so to please him, Iff gives him a cup of water from the Sea that contains a story. Haroun drinks it and finds himself looking through the eyes of a hero in the story of A Princess Rescue. As the hero climbs the tower to rescue the princess, he turns in to a spider and the princess hacks away at him until he falls on the ground. After waking up from the story, Haroun tells Iff about such tragic end of that story. At this time, Iff informs him that someone named Khattam-Shud is poisoning the stories.

Then, Butt the Hoopoe carrying Haroun and Iff, the Water Genie, flies to the land of Gup. Here, they first meet Mali, the water gardener, and the Plentimaw fishes. They find that the entire army of Gup is preparing for war with their enemy the citizens of the city, Chup. The Chupwalas have kidnapped their princess Batcheat from the city, Gup. Moreover, they have started to pollute the Sea of Stories. The leaders of the Gup, Princess Bolo, General Kitab and the Walrus announce their plans for war with the pages of the Guppee library (army). Then, some Guppee soldiers bring in a man with a hood over his head. They report him to be a spy. When his hood is removed, Haroun gets shocked as that man is his father, Rashid.

Here, Rashid explains that he is not a spy, but he is transported to Kahani through his dream. He informs that he has seen the Princess Batcheat captured by the Chupwalas when he was in the twilight strip. He also adds that the Cult master Khattam Shud wants to sacrifice her to the idol of Silence, Bezaban. Hearing this, Prince Bolo and General Kitab declare war on Chup and Rashid offers to guide them to the encampment of the Chupwalas. The Guppee army sails towards Chup which is the land of perpetual Darkness. Throughout

the entire course of their march, the Guppee army keeps on chattering and arguing about the causes of war.

After entering the land of Darkness, the Guppees come across a dark warrior who is fighting his own shadow in a very charming way, a kind of seductive dance. That warrior realizes that he is being watched and comes to the Guppees. He begins to speak but his speech is unintelligible to the Gupees. Rashid recognizes that the shadow warrior is speaking in an ancient gesture language, called Abhinaya. Rashid can understand this gesture language, so he interprets the warrior's talk to the Gupees. His name is Mudra and he is the second in command in Chup. He is now fighting against Khattam Shud in order to bring peace back to Chup city. Mudra agrees to help the Guppees in their mission to defeat Khattam-Shud.

In order to find out Khattam-Shud and all his activities, Haroun becomes ready to spy for the Guppee army. He along with Iff, Butt-the-Hoopoe, Mali and Plentimaw fishes begins to track towards the Old Zone. The water of the sea is poisoned so much that the fish cannot go ahead. The remaining members get captured in the nets of the enemy. Then, they are taken to a very huge black ship. They see big cauldrons of poison on the deck. Everything there, including the ship, looks like a shadow to Haroun. Khattam-Shud appears before the captured spies. He looks like a tiny man. Haroun realizes that this is not the actual Khattam-Shud, but his shadow that has detached itself from his owner.

Here, Khattam-Shud informs the prisoners about the process of how the Sea of Stories are being poisoned by him. He says that stories are useless, therefore they are being destroyed. He also shows them the place where they are building a great Plug to seal the Story Source at the bottom of the sea. At that time, Haroun's uncaptured companion, Mali arrives and jumps on to the generators causing great damage to all the machines on the ship. Here, Haroun gets an opportunity to escape and dives deep in to the sea to observe the Plug being constructed. He returns to Butt-the-Hoopoe, drinks Wish water, given to him by Iff, and strongly wishes that the axis of Kahani would spin normally. His wish gets fulfilled and a miracle happens. After a few minutes, the entire area of Chup is bathed in sunlight. Under the hot rays of the sun, all the shadows along with the ship itself begin to melt. Soon everyone is free and the poison is destroyed.

On the other hand, the real Khattam-Shud sends a messenger to the Guppee army. He begins to entertain the Guppees by juggling, but suddenly he pulls out a bomb. No one can notice it except Blabermouth who quickly jumps, snatches the bomb and throws it away. Thus, she saves all the Guppees from being blown-up. Then, the war begins between the two armies. The Guppees army overwhelms the Chupwala army. All of a sudden, there is a great earthquake as the moon (Kahani) begins to spin due to Haroun's wish. The huge statue of Bezaban falls and crushes the real Khattam-Shud. Peace is declared and everyone returns happily after rescuing the Princess Batchheet.

The walrus tells Haroun that he will be given a happy ending to his story for his bravery. Rashid is given his story telling ability back. When Haroun wakes-up, he finds himself back in the valley of K where his father is supposed to tell stories for a politician, Mr. Butto, but Rashid tells the story of Haroun and the Sea of Stories. It turns the crowd against the shrewd politician.

When Rashid and Haroun return to their city, it is raining and they are surprised to find people of the sad city dancing, playing, laughing and enjoying. Now, they are no longer feeling sad. They inform them that the city has remembered its name - Kahani which means 'story'. Haroun realizes that the Walrus has put a happy ending in to the rain drops. When he arrives home, he finds that his mother has returned. She confesses her mistake of running away with Mr. Sengupta. All of them become happy. The next morning Haroun awakes to find it is his birthday and his mother is singing merrily.

### **5.3 Manifestation of Magic Realism in the novel:-**

Having discussed about the book and the plot summary of the novel, an effort would now be made to evaluate the novel under the light of different characteristics of magic realism. By this evaluation, it will be established that the present novel of Salman Rushdie falls into the category of magic realism.

As discussed in the earlier chapters, there are many different characteristics of Magic Realism like Fantasy, Hybridity, Use of History, Dream, Telepathy, Mythology, Social and Political Critique etc. Generally, it is not possible for a magic realist text to contain all the characteristics of the genre, Magic Realism, but the presence of some of

them are enough to categorize the work as a magic realist text. Likewise, the present novel, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* is quite smaller than Rushdie's other novels and, therefore it contains fewer characteristics of magic realism. However, one cannot deny the fact that this novel belongs to the genre - Magic Realism.

Let us now evaluate this book from the viewpoint of Magic Realism.

