



ASSIMILATION, REDEMPTION, AND RESISTANCE IN KHALED HOSSEINI'S *THE KITE RUNNER*

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Abstract: *The Kite Runner* is the first Afghan novel written in English by the Afghan-American novelist Khaled Hosseini. In his debut novel, he surprises his readers with the different stages that his protagonist goes through to get their sympathy after the past sin he has committed. Amir, the protagonist, experiences living in different conditions during his childhood in Afghanistan and his adulthood in America. Living between two cultures provides the character different stages through his life. In this article, the study focuses on the protagonist's self-development as the stages of cultural resistance. They are necessary to the post-colonial intellectuals providing them persistence, encouragement, and resistance to the dominating forces. Using Fanon's Theory of cultural resistance to analyze Amir's self-development stages at different stages. This article aims to reveal the motivations behind Amir's persistence and encouragement for the readers to have a better comprehension of his diasporic experiences as the reason for his strength.

Index Terms - assimilation, cultural resistance, redemption, resistance, *The Kite Runner*

Introduction

Hosseini is Afghan by birth and American by residence. His living experiences are torn between Afghanistan and the United States. He acquires two cultures simultaneously giving him a unique feature among his rivalries. His first novel *The Kite Runner* comes as a response to the Taliban's ban on an ancient Afghan custom of kite-flying. He published the novel in 2003 after the American invasion of Afghanistan. In the novel, he reflects on his childhood by playing kite-flying in the streets of Kabul in Afghanistan. He recalls his memories to immortalize the Afghan custom which is buried under the Taliban regime. Likewise, he depicts the daily life of the Afghans and their rich cultural heritage worldwide by using the language of the Westerners. The novel gets unexpected popularity among American novels to occupy the best seller list for years.

The novel narrates a complicated friendship between two Afghan boys, the master Pashtun Amir and his servant the Hazara, Hassan. The novel consists of three parts. The first part tells the friendship of inferiority between the two boys ended in Afghanistan with unatoned sin. The second occurs in the United States, it moves around the protagonist's attempt to redeem his past sin by restoring his indigenous culture through his father's legacy. The last part covers the journey back of the protagonist to Afghanistan to resist the dominating power represented by the Taliban to rescue his dead friend's son. *The Kite Runner* records the protagonist's self-development from inferiority to resistance.

Literature Review

Since the publication of *The Kite Runner* in 2003, it occupies the bestseller list for many years. It gains recognition and popularization from many critics and scholars around the world. They study and analyze the novel from different corners. The studies are primarily concerned with the protagonist's psychological development to explain the evident transformation of the character from cowardice to bravery. They also deal with the theme of redemption that Hosseini deliberately uses to convey the protagonist's self-satisfaction after going back to the roots looking for the lost identity.

To understand the character transformation of the protagonist, Akmal and Sabriyati in "The Main Character in Khaled Hosseini's Novel *The Kite Runner: An Interdisciplinary Analysis of Literary Works from Psychological Standpoint*" concentrate on the literary analysis of the protagonist's character by using the fundamental dimension of personality from a psychological perspective to show that Amir's character is "round and dynamic" in which his personality acquires many changes from childhood to adulthood. Du Juan's paper "A Journey of Self-Actualization of Amir in *The Kite Runner*" analyzes the changes in Amir's personality from childhood to adulthood through the salvation journey to humanity portrayed in his experiences with Hassan. The personality development creates Amir's redemption from innocence to maturity, gradually transforming his cowardice, selfishness, and past torment or remorse into positive qualities. In "A Study of Amir's Psychological Change in *The Kite Runner*," Chen Kai-fu analyzes Amir's character psychologically to understand his inner world by showing his betrayal and cowardice towards Hasan, in which various psychological states lead to different attitudes.

Saraswat's article "Theme of Identity and Redemption in Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*" underlines the notions of guilt and persistence as stimulus factors for Amir to achieve his redemption to gain self-satisfaction. It describes Amir's journey back to his homeland as a process of identity reconstruction and redemption at the same time. In "Quest for Identity and Redemption in Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*" Walia examines the themes of identity and redemption and shows that both themes play a vital role in shaping a chain for connecting the characters. Another scholar, Khadawardi's paper "Superego Guilt, Redemption and Atonement in Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*" shows that the theme of guilt and redemption are interwoven, and it is impossible to separate and significantly impact Amir's character. It highlights the nature of the friendship between Amir and Hassan before and after the rape incident. Hosseini draws the events through this friendship to serve the themes of guilt, atonement, and redemption and their impact on the protagonist (Amir) and the victim (Hassan). In this regard, the novel can be read as an indictment and as fiction; it is an essential record of an important part of the history of Afghanistan.

