
Fluidity in Cultural Identity in Salman Rushdie's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*

Dr. Rama Islam

Associate Professor, Department of English, Metropolitan University, Sylhet, Bangladesh

ABSTRACT

Publication Info

Article history :

Received : 22-06-2022

Accepted : 12-11-2022

DOI : 10.30949/dajdtla.v18i2.1

Key words:

Fluidity; culture; identity;
difference; deconstruction

Corresponding author :

ramaislam@gmail.com

This article explores fluidity in cultural identity through the analysis and interpretation of Salman Rushdie's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*. Culture and identity are important areas of postcolonial and cultural studies. Cultural identity constantly changes due to diversity, as Rushdie shows the fluidity of cultural identity to depict the social, cultural, political, linguistic, and ecological differences between the sunlit land of Gup City and the perennially dark land of Chup City. The differences between Guppees, who represent liberal, pluralistic, and multicultural views, and Chupwalas, who represent various types of conservative world views, reveal people's antagonistic position. This difference also refers to a conflict between fundamentalism and Western literary modernism. The novel presents postmodern concepts, fluidity of cultural identity and the formation and reformation of identity, which are applicable to race, culture, and identity. The travels of Haroun Khalifa are an adventurous journey where he encounters different kinds of people in different places. Haroun anticipates a shift in cultural identities between Guppees and Chupwalas. Rushdie thinks that stories have the power to dominate silence, corruption, and oppression and to form new cultural identities. Rushdie's storytelling power represents various cultural identities as well as the change and formation of cultural identity. This article highlights fluidity in cultural identity in the context of postcolonial cultural studies.

Introduction:

One of the central themes of *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* is the fluidity of cultural identity, which was written in response to a fatwa (proclamation) issued by an Iranian fundamentalist, the Supreme Leader of Iran, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, on February 14, 1989, for writing his masterpiece, *The Satanic Verses*, which was published in 1989. As a result, Rushdie had to leave his home, became homeless, and encountered Western cultures. *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* is considered a semi-autobiographical novel where Haroun represents Rushdie's son Zafar and Rashid represents Rushdie. Rashid, like Rushdie, is a renowned storyteller who creates an imaginary world with his storytelling abilities. Rushdie, as a secular thinker, thinks about the changes in the world and emphasizes that intellectual freedom is more important than repression, and plurality is more appealing than rigidity in cultural identity. He shows the lending of history, story, thinking, perception, action, and adjudication, which differ from culture to culture and society to society. By writing about the differences between Guppees and Chupwalas in this novel, the author illustrates the differences that cause problems in today's world. This article is based on Rushdie's special concentration on cultures, redefining cultures, and the interactions and changes of cultures in light of postcolonial multiculturalism and postmodern fluidity.

Research Methodology:

This article has been written, analysed, and interpreted under the qualitative method following MLA research methodology. The systematic study will highlight postmodern plurality, and postcolonial fluidity in cultural identity to make an intensive study of the primary source,

Haroun and the Sea of Stories by Salman Rushdie. The secondary sources are taken from other relevant readings that assist me in understanding the broader concepts of postcolonial and postmodern perspectives.

Theoretical Framework:

Culture, identity, and fluidity in cultural identity are important areas of postcolonial and postmodern discourses. Culture is a source of identity, and identity is constructed through tradition and culture. Culture is closely related to society; it exists, necessarily creates, and continuously modifies when it gets access to other cultures. Fluidity is theoretically related to culture, power, and the construction of differences. The difference is a very important condition for any ethnic group, and the idea denotes quite simply the multiplicity of cultures or cultural identities. Homi K. Bhabha, in "Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences," rightly states that cultural diversity ". . . gives rise to anodyne liberal notions of multiculturalism, cultural exchange, or the culture of humanity" (qtd. in Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 206). Cultural diversity predicts a blend of multi-culture, cultural interaction, and humanity. Multiculturalism is a systemic perspective where each culture develops and evolves through encounters with other cultures. People in colonized Third World countries celebrate the concept of decolonization. Diverse cultural identities have rapidly become a space for political argument in favour of globalisation.