### **5.3.1 Fantasy:-**

It is generally believed that Rushdie's novels are marked with fantasy. His fifth novel, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* is fully loaded with fantasy which is considered as one of the most essential characteristics of magic realism. In fact, it would not be exaggeration in saying that the entire course of action in the novel i.e. from beginning to an end is of a fantastic nature. Rushdie clarifies the fantastic nature of the novel from the very beginning when he describes the sad city in the country of Alifbay. Here, Rushdie states;

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 (.....) in the north of the sad city stood mighty factories in which sadness was actually manufactured..... (H: 15)

This concept of sadness being manufactured surprises and confuses the reader at the very outset of the novel and thus Rushdie prepares the readers for the entire fantastic journey that is to follow ahead.

The great fantasy of the novel is the invention of the place where the entire course of action takes place i.e. Kahani which is called the Earth's second Moon. It travels so fast that no Earth instrument can detect it. This second Moon, Kahani is shown as divided in two parts – 1. Land of Gup and, (2) Land of Chup. Now, the most fantastic thing over there is that the rotation of Kahani has been brought under control by the Guppees. As a result, the Land of Gup is bathed in endless sunshine while Chup is surrounded by darkness of night forever. The Guppees have never seen night and the Chupwalas have never seen



daylight, they remain in perpetual darkness. This type of narration puts the novel in to the category of Magic Realism.

When Haroun's mother runs away with her neighbor, Haroun becomes a victim of "Attention-Deficit-Disorder". He cannot concentrate on anything for more than eleven minutes as his mother had left at eleven o'clock. Besides this, Haroun's father, Rashid's story-telling ability has also run-off along with the elopement of his wife, Soraya. Both these events are fantastic.

Then after, the descriptions of Moody Land and Mist of Misery are highly fantastic. The Moody Land is described as the place where;

...the atmosphere keeps on changing according to the moods of people. For example, the sun would shine all night if there were enough joyful people around. And, when people get angry, the ground would shake. (H: 48)

When Mr. Butto angrily shouts at the disappointed Rashid on the boat, the hot wind begins to blow with redoubled force; and as Rashid sank in to silent wretchedness, the green-yellow mist with the toilet stink came rushing towards them across the Lake; and the water was angrier than ever, slopping over the side of the swan-boat...as if it were responding to Butto's fury (and also, in point of fact, to Haroun's growing anger at Butto's behavior.) (H: 49)

Finally, Haroun orders everyone to keep silence and think about their happy moments. Everybody obeys him and the atmosphere becomes quite normal. Such types of descriptions appear quite often in the novel.

The reference to invisible tap and the appearance of Water Genie are also a part of the writer's fantasy. In the houseboat of Mr. Butto, Haroun wakes up by some strange sound in his bathroom. He is surprised to see an astonishing figure;

It had an outsize onion for a head and outsize aubergines for legs, and it was holding a tool box in one hand and what looked like a monkey wrench in the other. (H: 54)

That figure is an old man wearing a purple turban and baggy silk pajamas. His hair and beard are of blue colour. Haroun accidentally steps on a creaky board producing a little sound which makes the old man realize that he is being watched, so he immediately spins three times and disappears. But, by mistake, he drops a wrench on the floor. Haroun picks-up that wrench which is quite a strange tool as;

It had the general outline of a wrench, but it was somehow more fluid than solid, and was made up of thousands of little veins flowing with differently coloured liquids, all held together by some unbelievable, invisible force. It was beautiful. (H: 56)

Soon, that oldman reappears to demand his wrench back, but Haroun refuses and asks for his introduction. Here, the old man introduces him as the Water Genie, named Iff from the Ocean of the Streams of Stories. He also adds that he is there to turn off the Story Water from the great Story Sea because,

The gentleman (Haroun's father, Rashid) no longer requires the service...He has cancelled his subscription. (H: 57)

Haroun is greatly surprised to realize the real existence of Water Genie and the Great Sea of Stories. Earlier, he had ridiculed such matters whenever he heard about it from Rashid. Now, since he can see and talk to a Water Genie, he accepts these magical elements.

...Haroun, whose head was spinning, not only at the discovery that there really were Water Genies, that the Great Story Sea wasn't only a story, but also at the revelation that Rashid had quit, given-up, buttoned his lips. (H: 57)

Haroun asks Iff how he comes to know about his father's desire to quit. Iff explains that he sends the message through Thought Beams. "We tune in and listen to his thoughts. It's an advanced technology." (H: 57) Hearing this, Haroun feels sorry for his father and requests Iff to continue his subscription for story water. Iff tells him that the orders can only be reversed by the Grand Comptroller at P2C2E House, Gup city, Kahani. Iff also

informs that many brilliant people, the Eggheads are employed at Gup City, but only the Walrus is the Grand Comptroller. Then, Iff makes Haroun realize the existence of invisible tap for circulation of story water. Then Haroun makes the important decision of his life and asks Iff to take him to that magical planet called Kahani to see the Comptroller. At first, Iff refuses, but when Haroun threatens to keep his wrench, he hesitantly becomes ready to take him.

This entire event is nothing but the creation from the fantasy in which supernatural elements are mixed with the ordinary, and they are also accepted by the characters and the readers, too, as normal occurrences. Such type of narration makes the book to be a story of magic realism.

Again, Haroun's journey to the second Moon, Kahani is also a great example of fantasy.

The Water Genie, Iff takes out many tiny birds and fabulous winged creatures out of legends from the pocket of his pajamas and asks Haroun to select any one for their journey to Kahani. All these tiny birds and magical creatures were walking and flapping their wings on the Water Genie's palm. There were;

an Assyrian lion with the head of a bearded man and a pair of large hairy wings growing out of his flanks; and winged monkeys, flying saucers, tiny angels, levitating (and apparently air-breathing) fish...  
(H: 64).