Despite the fact that there is a considerable body of research on the protagonist's self-development, it focuses heavily on his psychological development. They underestimate the connections between the protagonist's actions and the postcolonial era that Afghanistan goes through. The purpose of this study is to examine Amir's particular resistance development against the hegemonic forces at various stages. In order to provide more information regarding the relationship between Amir's resistant behaviors and his hybrid culture during the self-development process, the researcher will divide Amir's self-development into three stages: from inferiority to assimilation, from assimilation to redemption, and from redemption to resistance; to evaluate them respectively. Additionally, they can offer a new perspective for the readers to look at the motivations for Amir's various behaviors in different stages of the novel.

Theoretical Background

Basing on post-colonial theory, Frantz Fanon in his book *The Wretched of the Earth* proposes that the process of decolonization is the process of creating new people due to internalizing the notion of liberation (2). In his book *The Location of Culture*, Homi Bhabha comments that the new people pass through the process of "rearticulation, or translation, of elements that are neither the One (unitary working class) nor the Other (the politics of gender) but something else besides, which contests the terms and territories of both" (41). In this regard, *The Kite Runner* is no longer a novel about an abusive relationship of friends and its impacts on the protagonist's life but rather a metaphor for the relationship between the colonized and the colonial force because of Hosseini's portrayal of Amir's self-development stages. As a result, Hosseini realizes the harshness of frequent colonizations on Afghanistan which affects the Pashtuns' character to behave as oppressor against the other minority groups.

In the colonization process, the colonizers inculcate their own culture in the other countries to put them a state of confusion in a space between two cultures. It is intractable for the colonized societies to reclaim their indigenous culture after the decolonization process because the colonizer's adjustment specifically the cultural values and the social order of the colonized country according to the Western views. The social and cultural adjustment affects negatively the stability of the identity-construction of the colonized individuals in the native or abroad and puts them in a psychological whirlpool pushing them to ask the question "who are we in reality?" (Fanon, 2004: 182). In this regard, the failure of identifying themselves within the social order is called identity crisis which causes them psychological instability attached to nightmares, hallucinations, alienation, depression, despair, and even downfall. To recover from the complicated crisis of national cultural identity and overcome the mental disorder through restoring the precolonial history and eroding the colonist ideology (Barry, 186). Fanon realizes that restoring the past "does not only rehabilitate or justify the promise of a national culture" and it can "trigger a change of fundamental importance in the colonized's psyche-

affective equilibrium” (2004: 148). According to him, restoring the precolonial history requires finding a voice and an identity (Barry, 186) in the colonizer’s canon.

Restoring the past and erasing the colonialist ideology from the consciousness of the colonized intellectuals goes through the process of “cultural resistance” which is necessary for the colonized societies to restore their authentic representation. Duncombe Stephen (2007) defines “cultural resistance” as “the practice of using meanings and symbols ... to contest and combat a dominant power,” for instance, the Hebrew Scriptures help to construct and maintain the Jewish identity in facing the oppressing power (911). In this regard, the colonized intellectuals need to find an effective role or an identity in the mainstream culture of the colonizer. Fanon mentions that the process of establishing such a role goes in three stages, first, they have to have full assimilation with the colonizer’s culture. Secondly, they have “their convictions shaken and decide to cast their minds back... old childhood memories will surface, old legends be interpreted on the basis of a borrowed aesthetic, and a concept of the world discovered under other skies” (Fanon, 2004: 148). And the third stage is called “the combat stage” where the intellectuals, “after having tried to lose [themselves] among the people, with the people, will rouse the people... [they] turn into galvanizer[s] of the people” (ibid). Peter Barry explains these stages as “*Adopt*,” “*Adapt*,” and “*Adept*” stages which all the postcolonial literary writers such as Chinua Achebe and others follow these stages (189). According to Barry, the first stage requires “unquestioning acceptance of the authority of European models (especially in the novel)” intending to produce a literary masterpiece modeled in European style (ibid). In the second stage, it demands “to adapt the European form to African [colonized] subject matter, thus assuming partial rights of intervention in the genre” (ibid). The last stage is “a declaration of cultural indifference whereby African [colonized] writers” re-establish their form away from the European form (ibid).

To show how the three stages are applied in *The Kite Runner*, Hosseini presents them through the protagonist’s transformation throughout the events of the novel. The protagonist goes through different stages of transformation in the novel. They start with the stage of inferiority complex to assimilation with Western culture while the protagonist is still in the homeland. The second stage happens when the character takes the diaspora as his prominent residence, but he starts to redeem his past sin and recalls the indigenous culture back. In the last stage, Hosseini paves the way for his protagonist to go back to Afghanistan to look for his past which puts him in a resistant situation with the dominating forces there represented by Assef.