Identity is not predetermined and is not constituted on the basis of homogeneity; it contributes to forming and reforming identities. In *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha states, "Identity is never as a priori, nor a finished product; it is only ever the problematic process of access to an image of totality" (73). Bhabha writes about the process of identification, as identity tends to be fluid in nature. He borrowed the concept of hybridity from Mikhail Bakhtin and Derrida's deconstructive approach to binary opposition. Stuart Hall in "Cultural Identity and Diaspora" writes:

Cultural identity . . . is a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture and power. (225)

Cultural differences cannot be confined to any national border; rather, they cross borders. Cultural encounters create bridges between people and bring them together. Postcolonial cultural identity is not static; rather, it is in constant motion or fluid.

Modernist movements challenge absolutism, and postmodernists celebrate plurality and difference. The postmodern lens proposes that nothing has intrinsic meaning and that subjectivity is plural rather than unified. The universe of Kafka represents multiplicity, which is characterized by extreme flux and constant change, shifting from one state to the next. Fluidity refers to the stage of constant change, and cultural identity refers to a person's sense of belonging to a particular culture. Fluidity in cultural identity can be described as the identity of a particular culture or group that constantly changes or evolves. An individual's identity and cultural practices affect how he or she identifies with the world and his or her beliefs and values.

Jacque Derrida's concept of difference, a branch of deconstruction, refers to different attitudes, approaches, and strategies that make divergences in gender, religious beliefs, age, experience, race, ethnicity, nationality, disability, skills, income, language, social roles, economic, cultural backgrounds, manners, and countless other domains. In the article titled "What's the difference? Diversity Constructs as Separation, Variety, or Disparity in Organisations," David A. Harrison and Katherine J. Klein state, ". . . diversity may indicate disparity: differences in

concentration of valued social assets or resources such as pay and status among unit members—vertical differences that, at their extreme, privilege a few over many . . .” (1200). The difference is the basic aspect of the concept of deconstruction, where identity differs and changes. Everyone is unique, and differences help to introduce to new ideas and help us understand each other. Derrida argues that there can be no universal in difference, and in *Speech and Phenomena and Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs* he states, “Differences are thus ‘produced’—differed—by difference.” (145). It is difficult to bring together all the differences; because it celebrates variation and plurality. The concept of difference refers to diverse dimensions that encompass acceptance and rejection of cultures.

Postmodern identity is plural, unstable, and fluid; it is dependent upon where the self is culturally and historically located, and it forms and reforms in real socio-cultural and historical circumstances. The concept of “meta-narrative” proposed by Lyotard leads to the self-construction of small narratives, none of which are more valid than the others. Postmodernism not only liberates and theorises limitless opportunities for re-theorising society but also imposes new problems. There is an inconsistency in the postmodern approach, and the theory of the ending of meta-narrative is a type of meta-narrative itself. Identity dissolution or formation is a process that began in the nineteenth century and accelerated in the twentieth. Jean Baudrillard states:

The end of history is, alas, also the end of the dustbins of history. There are no longer any dustbins even for disposing of old ideologies, old regimes, old values. . . . Conclusion: if there are no more dustbins of history, this is *because History itself has become a dustbin*. It has become its own dustbin. Just as the planet itself is becoming its own dustbin. (26)

Because of the rise of global capitalism, identity formation and reformation are becoming more diverse.