It's quite obvious for Haroun to think of these tiny birds and creatures are not able to carry them to anywhere. But instead of arguing, he selects a tiny crested bird. Iff says that it is the Hoopoe. He adds that "In the old stories, the Hoopoe is the bird that leads all other birds through many dangerous places to their ultimate goal." (H: 64)

The Water Genie, Iff throws that tiny bird, Hoopoe out of the window. Haroun rushes to the window and observes;

the Hoopoe floating on the Dull Lake, grown large, as large as a double bed, easily large enough for a Water Genie and a boy to ride upon its back. (H; 64-65)

This type of enlargement of Hoopoe, the mythical bird, is purely a work of Rushdie's fantasy. Apart from this magnification, the Hoopoe can fly too fast, read the minds of others and it can also communicate telepathically. Both Haroun and Iff embark on the back of the Hoopoe and start their fantastic journey to Kahani. They travel at a speed so fast "that the earth below them and the sky above both dissolved in to a blur." (H: 65) The Hoopoe reminds Haroun of Mr. Butt, the mail coach driver; so he calls it – Butt the Hoopoe.

In addition to all these fantastic elements, Rushdie brings forth Wishwater in his narration. The Wishwater (whose glow was golden) can make one's desire come true. During their flight, Butt the Hoopoe lands in the middle of the ocean and Iff fills up the bottle of Wishwater. He offers Haroun to drink that Wishwater in order to accomplish his wish of his father's story telling ability to return. The secret of Wishwater is; "the harder you wished, the better it worked." (H: 70) Thus, by using such magical elements in the novel, Rushdie has created a web of fantasy throughout the text.

Another fantastic element is that of Story water. Iff dips in to the Ocean and produces a golden cup with a story inside. Haroun drinks the water and finds himself as the young hero in the "Princess Rescue Story Number S/1001/ZHT/420/41(r)xi" (H: 73) surrounded by monsters and strange creatures. The princess is kept imprisoned in a high tower and Haroun watches as the hero dispenses with the monsters and begins to climb the tower. When Haroun (as the hero in the story) is half way up the tower, he begins to turn in to a giant spider. He reaches at the top of the tower where the princess, out of fear, begins to hack away the horrible creature until the hero falls to the ground. Haroun wakes up from the story and tells Iff and Hoopoe about this tragic end of the story. Here, Iff informs him that it is because of the leader of the Land of Chup, Khattam-Shud who is polluting the Sea of Stories.

After the fabulous episodes of Wishwater and Story water, Rushdie presents one more fantastic figure i.e. Plentimaw fishes namely – Bagha and Goopy. They are as big as giant sharks and they have dozens of mouths all over their bodies. Haroun observes, “Each mouth spoke with its own voice” (84). Plentimaw fishes seem to be highly magical creatures from the way they are described as;

Plentimaw fishes always go in two’s. They are faithful to partners for life. To express this perfect union they speak, only and always, in rhymes. (H: 85)

Not only this, but their functions are also of a magical nature. Iff introduces these Plentimaw Fishes as “hunger artists” – because

when they are hungry, they swallow stories through every mouth, and in their innards miracles occur; a little bit of one story joins on to an idea from another, and hey presto, when they spew the stories out they are not the old tales but the new ones. (H: 86)

Thus, Plentimaw Fishes perform magical functions and really create new stories in their digestive systems. Iff narrates this extraordinary creature while Haroun and the readers, too listen and also accept it as quite ordinary or common thing over there. In fact, it is the main characteristic of Magic Realism to take the uncommon or extraordinary as quite normal occurrence.

Rushdie has referred to the parliament of Gup city which also seems to be fantastic in nature. The Parliament of Gup, known as the *Chatterbox* because – “debates there could run on for weeks or months or even, occasionally, years, on account of the Guppee fondness for conversation.” (H: 88)

The way Haroun’s father, Rashid is transferred through his dream to Gup city is really fantastic. Rashid himself reveals how he reached Gup;

As a frequent insomnia sufferer, 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 a 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...* (H: 99)

Thus, Rashid arrives at Gup city at the Second Moon through his dream – a process known as Rapture. It is really an extreme form of fantasy.

Another example of Rushdie's fantasy includes Twilight Strip which is situated exactly between Gup and Chup. In a way, it can be said that the Twilight Strip separates darkness (Chup) from the endless light (Gup). The Gupees have long ago constructed an unbreakable and invisible wall in the Twilight Strip. This wall is known as Chattergy's Wall. Haroun develops a feeling of despair when he enters the Twilight Strip along with the Gup army. This feeling of despair is what Butt the Hoopoe describes as being "Heart-Shadow. It happens to most people the first time they see the Twilight Strip and the Darkness beyond [...] But but but don't worry. You will get acclimatized. It will pass." (H: 121)

Haroun's journey in to the magical world of Kahani reveals to him the reality of the realm of fantasy, which he doubted earlier. Now he believes and accepts, too, as he sees them with his own eyes. The entire novel is loaded with such magical events. After the Twilight Strip, Rushdie introduces one more fantastic figure namely Mudra, the Shadow Warrior. Haroun finds him fighting against his own shadow; which in turn, is fighting back with equal ferocity, attention and skill. The shadow has its own will. Haroun observes;

The shadow was attached to the warrior at the feet, but other than that seemed to be entirely free. (H: 124)

Then, the description of the eyes of the Chupwalas is also fabulous. Looking at the eyes of the Shadow Warrior, Haroun remarks;

Instead of whites, they had blacks; and the irises were grey as twilight, and the pupils were white as milk. No wonder the Chupwalas like the dark. (H: 125)

He further points out about their eyes as;

They must be blind as bats in the sunlight because their eyes are the wrong way round like a film negative that somebody forgot to print.  
(H: 125)

After presenting the magical figure in the form of the Shadow Warrior, Rushdie moves ahead once again in the realm of fantasy to introduce the Chupwalas and their leader, Khattam-Shud. In fact, the shadow of Mudra informs the Guppees about the Chupwalas by using the language of Gestures – ‘Abhinaya’. First of all, he makes it clear that in the Land of Chup, “Shadows are considered the equals of the people to whom they are joined.” (H: 132) The most surprising and fantastic thing about shadows is, as Mudra reveals;

In the Land of Chup, a Shadow very often has a stronger personality than the Person, or Self, 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 Substance or Self or Person; they can pull in opposite directions. (H: 132)