Assimilation, Redemption, and Resistance in *The Kite Runner*

1. From Inferiority to Assimilation (Adopting Stage)

Through his arguments, Frantz Fanon the French psychiatrist provocatively warns the colonized people's endeavors to appear or behave like the colonizer's beings for two reasons. The first reason concerns the colonizers' views in that it is impossible for them to treat the colonized as European on the one hand. He gives this opposing viewpoint from the real experiences of living between the colonized and colonizer, which shows their judgment of the colonized according to their colors as he declares that the world is divided into two parts. The first part represents the Westerners as white, civilized, soft, peaceful, and human, while the second represents the colonized people like blacks, uncivilized, rough, violent, and inhuman. Fanon tackles the colonized people with an inferiority complex in their souls due to their cultural background and attempts to adopt the Western culture to elevate their humanity in renouncing their origin (1986: 9). On the other hand, the second reason deals with the colonized themselves in which they use the mimic technique to behave exactly like the whites to be whiter. This action leads to the symptoms of "slavish imitation" (Yeh, 205), in which the colonized (enslaved person) tries to replace the colonizer (master's) position by imitating his dominating strategy and submissive ideology, leading to hesitate the indigenous identity of the colonized people.

The sense of inferiority caught the colonized people inside the colonized country, pushing them to behave differently from each other. Those who imitate and behave similarly to the colonizers occupy the colonizer's position by oppressing the other group. For instance, in *The Kite Runner*, the Pashtuns take the colonizer's position in the Afghan context, reflecting their inferiority by mistreating the Hazaras to feel superior. The inferiority complex is a term by the Austrian psychotherapist Alfred Adler to describe the deep feeling of the incompetence of a person. This feeling can be satisfied when the man is driven by "will to power," the ability to control others to feel superior (qtd. Sabates, 113). According to him, people are motivated by social forces rather than sexual instincts (qtd. Sabtes, 111) to determine who they are. Therefore, the inferiority complex of the Pashtuns is created due to their experiences with colonialism leading them to mistreat Hazaras.

Regarding Afghanistan's long history of colonialism, Afghanistan is a torn land with multiple ethnicities. Two groups of Afghan Pashtuns and Hazaras are presented in *The Kite Runner*. Hosseini sheds light on their

struggle with colonialism by describing the Pashtuns suffering one layer, but Hazaras suffering from two layers of colonialism. The Hazaras suffer from double colonization from the colonial forces and the majority group as Pashtuns. According to Spivak, they are a subaltern group who are mute against aggressive treatment. During the long history of colonialism, the Pashtuns imitate Western ideologies by establishing the neurotic orientation of the master-slave relationship to occupy the master position and get control of the Hazaras.

Hosseini depicts the narrator's family which belongs to the Pashtun ethnic group as a wealthy and educated descendant of the royal family as Amir talks about the photograph of his grandfather, "my grandfather and King Nadir Shah taken in 1931" (Hosseini, 5). The Hazara boy Ali started working as a servant for the Pashtun family when they found Ali as a little boy who lost his father and mother in an accident. The Pashtuns decide his destiny, to work as a servant in their house, and he has to transfer such a disgrace to his son. The children of both groups have different destinies as decided by the social hierarchy. Generally, Pashtuns live an extravagant and luxurious life while the Hazaras live miserable life. Amir declares, "I went past the rosebushes to Baba's mansion, Hassan to the mud shack where he had been born, where he'd lived his entire life" (Hosseini, 6).

The Kite Runner documents the condition and status of the Hazaras in Afghanistan. They are treated as "other" on several occasions showing no humanistic values for them as if they are "objects" rather than human beings. During the colonial regime, the colonizers used deliberate strategies to fade away the history of the colonized. Fanon mentions that the colonizers apply many ideological principles to get control of the land and the people by distorting, disfiguring, and destroying their past (2004: 149). The Pashtuns follow this procedure in dealing with the history of the Hazaras in schools and universities. As the protagonist mentions, "school textbooks barely mentioned them (the Hazaras) and referred to their ancestry only in passing" (Hosseini, 9). Amir's eagerness pushes him to read about the hidden history of the Hazaras to discover. He confesses that his people have persecuted and oppressed the marginal Hazaras. He says,

...my people, the Pashtuns, had persecuted and oppressed the Hazaras. It said the Hazaras had tried to rise against the Pashtuns in the nineteenth century, but the Pashtuns had "quelled them with unspeakable violence." ... my people had killed the Hazaras, driven them from their lands, burned their homes, and sold their women... part of the reason Pashtuns had oppressed the Hazaras was that Pashtuns were Sunni Muslims, while Hazaras were Shi'a. (Hosseini, 128)

The extract is a vital reference to show how the Pashtuns ill-treated the Hazaras during the last three centuries, and the reason behind the oppression is sectarian affiliation. Hosseini shows how the Pashtuns react when they mention the Hazaras. When Amir asks his teacher about the book of Hazara history, his reaction is negative. He says, "...he (the teacher) wrinkled his nose when he said the word Shi'a like it was some kind of disease" (Hosseini, 10).