Postmodern studies present numerous texts indicating the end of history, theory, meaning, and so on. There is a positive aspect of fluid and unstable identity. In *History and Social Strategy towards a Radical Democratic Politics*, Laclau and Mouffe write:

Since all identity is relational - even if the system of relations does not reach the point of being fixed as a stable system of differences - since, too, all discourse is subverted by a field of discursivity which overflows it, the transition from 'elements' to 'moments' can never be complete . The status of the 'elements' is that of floating signifiers, incapable of being wholly articulated to a discursive chain. And this floating character finally penetrates every discursive (i. e. social) identity. (113)

Identity is not fixed, and it makes social interactions possible. There is a concept of articulation (political, social, cultural, and so on) where social relations and identities are modified.

Fluidity in Cultural Identity in *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*

Haroun and the Sea of Stories by Salman Rushdie depicts cultural identity fluidity through the lens of postcolonial and postmodern perspectives. Fluidity in cultural identity relates to the concept of a single individual articulation or many articulations; two people may give two different articulations or the same articulation. Culture and multicultural identities extend to the differences within a community or communities. Rushdie shows one idea and many others in the novel, and he celebrates the concepts of difference and transformation of identity. He writes, “The real world was full of magic, so magical worlds could easily be real” (50). The novel focuses on the magical power of stories, which represents freedom of speech and personal liberty.

The setting, Alifbay, is shown as “a sad city,” “the saddest of the cities,” (15), which is thickly populated, and there are factories in the north of the city wherein sadness is allegedly

manufactured and exported. The city is not only sad because of overpopulation but also because of environmental pollution. Haroun and Rashid's family is exceptionally jubilant because of their distinct cultural practices. People are dissatisfied and depressed as a result of their businesses and over-involvement in mechanical life. Rushdie brings unity in diversity through the people of that city, who are characterized by similarities and differences.

Rashid, the Ocean of Notions, tells lots of different stories that bring happiness to his family and smiles to Alifbay. Haroun's power of imagination develops when he learns about stories from different worlds from his father. Rushdie shows the difference between Rashid and Mr. Sengupta, and it represents a conflict between intellectuality and a materialistic approach. Mr. Sengupta hates stories and storytellers and states, "What's the use of stories that are not even true?" (20). He is so materialistic that he does not like creativity or imagination at all. Stories are meaningless to him, but Rushdie shows that stories have the power of renovation. As a result, politicians from various political parties beg Rashid to tell stories in order to influence and persuade people to vote for them so that they can win.

Rushdie, like most postcolonial writers, including Chinua Achebe, Wilson Harris, Derek Walcott, Amitav Ghosh, Shashi Tharoor, Rohinton Mistry, and Nagib Mahfouz, to name a few, uses legend to challenge hegemony. As people have no space to express themselves in the form of dialogue, Rushdie celebrates 'stories'. He refers to diverse story-telling traditions as interconnecting different cultural traditions. A person can enter his inner state of mind, avoiding all kinds of obstacles, through reading or writing a story. Rashid "was so busy making up and telling stories . . . he was the Ocean of Notions, the famous Shah of Blah" (16). He is called as the "ocean of notions" and the "Shah of Blah" for what his rivals are jealous of. Rushdie provides various levels of creating a magical world with Water Genies. There is an allegorical relationship between the storyteller and Rashid's identity represents Rushdie, and Haroun's identity represents Zafar Rushdie. After the fatwa, Rushdie started to write *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* with the encouragement of Zafar, and after his wife's departure Rashid starts a new journey under the influence of Haroun. Rashid, like Rushdie, tells stories to keep people happy, united, and peaceful. To give the answer about his power of story-telling to Haroun, he states, "From the great Story Sea, I drink the warm Story Waters . . . It comes out of an invisible Tap installed by one of the Water Genies" (17). Haroun imagines a world that is a sea of stories with warm water. He has also created another story about an invisible tap made by a Water Genie. Haroun believes that Rashid gains the ability to tell stories after drinking warm story water from an invisible tap.