This is really something that is quite difficult for normal human beings to accept, but the way Rushdie presents, it seems to be quite common in that magical world, and hence get accepted by all. After this, the Shadow Warrior proceeds to reveal the secrets of their leader, Khattam-Shud. It is the most striking and fabulous revelation (information). Mudra says that Khattam-Shud’s black magic has had fearsome results. He clarifies that;

He (Khattam-Shud) has plunged so deeply in to the Dark Art of Sorcery that he has become shadowy himself – changeable, dark, more like a Shadow than a Person. (H: 133)

Explaining the effect of Khattam-Shud’s black magic, Mudra reveals that

...as Khattam-Shud has become more Shadowy, so his Shadow has come to be more like a Person. And the point has come at which it’s no longer possible to tell which Khattam-Shud’s Shadow is and which his substantial 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! (H: 133)

Rushdie does not stop here, but takes the reader still deep in to the realm of fantasy. He informs that the Chupwalas have invented artificial darkness, just as other people have artificial light! The Chupwalas use “dark bulbs – producing strange darkness, so that the reversed eyes of the Chupwalas (which would be blinded by brightness) could see properly [...] Darkness you can switch on and off.” (H: 150)

The next fantastic event occurs when Haroun, Iff, and Butt the Hoopoe are captured by the soldiers of Khattam-Shud and they are brought on a very huge dark ship which is a shadow ship created by the black magic of Khattam-Shud. Here, Haroun sees the Cultmaster Khattam-Shud for the first time. He thinks of him as a tiny man looking like a feeble clerk. Then Khattam-Shud shows them his Virat Roop (Huge Form) which is described thus;

The Cultmaster grew and grew before their appalled, astonished eyes, until he was one hundred and one feet tall, with one hundred and one hands, each of which had three eyes and a protruding tongue of flame; and a hundred and one arms, one hundred of which were holding enormous black swords, while one hundred and first tossed Butt the Hoopoe’s brain-box casually in to the air... (H: 156)

When Haroun uses ‘Bite-a-Lite’ (a small device that throws enormous light by biting it) to blindfold the Chupwalas in order to escape from them, he observes that “*none of the Chupwalas had shadows!*” (166). It means that they are all shadows detached from their real selves. Here, Haroun becomes sure of the fact that, “Everything and everyone here is a Shadow made solid...” (H: 166)

Having observed this magical event, Haroun thinks;



If only the sun would come out they'd all melt away, they'd become flat and shapeless, like the shadows they really are! (H: 166)

Along with this, the narration of the Wellspring or Source of Stories and the Plug, constructed by Khattam-Shud to seal the Wellspring, are also quite fantastic. It is said that the Source of Stories or the Wellspring is a very huge hole in the sea-bed through which the glowing flow of pure unpolluted stories come bubbling-up from the very heart of Kahani. And the Plug which is supposed to seal that Wellspring is about the size of a football stadium. Thus, Rushdie has artistically embellished the entire novel with such type of many fantastic and magical elements.

The last fantastic event of the novel is again the magic created by the use of 'Wishwater'. After observing the Wellspring and the Plug, Haroun happens to realize that he is having "a bottle half-full of the magical golden liquid which Iff, the Water Genie, had offered him...: Wishwater." (H: 170) Here, Haroun makes up his mind to bring a drastic change by using that Wishwater. He open the lid and drinks the Wishwater down to the last drop. Soon he is wrapped with a golden light like a shawl..., he closes his eyes and prays;

I wish this Moon, Kahani, to turn, so that it's no longer half in light and half in darkness...I wish it to turn this very instant, in such a way that the sun shines down on the Dark Ship, the full, hot, noonday sun. (H: 170)

After a few minutes, "with a mighty shuddering and a mighty juddering Haroun Khalifa's wish came true. The Moon Kahani turned – quickly...and the sun rose, at high speed." (H: 171)

With this magic of Wishwater, extraordinary things begin to happen. As the sunlight hit the huge Dark Ship and the Chupwalas, all of them begin to melt, start losing their shapes, "as if it were a mountain of ice-cream left out in the sun by mistake." (173). In this way, the sorcery of Khattam-Shud has been destroyed by the sunlight and all the shadow soldiers along with their Cult-master, Khattam-Shud vanish altogether. At the same

time, the Moon Kahani has settled down to a normal speed of rotation so that there would be day and night in Gup and in Chup.

Thus, Rushdie has made enormous use of fantasy throughout the novel. Each and every page of the novel is loaded with some or other type of fantastic event. Having observed all above fantastic elements used in the novel, one cannot hesitate to label this novel, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* as a work of Magic Realism.

### **5.3.2 Hybridity:-**

Hybridity is one of the most important characteristics of Magic Realism. It means the combination of multiple opposing elements in such a manner that the salient features of various elements can be maintained. Salman Rushdie's fifth novel, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* is also an embodiment of hybridity, as it is suffused with many opposing elements maintaining the balance between those opposite elements. It also helps in maintaining the real identity of different elements. For instance, the very genre, Magic Realism, used by Rushdie is a combination of opposite elements like - ordinary and extraordinary things, magic and realism.

The use of shadows in *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* by Rushdie is the best example of hybridity as the shadows are formed by the combination of two opposite elements i.e. light and dark. The shadows can never exist in the extreme of light or darkness. They require both light and dark, the shadows represent the balance of goodness and evil.

When shadows are introduced in to the novel, they are presented from the negative point of view. As Rashid Khalifa states,

You all know the stories about Chup! – That is a place of shadows...; of secret conspiracies and poison rings - ... (H: 102).