Suraya leaves the house with Mr. Sengupta at eleven a.m., and Rushdie's use of the number eleven, is very significant and has different interpretations. In the Bible, 'eleven' symbolizes disorder, chaos, and judgment. The number is also considered a symbol of internal conflict and rebellion. The disorder occurs in the lives of Haroun and Rashid because of their disconnection from Suraya. Haroun cannot concentrate on anything longer than eleven minutes, and Rashid cannot tell stories anymore. When Rashid opens his mouth to deliver a speech for a politician, the harsh sound "Ark, ark, ark" (26) is heard.

Rashid's silence is significant, and in Moody Land, his tale is one of his best stories. He says, "It was the story of a magical country that changes constantly" (47). Moody Land is a magical place where stories change according to the moods of the people. The changing of moods represents diversity and fluidity. Iff thinks that storytellers need extra fuel to tell stories. Haroun tells his father to think of the good memories, the happiest times, and his wedding day so that he can overcome his gloomy mood and tell stories. The psychological damage of Rushdie caused by the colonial and imperial tyranny of Khomeini reflects both political and cultural conflicts. In *Postmodernism: A Very Short Introduction*, Christopher Butler states:

Postmodern thought, in attacking the idea of a national centre or dominant ideology, facilitated the promotion of a politics of difference. Under postmodern conditions, the ordered class politics preferred by socialists has given way to a far more diffuse and pluralistic *identity politics*, which often involves the self-conscious assertion of a marginalized identity against the dominant discourse. (57)

Postmodern studies satirize and criticize politics and the politics of difference; it does not matter who holds the most power or who is in opposition; they emphasise pluralistic identity politics. Dismantling power structures through politics gives rise to the cultural movement, which provides the concept of the difference between marginalized identity and dominant discourse. Power disparities exist in different countries around the world, as well as among people who believe in different versions of the truth. Rushdie's portrayal of oppression over free speech is represented by Rashid's power of storytelling stopping when his wife Suraya leaves the house. It is related to the power politics of colonialists or Europeans over the people of colonies and third-world countries and their cultures.

Rushdie connects ancient Sanskrit culture with Western culture by demonstrating how the Water Genie instructs Haroun to select a bird, hoppoo, to transport them to Kahani (story). Rashid travels to Kahani, the Earth of the Second Moon, by a means known as 'Rapture', by which he is able to travel inside his dreams and wake up in the world the dream has created. Rushdie creates two diverse worlds—the real world and the imaginary world, as he mentions:

. . . the Streams of Story . . . each coloured strand represented and contained a single tale. . . . Different parts of the Ocean contained different sort of stories, and all the stories that had ever been told and many that were in the process of being invented could be found here, the Ocean of the Stream of Stories was in fact the biggest library in the universe. (72)

The stream of stories represents diverse stories, and each coloured story represents different tales with one or multiple subjects. Stories are fluid and have the ability to change and take on new forms to connect with other stories. The world of stories is lively, and it makes cultures and races of different origins live in two different regions.

The space of stories is vast, as is the world's largest library, and the majority of the plot of Moon Kahani is divided into two equal sections, one of which is kept in perpetual daylight and the other in perpetual darkness. The idea of light and darkness is compared with the fair-skinned imperialists and colonized people, enlightened and ignorant, East and West, and North and South. Edward Said argues in *Orientalism*, the precursor to postcolonial studies that “the idea of European identity as superior in comparison to all non-European peoples and cultures” (7). During the colonial period, colonialists thought themselves superior to the people of third world countries. The same superiority complex is observed in racism, imperialism, and neocolonialism.

In *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, Rushdie portrays a tradition and history that need to be preserved. The author portrays two different cities on Kahani: the Land of Gup, the Bright Side of Kahani, and the Land of Chup, the Dark Side of Kahani. As Rushdie states, “The Land of Gup is bathed in Endless Sunshine, while over in Chup it's always in the middle of the night” (80). The two distinct ethnic groups, Guppees from the Land of Gup and Chupwallas from the Land of Chup are in conflicts. Guppees live with multicultural identifications as Rushdie celebrates postcolonial multiculturalism and hybridity. Differences can be defined by an individual or a group that is in conflict, and sometimes war happens between them because of their differences. Postcolonial studies emphasize the variety of the local and the group. Diversity gives rise to the concepts of power or dominance relations between groups, particularly “identity groups,” which are the multiplicity of people who categorize themselves as others.

Postcolonial terminologies proclaim a conflict between good and evil, and they are also compared with the conflict between the forms of colonial and repressive powers and systems and the cultural crises of indigenous people. The ideas give an archetypal analysis to the concepts of good and evil, as Rashid represents good and Khatam-Shud represents evil. Each ethnic group's culture is distinct from the others. Rushdie writes:

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 things just as strongly. (125)

Guppees defend the story sea; because there is diversity in their own community. There are numerous differences between two groups in the case of race, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, physical abilities, and religious beliefs. Gups are talkative and they tell stories and represent intellectuality. Rushdie writes, "In Chup City, the schools and law courts, theaters are all closed now and unable to operate because of the silence laws," (101). Khatam-Shud, the ruler of Chupwalas, despises stories, fancies, and dreams; Chattergy is the king; and Batcheat is the prince of Guppees. The citizens of these two cities bear different cultural identities, which represent people from different races, groups, or communities. In his essay, "Telling of the Tale: Text, Context, and Narrative Act in Rushdie's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*," R. S. Krishnan observes that there is a "... war between Speech and Silence ... fought on many fronts: between good and evil, between freedom and repression, between democracy and dictatorship" (68). All cultures have their own unique ways of practicing. The acculturation of a group happens under the influence of another culture. Rushdie uses the cultural differences to focus on a conflict between speech and silence, good and evil, freedom and repression, and democracy and dictatorship. Cultural differences are very important to form a new identity and strengthen relationships with multicultural identities.

When an individual interacts with others in various social settings, he or she encounters differences. Khatam Shud, the ruler of the dark side, feels stories as threats to his power, and he wishes silence for all human beings. Rashid mentions, "Khatam-Shud is the Arch-Enemy of all Stories, even of Language itself. He is the Prince of Silence and Foe of Speech. ... Khatam-Shud: The End" (39). Khatam-Shud hates stories and wants to put an end to dreams, stories, life, and everything else of this planet by poisoning the ocean of stories, the storehouse of culture, history, and literature on the moon. He takes on various roles in order to destroy nature, history, literature, the arts, and culture. By poisoning the stories, Khatam-Shud wants to stop the creativity. As Khatam Shud is afraid of lights, enlightenments, and intellectuals, he says, "The world, however, is not for fun ... The world is for controlling ... Your world, my world, all worlds. They are all to be Ruled. And inside every single story, inside every Stream of the Ocean, there lies a world, a story-world, that I cannot Rule at all" (161). Rushdie compares Khatam-Shud with the people who are autocratic and against freedom of speech and intellectuals. There are different categories of people in the world and people who are against cultural practices never like stories or imaginary worlds. These people are so blind that they dislike dreamers and do not want to be ruled by liberal humanism.

Rushdie shows a different world in which free speech is good for any society, and Haroun feels, "This new world, these new friends: I've just arrived, and already none of it seems very strange at all" (87) in his story. As a representative of the postmodern generation, Haroun celebrates plurality, accepts reality, and adjusts to it. In this sense, authors from different countries in this world create many worlds within this one world in their writings. The people of dark lands have no interest in seeing a different world, as Rashid describes the conflict as "a war between buffoons" (179). On Kahani, there is a clash or opposition between light, speech, and democracy and darkness, silence, and dictatorship. Haroun wishes to see both Gup and Chup societies equalized as a solution to postcolonial multiculturalism.