Here, the words used by Rashid to describe Chup – “secret, conspiracy and poison” create a negative impression of the Chupwalas and their shadows. Once again the shadows are associated with the dark and the negative side when Haroun, under the influence of Heart-Shadow, expresses his fatalistic view thus;

With our absurd armada, how can we ever succeed in that world,...  
It was a suicidal mission...they would be defeated, and Batcheat  
would perish, and the Ocean would be irreparably ruined, and all  
stories would come to a final end. (H: 121)

In this way, the shadows are again projected as to have evil impact as Haroun has turned quite a pessimist under the influence of “Heart-Shadow”. This negative impression turns in to positive with the entry of Mudra, the Shadow Warrior. He is presented in a positive way. When Haroun sees him for the first time, he gets highly impressed with the Shadow Warrior. It is described in the novel as;

And as they fought each other, standing toe to toe, Haroun began to think of their combat as a dance of great beauty and grace, a dance danced in perfect silence, because the music was playing inside the dancers’ heads. (H: 124)

Here the shadow is shown to have a life of its own, but it is no longer seen as a display of evil. This transition can even be seen in Haroun’s thoughts in which “combat” turns in to something as beautiful as a “dance”. In this case, shadows are not as sinister as they seem to be. It is explained by Haroun a little ahead through his thoughts about the shadows;

But it’s not as simple as that”, he told himself, “because the dance of the Shadow Warrior showed him that silence had its own grace and beauty (just as speech could be graceless and ugly); and that Action could be as noble as Words; and that creatures of darkness could be as lovely as the children of light. If Guppees and Chupwalas didn’t hate each other so, he thought, they might actually find each other pretty interesting. Opposites attract, as they say. (H: 125)

Thus, Rushdie has connected two opposite elements through the shadows. Earlier the shadows were the symbols of destruction and doom, but through Shadow Warrior,

Rushdie establishes that there is a possibility of shadows representing goodness and nobility. Thus, it disrupts the idea that shadows represent all that is dark and bad.

In this way, Rushdie has shown that the shadows represent the balance between light and dark, goodness and evil. Shadows exist from a combination of light and darkness. Without either light or darkness, shadows do not exist. Thus, it becomes quite clear that shadows represent both light and dark. The duality of shadows allows light and darkness to co-exist.

There are numerous other examples of hybridity in the novel like speech and silence, light and darkness, the material and the shadow. The Gup City, half of the Moon, Kahani is constantly in sunlight while the Chup City is in constant darkness. Furthermore, there is a wall between these two worlds, namely Chattergy's Wall. This sense of building of a wall between vastly different cultures also has a basis in real life, with the invisible wall between the West and the Middle-East.

Salman Rushdie again provides the readers with another example of hybridity through Haroun's thinking while Guppee's marching on the Chupwalas. Observing the Shadow Warrior's martial dance, Haroun thinks;

How many opposites are at war in this battle between Gup and Chup! ...Gup is bright and Chup is dark. Gup is warm and Chup is freezing cold. Gup is all chattering and noise, whereas Chup is silent as a shadow. Guppees love the Ocean, Chupwalas try to poison it. Guppees love Stories, and Speech; Chupwalas, it seems, hate these things just as strongly." It was a war between Love (of the Ocean, or the Princess) and Death (which was what Cultmaster Khattam-Shud had in mind for the Ocean, and for the Princess, too.). (H: 125)

The war between Gup and Chup i.e. Speech and Silence is fought on many fronts: between good and evil, between freedom and repression, between democracy and dictatorship. Rushdie's intention is not only to pose facile choices between Manichean opposites, but rather to attack such dualism. As M. Keith Booker observes;

Rushdie's fiction consistently embraces contradiction, privileging the plural over the singular, the polyphonic over the monologic. One of the clearest ways in which it does so is by carefully constructing dual oppositions...only to deconstruct those oppositions by demonstrating that the apparent polar opposites are in fact interchangeable and mutually interdependent. This deconstruction of oppositions functions as a transgression of the boundaries societies (especially authoritarian ones) maintain to define themselves. (Keith: 50)

In this way, Rushdie has extensively made use of hybridity, an important characteristic of magic realism, in his novel, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*. This literary device puts the novel in the category of magic realism.

### **5.3.3 Allegorical Presentation:-**

Allegory, a literary device, is an extended metaphor used to convey hidden meanings through symbolic figures, actions, imagery and events, which together create the moral, spiritual or political meaning the author wishes to convey. In his novel, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, Rushdie has used allegory as a device to represent autobiographical aspect which turns out to be the characteristic of magic realism, a literary genre. In fact, Frederic Jameson calls allegory an indistinguishable part of magic realism. He is of the opinion that;

Postcolonial literatures allegorize for the purpose of national self definition is debatable, but I do agree that allegory (often in conjunction with magic realism and sometimes indistinguishable from it) has become a frequent device of post colonial writers, (Jameson: 65)

Salman Rushdie has used allegory in the present novel on both personal and political levels. It rather becomes a little difficult to trace where they exactly reside as both forms of allegory collapse into one another. On one level, there is a personal allegory presented in the novel. At the time of writing this novel, Rushdie was under the threat of

the fatwa issued against him by the Iranian religious leader. The allegorical connections are evident in the context – Soraya leaves Rashid, the Ocean of Notions, in much the same way that Salman Rushdie himself was abandoned by those he loved the most. Rashid's inability to tell stories as he is deserted by his wife is exactly the same thing Rushdie himself experienced while living in forced exile. The theme that Haroun saves his father and restores his story-telling ability is allegorical to the dedication of the book to Zafar, Rushdie's own son. In this light, the story operates as a personal allegory for Salman Rushdie.

Mark McDannald of Washington and Lee University has written some essays on this novel. His essay, "Allegorical Defiance of Censorship in Rushdie's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*" is an excellent piece of critical work. He views this novel as an allegory that expresses Rushdie's desire to battle censorship in the world of literature, while fulfilling his duties of being a good father to his son. Throughout his essays, McDannald remains unbiased, favoring neither Rushdie nor the fatwa in his analysis. In fact, he reveals Rushdie's underlying intentions and stories by employing textual support and certain literary devices while maintaining his objectivity.

McDannald observes that Salman Rushdie occupies the thoughts and actions of his characters that serve as his surrogate within the narrative. First of all, he clarifies that Rushdie's persona appears most clearly in Rashid, the Shah of Blah, a father and storyteller who loses his ability to create. This mirrors Rushdie's own troubles in writing after the Ayatollah placed the price on his head.