Haroun courageously gets involved in the war between two groups to save Batcheat and the ocean of stories that can continuously produce new stories. He comments on his own solution to the conflict, "From now on, Kahani will be a sensible Moon . . . with sensible days and nights" (176). Light does not triumph in the novel's motion; rather, it returns to the dark side while darkness returns to the light side. The return of alternating night and day improves relations on the Moon, resulting in an equal distribution of light between its two sides and the end of the Moon's separation into eternal daylight in the north and perpetual darkness in the south. The solution puts an end to segregation, "it is a victory . . . over our old Hostility and Suspicion" (193). Haroun resists the rigidity of the binary oppositions that seem to characterize the two sides, "But it's not as simple as that" (125). He points out the obvious uses of opposition that are the two communities of Kahani who are taken into consideration, as complementation and cooperation: "Opposites attract, as they say" (125). There is an attraction to difference, just like there is a difference between the East and the West and the North and the South. Diversity has the power to create relations between two races, groups, nations, and cultures. This solution is exactly what Ashcroft et al. identify as one of the hallmarks of postcolonial texts, "The 'Empire writes back' to the imperial 'centre' . . . by questioning the bases of European and British metaphysics, challenging the world-view that can polarize centre and periphery . . . as an essential way of ordering reality" (32). The postcolonial studies theorist rightly shows that there should be a restructuring in the systems that will minimize polarities and connect the center with the periphery, unity with diversity, and one with many.

Rushdie shows that the geography of the moon Kahani and its distribution of light and darkness suggest a colonial conflict rather than a simple opposition between freedom of speech and censorship. Correspondingly, the inhabitants of the north are characterized as good and their enemies as evil and threatening. In *Culture and Imperialism*, Said remarks, "the emblematic Black's 'ugliness, idleness, rebellion' are doomed forever to subhuman status" (121). This quote reflects colonialist attitudes toward black people, who are stereotyped as ugly, idle, and subhuman. The people of the North consider themselves enlightened, and the people of the South are marked as dark, savage, and dangerous.

From the context of the global south, this world can be imagined as the historical divide between the light-skinned colonizers from the north and the darker-skinned peoples from the south. It is also worth mentioning that the metaphor of light and darkness was all-pervasive in colonial discourse. In keeping with their "civilizing mission," the "enlightened," colonial societies were bent on eradicating the savage customs, pagan religions, and ignorance of the dark peoples. This mission provides the ideological framework for the colonizers to appropriate and exploit the world's resources for their own benefit. That is exactly what happens in Kahani, too.

The Eggheads of Gup invent a way to stop the rotation of their planet, which allows them to appropriate daylight, a most vital resource, from the Chupwalas. The differences between these two groups give them different social identities. Diversity presents the concept of opposition as Abdul Jan Mohammed explains, "the colonial mentality is dominated by a Manichean allegory of white and black, good and evil, salvation and damnation, civilization and savagery, superiority and inferiority, intelligence and emotion, self and other, subject and object" (4). Colonizers always have superior attitudes towards others. Rushdie shows Khomeini's different roles, as Khomeini is the Khatam-Shud of the text, and the same person represents colonialists, Europeans, and evil. Khatam-Shud discovers that "for every story there is an anti-story . . . and if you pour this anti-story into the story, the two cancel each other out, and bingo! End of Story" (160). Khatam-Shud wants to stop the storytelling traditions of the whole world by inventing an anti-story device. Geopolitics is a burning issue in globalism, and there are certain groups of people in this world who are always doing politics to become superior.