Then after, another character named Prince Bolo also stands as allegorical of Rushdie's egotistical motivations. Rushdie has shown this character as selfish. Bolo favors war mainly to save his beloved Princess Batcheat and the Ocean was of secondary importance to him. Bolo's first thoughts are for himself and his own situation. He would rather secure his own future and then ensure safety to the Ocean.

Here Rushdie desires to put an end to his situation and threat first, and then work upon censorship as a whole. Rushdie, however, always presents Bolo in a somewhat silly way showing that though he dreads his own lot and may strive to secure his own life, he

realizes that his situation really takes a backseat to the larger problem. Through the character of Prince Bolo, Rushdie seems to acknowledge his own limitations and desires to do things solely for his own benefit.

Rushdie also includes himself in Haroun, who exists primarily as a representation of Rushdie's own real life son, Zafar. His persona emerges in Haroun, though as a serious voice of fear and genuine concern, not about individual desires but about the censorship debate as a whole. Haroun shares Rashid's, and Rushdie's, creative block as demonstrated by his inability to concentrate for more than eleven minutes at a time, linking father to son. In addition, Butt the Hoopoe says to Haroun,

Don't sound too pleased. Who knows what's in store for us, up ahead? (H: 147).

This dialogue displays the sense of uncertainty that Haroun, and Rushdie, hold for the future. When Haroun is captured by the Chupwalas, he becomes frustrated and angry because he has been unable to save the Ocean. This seems to reflect a similar frustration in Rushdie, not for himself but for the larger struggle against censorship of which he is but a small part. Haroun wishes for the sun to shine equally on both halves of the Moon, Kahani i.e. on both sides of the dilemma.

Here, it seems Rushdie ultimately wishes for both sides of the censorship crisis to view each other with equal lighting, to abandon the differences between them and cease the destructive bickering, murder, terrorism and other human rights violations. Thus, the character of Haroun also stands allegorically for Rushdie in a humbling fashion which lessens the importance of the individual and heightens the importance of the larger problem – censorship.

At the same time, the allegorical connections on a political level are also present in the novel. The rejection of story-telling by Sengupta, Soraya and Khattum-Shud are allegorical statements against social and political authority that seek to silence artistic free speech. The fatwa has silenced Rushdie's unwavering commitment to liberalized notions of free speech and artistic expression. Rushdie's novel operates as an allegorical criticism of these forces that work to silence the artist's voice in the world. The fact that the story-

teller, Rashid has been used by those in the position of power to gain the votes of the public in the election is another allegorical connection to show how Rushdie views the relationship between art and the government.

Rushdie's use of allegory to highlight the autobiographical aspects is one more characteristic to brand the novel as a magic realist text.

### **5.3.4 Socio – Political Reference:-**

Presenting socio-political condition of the country has remained one of the foremost salient features of magic realism. Generally, it is Rushdie's most favorite aspect to deal with magic in his novels. Like all his previous novels, Rushdie has presented the socio-political aspect in his novel, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*. Actually, this novel is primarily meant for children and presented as a fairy tale, so it does not contain a very sharp socio-political criticism. However, the author has echoed some basic aspects of socio-political life.

At the very beginning of the novel, Rashid's wife, Soraya runs away with her neighbor named Mr. Sengupta who has been poisoning the ears of Soraya against her husband's constant indulgence in the imaginative world of stories. He would ask her,

That husband of yours, excuse me if I mention, He's got his head stuck in the air and his feet off the ground. What are all these stories? Life is not a story book or a joke shop. All this fun will come to no good. What's the use of stories that aren't even true? (H: 20).

Here, Rushdie intends to show the adverse effect of parents' separation on the child. As a result of this elopement, Haroun becomes highly upset and he finds himself unable to concentrate on his study or anything else for more than eleven minutes. At the same time, Rushdie has also presented the pathetic condition of the poor people in our society by critiquing the prevailing social system. He writes,

The poor lived in the tumbled down shacks made of old cardboard boxes and plastic sheeting, and these shacks were glued together by despair. And then there were the super-poor, who had no homes at



all. They slept on pavements and in the door ways of shops, and had to pay rent to local gangsters for doing even that. (H: 18)

Rushdie further gives another contradictory comment to this one. He states, “People mostly had big families; but the poor children got sick and starved, while the rich kids overate and quarreled over their parents’ money.” (H: 18)

Not only the son, but also a husband gets adversely affected by desertion is effectively shown through the character of Rashid Khalifa. Rashid is so much shocked about his wife’s elopement that he loses his story-telling ability and he remains upset. In this way, Rushdie has revealed this social aspect and has shown the red light to such an act.

The writer has also stuffed the novel with some political satires. For example, Rashid Khalifa, the master story-teller, is used by the politicians to gain votes of the public in election. In fact, Rashid is highly in demand during election time;

In those days, it was almost election time and the Grand Panjandrums of various political parties all came to Rashid, smiling their fat cat smiles, to beg him to tell his stories at their rallies and nobody else’s. (H: 20)

In fact, people never believe anything the politicians say, but everyone has complete faith in Rashid. So, the politics need Rashid to help them win the people’s votes. “They lined up outside his door with their shiny faces and fake smiles and begs for hard cash. Rashid could pick and choose.” (H: 20)

A certain politician named Mr. Snooty Buttoo hires Rashid with the expectation that the public, being impressed by the stories of Rashid, will vote for him and he would win the election and political power. He even tells Rashid on the house boat,

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. (H: 47)

In fact, what Rashid is asked to do is to launch an election campaign and build a clear and reliable image of the politician in order to win votes and the elections. But when in the utter despair of his wife's elopement, Rashid fails to tell any praising story in the town of G, the politicians became furious and accuse Rashid of "Having taken a bribe from their rivals" and threaten that "they might cut off his tongue and other items also," (H: 27)

Thus, Rushdie criticizes the way politicians make use of artists. In fact, Rushdie does not expose only the politics on earth, but also presents and attacks on the politics of the imaginary planet, Kahani which is known as the Second Moon. Here, the planet Kahani is divided in two parts – Gup and Chup. It is dirty politics on the part of Guppees that they have planned, without the consent from the Chupwalas, that they will mechanically control the Moon and subject the Chupwalas to permanent darkness while constant day for themselves. This type of perpetual light/dark balance of the Moon has been made possible on account of the genius of the Eggheads at P2C2E House (Process Too Complicated To Explain). With this episode, Rushdie tries to explain that some level of censorship, or at least the under lying desire to control lies among everyone.