Rushdie transforms Indian words into English, and it gives the theoretical idea, “Chutnification,” the adoption of Indian languages and cultures into English language and culture. The transformation of English gives the additional connotation of making the language used in the novel strong, more appealing, and more exciting. The names Haroun and Rashid have been taken from the historical name Harun Al-Rashid, a caliph and important character in the collection of Middle Eastern folk tales, *One Thousand and One Nights*. The names of two fishes, 'Goopy' and 'Bagha' are taken from Indian characters of Upendrakishore Roychowdhury's popular story, “Goopy Gyne Bagha Byne”. Haroun, Rashid and Suraya are Persian names and Mr Sengupta and Miss Oneta are Indian names. Rushdie's Hindi and Urdu words represents fluidity in cultural identity. His postcolonial approach is exposed when he Indianises the English language in order to emphasize on cultural encounters and deconstruct the concrete ideas about the benefits of mimicking. The name, “Buttoo” means “little child” in Hindi, and is probably given to this character as an act of contempt. Prince Bolo's name is the imperative form of the verb bolna, and therefore means “Speak!” and his beloved Batcheat is translated as “chit-chat”. General Kitab literally means “General Book,” the commander of the Guppee 'Library'. Guppee laws permit an unlimited liberty of speech, King Chattergy, father of princess Batcheat and Prince Bolo's father-in-law symbolizes the nominal head of Gup's government but has little real power. The wall makes a division Gup from Chup and it is named after Chatterjee, which is a legitimate name in India. Blabbermouth, a Women Page of the Library of Gup, is a talkative, ill-tempered, contemptuous, stubborn, unscrupulous, quarrelsome girl who despises Princess Batcheat. Mudra's gestures make up the languages which are Avhinaya (difference). The words 'dull' and 'mood' of 'The Dull Lake' and 'The Moody Land' are taken from English. One word or sentence has been articulated many times as 'ark' and 'what's the use of story in this world?' Rushdie's language gives the postcolonial voice as he transforms the hegemony of English language and hybridizes the language. He shows that other languages are global like English language. Words of different languages have different social and historical backgrounds. Linguistic identities of different ethnic groups or races are related with make cross-cultural or trans-cultural discourse.

Postcolonialism looks for new spaces that privilege diversity and thus challenge the global by engaging with the local and the atypical; where doctrine is replaced by ambivalence, stability by instability, and purity by hybridity. Throughout his life, Rushdie has successfully juggled multiple stories and diverse concepts that challenge the people of the dark world. He has been described as a “juggler of words” by Narasimhaiah in 1995, because not many critics have focused on the use of lexical items in the novel. Culture is the best medium to form unity from diversity and connectivity from differences, as Bhabha argues, “. . . the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized, and read anew” (208). The culture of one country is not fixed, it encounters other cultures. The interrelation of cultures builds a bridge through appropriation, translation, and new cultural formation.

Guppees are more powerful than Chupwalas, and speech is more powerful than silence, corruption, or oppression in the world. Story is a key part of culture, and different stories from different cultures are influenced by each other. A story is not true, or it is useless to transform it into the concept that every story has its own world, which represents society, politics, and culture. Many stories create worlds with different meanings, as Rushdie writes:

Ocean of Story was in fact the biggest library in the universe . . . 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 Stream of Stories was much more than a storeroom of yarns. It was not dead but alive. (72)

Rushdie represents the vast gallery of knowledge, and different branches of knowledge give

different new ideas. The postmodernist theory of multiplicity rejects stability and talks about fluidity. Multiplicity is essential for the flow of life, and an ocean of stories encourages people to live. Stories, as a fluid form, help to change and form a new story.

Rushdie demonstrates the intertextual and intercultural references of various cultural traditions from Asia, Europe, and America, weaving a new cultural matrix with the universal cultural mixture. The concept of the "ocean of stories" is taken from the story-telling traditions of different cultures that influence and are influenced by each other. In "Fairy Tale Politics: Free Speech and Multiculturalism in *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*," Andrew S. Teverson states, ". . . if nation is understood not as a unified and holistic entity defined by the exclusion of 'others' but as a fluid, provisional entity defined by its capacity to incorporate difference and variation" (460). Rushdie connects the cultural practices of different nations from the East with the nations of the West. The ocean of stories is not only a metaphor for free speech and free narratives but also for the unlimited encounters and relations between the cultural interests of different nations. In *Key Issues in Critical and Cultural Theory*, Kate McGowan states, "Difference in hybridity, however transformative it may be understood to be, therefore becomes something external to the subject, and an addition to its originary unity" (93). Rushdie shows the relations of the legends, fairy tales, and folk tales of Indian, Persian, Arabic, and European story-telling traditions and literary sources by giving references to and making relations with Somadeva's *Katha Sarit Sagar* (the ocean of the stream of stories), Satyajit Roy's movie "Gopi Gayen Bagha Bayen" adopted from Upendrakishore Roychowdhury's popular story, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, *One Thousand and One Nights* and Charles Kingsley's *The Water Babies* with *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*. Rushdie's use of tales from different cultures refers to Haroun's drinking water from the story sea. The stories of diverse cultures are not separated from each other, rather share a number of important features.