On the other hand, the Chupwalas, under the leadership of Khattam-Shud, wish to poison the Sea of Stories and also remove the language completely. Thus, they strive very hard to destroy or censor the speech of the Guppees. Here, Rushdie attacks the politics of Censorship through the character of Khattam-Shud who is presented in the novel as, "the Arch-Enemy of all Stories, even of language itself. He is the Prince of Silence and the Foe of Speech." (39). He is also called as the Cultmaster of Bezaban. Rushdie reveals the strong desire of controlling others through this Khattam-Shud. When Haroun asks him why he hates stories so much, Khattam-Shud replies,

The world is, however, is not for Fun...The world is for Controlling...Your world, my world, all worlds. 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. (H: 161)

Here, Rushdie does not miss an opportunity to attack the fanaticism of Khattam-Shud's followers who swear vows of life long silence to show their devotion towards the Prince of Silence. It is described in the text as;

In the old days the Cultmaster, Khattam-Shud, preached hatred only towards Stories and fancies and dreams; but now he has become more severe, and opposes Speech for any reason at all. 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 in to great frenzies and sew their lips together with stout twine; so they die slowly of hunger and thrust, sacrificing themselves for the love of Bezuban. (H: 101)

The novel, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* also suggests that many of the Chupwalas do not really want to be a part of Khattam-Shud's plan and seem to remain with his side purely out of fear. Most of them do not wish to remain eternally silent. Mudra, the Shadow Warrior, rebels and he is found communicating with the language of Gesture. Rushdie also satirizes the conflict between the Censors and the free speech activists through the battle scene between the Guppees and the Chupwalas. He presents both the feuding parties thus;

...the Chupwalas who lived there wore little spherical nose warmers that gave them the look of circus clowns. Red nose warmers were issued to the Pages of Gup as they marched in to the Darkness.”  
(179)

Rashid, the story-teller, also comments, “Really, this is beginning to look like a war between buffoons.” (179)

Here, Rushdie has given both the sides equally ridiculous, clown-like appearances, mocking the battle between the Censors and the free-speech activists. He seems to suggest that this battle is ridiculous and meaningless, as he states through Rashid, the Shah of Blah; “Neither army will even be able to see properly during the fight” (180), because of the disparity in the amount of light each side is used to. Through this ridiculous battle, Rushdie

seems to suggest that none of the armies in this censorship battle will ever see things in the exact same way and certain differences between groups are inherent that should be solved through discussion rather than such ridiculous battle.

The final battle between the Guppees and the Chupwalas is Rushdie's commentary on war fought for political, religious or personal reasons. Rushdie creates two armies that go to war for foolish reasons. This war makes them look foolish. Each and every soldier puts on a nose warmer in order to protect their nose from freezing over. That exactly makes them look like clowns. The foolishness of war comes to light when it is learned that the Chupwalas fight only because they are afraid not to do so. Therefore, this war has nothing to do with bravery, courage or honor.

In the middle of the novel, the readers come across one more satire from the writer in a very humorous way. When Rashid, the story-teller, gets transferred to the Gup City, he is captured and taken as a spy by the Guppees. Here, Haroun asks the Water Genie, Iff, "What do Guppees do to spies, anyhow? [...] I suppose you rip out their fingernails one by one until they confess. Do you kill them slowly and painfully, or quickly with a million volts in an electric chair?" (97). Iff and other Guppes are shocked and horrified on listening about this type of punishment for a spy. Iff even bursts out, "Where did you pick up such bloodthirstiness?" (97) Then, being insisted upon, Iff affirms;

I don't know..., we've never caught a spy before. May be we should scold him. Or make him stand in the corner. Or write *I must not spy* one thousand and one times. Or is that too severe? (H: 97-98)

In this way, Salman Rushdie has exposed some of the social and political evils prevailing in the world through the use of elements of a fairy tale. Since, it is one of the characteristics of magic realism to present socio-political critique, the present novel, Haroun and the Sea of Stories can be justified as a magic realist text as it has successfully displayed this aspect throughout the novel.

### 5.3.5 Use of Language:-

Salman Rushdie is famous for his playful use of English language. In fact, he toys with the language. He uses various linguistic devices and makes many linguistic experiments to make his novel interesting. It is one of the characteristics of magic realism to use heightened language which is found in Rushdie's novel, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*. It can be said that Rushdie's use of language is more effective than most other Indo-Anglican novelists. Appreciating Rushdie's playful use of English, M. L. Raina states;

No Indian novelist has had the courage to handle English language with the gaiety and joyousness as Rushdie. (Raina: 172)

Rushdie has profusely loaded the novel with Hindustani (Hindi) words. In fact, the names of most of the characters in the novel are based on Hindi. For example, the name of the villain is Khattam-Shud which is a traditional term in Hindi to indicate the end of the story exactly in the same way as the Western term 'The End' indicates the conclusion of the story. Then the Chief of Gup army is named General Kitab (Hindi) that means a book. Even the names of two parts of the Second Moon – Gup and Chup (Hindi) are based on the English words 'Gossip' and 'Silence' respectively. Apart from this, the name of the alternate universe i.e. the Second Moon of the earth and the forgotten name of Haroun's city is 'Kahani' (Hindi) which means a story. Even the name of the battlefield in the novel is from Hindi language, 'Bat-Mat-Karo' which means 'Do not speak'. The kings and rulers are named with Hindi words, for instance, the king of Gup City is King Chatterji which means chatter. Then Prince Bolo means to speak and the Princess Batcheat means chit-chat. The Shadow Warrior is named Mudra, the Abhinaya which means the language of gesture.