Bhabha's concept of multiculturalism refers to the belief that all people are equal and identical. He argues, "The difference between disjunctive sites and representations of social life has to be articulated without surmounting the incommensurable meanings and judgments that are produced within the process of transcultural negotiation" (162). The concept, difference is a formulation of Bhabha's hybridity, where ambivalence of identity is hybridized. The crucial aspect of difference is that it serves to mark a force to change and re-describe culture. Derrida's sense of difference is older than being as he states that, "difference (is) 'older' than the ontological difference or the truth of Being" (154). Being comes about through difference and the identity of a being is fixed and singular in the first place and it becomes transformative with the difference in hybridity. Rushdie's stories represent different cultural identities and their changes. He emphasizes liberty and the formation and reformation of identities and cultures in *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*. He shows diverse concepts to show fluidity in cultural identity and presents changes through the travels of Haroun and Rashid to the lands of the Guppees and Chupwallas. At the end of the novel, Haroun returns home, finds his mother singing in the rain, and the city is happy. Haroun feels, "time is definitely on the move again around these parts" (211). Time flies and it is fluid; globalisation makes possible fluidity in cultural identity that changes over time.

Works Cited

- Ashcroft, B., G. Griffiths, and H. Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back*. Routledge, 2002.
- Baudrillard, Jean. *The Illusion of the End*. Trans. by Chris Turner. Polity Press, 1994.
- Bhabha, Homi K. "Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences". Ed. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin. *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*. Routledge, 2003, pp.206-209.

- . *The Location of Culture*. Routledge, 1994.
- Butler, Christopher Butler. *Postmodernism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Deleuze, Gilles. *Foucault*. Trans. and Ed. by Sean Hand. University of Minnesota Press, 2006.
- Derrida, Jacques. *Speech, Phenomena and Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs*. Trans. David B. Allison. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973.
- Foucault, Michel. *The Archeology of Knowledge*. Routledge, 2004.
- Hall, Stuart. "Cultural Identity and Diaspora". *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*. Ed. by Jonathan Rutherford. Lawrence and Wishart, 1990.
- Harrison, David A. and Katherine J. Klein. "Diversity Constructs as Separation, Variety, or Disparity in Organisations". *Academy of Management Review* 32: 2007, pp.1199-1228.
- Krishnan, R. S. "Telling of the Tale: Text, Context, and Narrative Act in Rushdie's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*". *International Fiction Review*, 1995, pp. 67-73.
- Laclau, E. and Mouffe, C. *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards A Radical Democratic Politics*. Verso, 1985.
- McGowan, Kate. *Key Issues in Critical and Cultural Studies*. Open University Press, 2007.
- Mohammed, A. R. J. *Manichean Aesthetics: The Politics of Literature in Colonial Africa* University of Massachusetts Press, 1983.
- Rushdie, Salman. *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*. Puffin Books, 1993.
- Said, E. W. *Culture and Imperialism*. Vintage, 1994.
- . *Orientalism*. Penguin Books, 2003.
- Teverson, Andrew S. "Fairy Tale politics: Free Speech and Multiculturalism in *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*." *Twentieth-Century Literature*, 47.4, 2001, pp. 444-466.