Not only the names of characters, but also the names of places indicate the playful use of language by the novelist. For example, the name of Haroun's country is Alifbay which means Alphabet. Certain names of the places are only a single letter of the alphabet which is the most striking linguistic experiment of Rushdie. For instance;

Rashid had often told Haroun about the beauty of the road from the town of G to the valley of K, a road that climbed like a serpent through the Pass of H towards the tunnel of I (which was also known as J) (H: 33)

In fact, the names of the boy-hero and his father - Haroun and Rashid are based on the character in *The Arabian Nights* – Haroun al-Raschid, Caliph of Baghdad. Here, it can be said that Rushdie’s use of names is one of the most striking element of playful language in the novel. Almost all of the names in the novel are either derived from Hindustani language or allude to other stories. The names in the novel correspond with the culture to which the character belongs. For instance all the names of the people of Gup correspond to wordiness, gossip or speech. On the other hand, the names of people from Chup correspond to silence or lack of speech.

Several examples of Rushdie’s playful use of language also include the use of aphorism, a saying that embodies a general truth. For instance, Blabbermouth tells Haroun, “You shouldn’t judge a *book by its cover*.” (H: 114). 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 into the fire” (H: 117). This is an idiom, a phrase the meaning of which is to move from one bad situation in to something even worse.

Rushdie’s linguistic playfulness also includes his use of bilingual echoic formation such as – “wobbling-bobbling” and “iffing and butting”. Then again dovetailing words like – “sitting-sitting”, “long long way”, “shouting shouting”, “thousand thousand thousand”, “slowly slowly”, “come come”, “what what?”, “sweet sweet voice” and many more.

Linguistic creativity in the novel is at the core of the storytelling act. Haroun’s friend, Hoopoe uses the conjunction ‘but’ in a very unusual manner like;

“Correct, but but but you’ll admit it’s too much fun to watch. (H: 32)

“But but but it is because of Speed.” (H: 67)

Instead of using 'but' only once, his verbal business card is its triple usage. Then after, the abbreviation P2C2E which means "Process too complicated to Explain" also stands for linguistic creativity. There are many instances in which Rushdie uses Hindi or Urdu influenced sentence patterns. It really reflects the English speech patterns in India. For example, Rashid tells the Guppees, "How I arrived in Gup, you will be wondering." (H: 99) In this context, most British or American English speakers would speak, "you will wonder", but Rushdie has chosen to recreate the flavor of English conversation heard throughout India. Another example involves Miss Oneeta when she tells Haroun and his father, "...and no need to worry about me, sitting sitting all by myself." (H: 25) And then typical Indian English phrase, "an Unthinkable Thing happened." (H: 22). In this way, Rushdie has presented purely Indianized English throughout the book.

The novelist has used some words outside the ordinary context in which they are expected, and the device employed to achieve this effect is ambiguity. For instance, Iff and Butt are the names of two different characters in this novel, but in the ordinary context, 'if and but' are the conjunctions. Here, they have been presented as nouns instead of conjunctions. The readers get confused with such type of linguistic experiments and it is only through the narrative context they are able to understand this shift engineered by Rushdie.

Sometimes Rushdie creates humour through his funny use of Indianized English. When Rashid informs Miss Oneeta about Haroun's wandering attention, she firmly says "Cause is located in his pussy-collar-jee". Here not only Rashid and Haroun, but also the readers get highly confused with this statement. After a few moments, Rashid and Haroun work out that she means to say *psychology*. It is really funny to note such type of English used by some illiterate people. Miss Oneeta further remarks in the same tone;

Owing to Pussy-collar-jeeecal sadness, the young master is stuck fast on his eleven number and cannot get to twelve. (H: 24)

Road side warning boards are also an example of Rushdie's use of heightened language. Rushdie has cleverly used metaphors in these warnings in order to make them humorous. For instance;

IF YOU TRY TO RUSH OR ZOOM

YOU ARE SURE TO MEET YOUR DOOM (H: 31)

Another playful witty warning is;

IF FROM SPEED YOU GET YOUR THRILL

TAKE PRECAUTION-MAKE YOU WILL. (H: 35)

And one more rhymed warning;

DRIVE LIKE HELL AND YOU WILL GET THERE.

And finally, BE DEAD SLOW OR BE DEAD. (H: 38)

Throughout the novel, the readers can find a number of examples of linguistic experiments by Rushdie in *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*. The way he describes the Khattam-Shud is really very funny and striking;

“Through the doors came a skinny, scrawny, measly, weasely, sniveling clerical type...” (H: 153)

After observing all these instances of playful use of language by Rushdie, it can be said that *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* is clearly an example of the creative use of language. But at the same time, it is also a plea for freedom of thought and expression, a story in which the powers of language defeat the evil of being silenced. Thus, the present novel employs linguistic creativity for the benefit of an overall message defining humanity in terms of freedom from censorship and thought control. Here one finds the central role of language directly in opposition to silence.

In fact, Rushdie’s linguistic experiments, strange and startling at times, have attracted readers and reviewers all over the world and have placed Indian English fiction at the top most position. It cannot be termed exaggeration to say that Rushdie has established a style of language that can only be labeled as ‘Rushdiesque’.



Finally, it can be said that this type of playful use of language along with many types of linguistic experiments and the different other characteristics which have been discussed earlier like Fantasy, Hybridity, Allegorical Presentation and Socio-Political Reference put the novel, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* in the realm of magic realism. Here, it would be worthwhile to quote Sushila Singh' remarks about the novel, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*;

The novel thus is not to be mistaken as merely a children's classic. With his magic touch, Salman Rushdie has once again created a book which can be read at different levels of meaning: as a fable, as fantasy, adventure, allegory or an autobiographical novel. In his endeavour to come to terms with the realities of the present day world and an individual's predicament in it, he has produced a work of superb craftsmanship. (Singh: 1992: 216)

In this way, having studied the novel, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* in detail, it can be affirmed that Rushdie has presented a world of Fantasy and Magic on the stage of Realism. By an exquisite amalgamation of magical elements with factual setting, Rushdie has stuffed the novel, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* with the literary devices such as – Allegorical Presentation, Innovative Use of Language, Hybridity, and Implicit Criticism of Contemporary Socio-Political Condition. On account of all these features, the novel, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* can easily be labelled as a text of Magic Realism.

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