In addition, the Pashtuns intend to keep the Hazaras illiterate and lack the knowledge to be deceived easily. It is one of the colonizer's strategies to impose its authority on the colonized. They force them to grow up with illiteracy as Amir mentions, "what use did a servant have for the written word?" (Hosseini, 28), and how Amir easily deceives Hassan while reading him some stories to measure his ignorance of the meaning of some words by manipulating them to have a sense of happiness as he uses the word "imbecile" to mean "smart." Although Amir loves Hassan as a friend and half-brother, the Pashtun race in his blood leads him to treat Hassan as nothing more than a cook when he shows some unintentional criticism in one of Amir's stories. Amir says to himself, "what does he know, that illiterate Hazara? He'll never be anything but a cook. How dare he criticize you?" (Hosseini, 34). It justifies that even a friend is never treated as equal.

To reflect the inferiority complex, Hosseini highlights the Pashtuns' inferiority as the cause of the mistreatment of the Hazaras. In *The Kite Runner*, the protagonist suffers from an inferiority complex because of his father's indifference to his interests in accusing him of his wife's death (Chen, 191). At the same time, his father admires the Hazara boy on many occasions rather than his son. This action represents a negative message for the protagonist that he is inferior to the man according to his father's requirements. In this regard, he tries to overcome the feeling of inferiority by striving for perfection through mistreating marginalized groups such as Hazaras. The inferiority complex hesitates the protagonist's identity in his childhood, pushing him to adopt intellectuality as reading and writing literature rather than physical activities such as playing soccer which is common among Afghan children. Being different in Afghan society puts Amir in between two spaces, his father's wishes and his intellectual interests.

2. From Assimilation to Redemption (Adapting Stage)

On several occasions, Hosseini reveals that his protagonist identified with his new country as his home when he mentions "... San Francisco, the city I now call home" (Hosseini, 2), and then he says, "I have a wife in America, a home, a career, and a family. Kabul is a dangerous place" (Hosseini, 221). Hosseini offers his readers two images of two Pashtuns from different generations as the main characters in his novel, such as the protagonist Amir and his father, Baba. Amir stands for the generation who was raised during the last few years of monarchy and its overthrow, while Baba stands for the precedent generation who was raised up in the time of the monarchy. Hosseini shows how it is easy for Baba to identify himself within the Afghan society to be a successful businessman, but it is difficult for Amir to identify with the Afghan society and land as all his attempts go in vain. The diversity of the identification process reveals the nature of the Afghan society, which values physical strength rather than mental strength, as Hosseini assures during the depiction of the characters of Amir and his father. Amir declares that,

I read everything, Rumi, Hāfēz, Saadi, Victor Hugo, Jules Verne, Mark Twain, Ian Fleming. When I had finished my mother's books—not the boring history ones, I was never much into those, but the novels, the epics—I started spending my allowance on books. I bought one a week from the bookstore near Cinema Park, and stored them in cardboard boxes when I ran out of shelf room. (Hosseini, 19)

In his declaration, Amir finds himself reading books which are considered an odd habit for Afghan children. Amir is depicted as making efforts to strengthen his mentality by reading more books, while Baba had a different childhood which fitted with the Afghan society as Amir puts on,

Real men didn't read poetry—and God forbid they should ever write it! Real men—real boys—played soccer just as Baba had when he had been young... Baba sensed my lack of genuine interest and resigned himself to the bleak fact that his son was never going to either play or watch soccer. (Hosseini, 20)

In these words, Amir shows the different childhood that he had as he never attempted to show or strengthen his physical powers, and Baba realized that his son would never play soccer or watch it, i.e., he never tried to go out and play with other boys. Baba had a different childhood than that Amir when playing soccer. Baba starts recognizing the lack of physical strength in his son as he has nothing to do with any games that require energy. Instead, he is interested in being immersed in a heap of books. Baba mentions that Amir is "always buried in those books or shuffling around the house like he's lost in some dream, ... I (Baba) wasn't like that at all, and neither were any of the kids I grew up with" (Hosseini, 20-21). Amir's generation finds the social principles of the Afghan society strange for them, and it is hard for them to locate their identities, leading to suffering from an identity crisis. The Afghan society is based on communist perceptions that support laboring, which primarily needs physical strength. Hosseini describes the Hazara boy Hassan as the one who fills the gaps in Amir's personality by defending him when he is put in a situation that needs masculine strength, like a kite runner. As Baba mentions, "self-defense has nothing to do with meanness ... what always happens when the neighborhood boys tease him (Amir)? Hassan steps in and fends them off. I've seen it with my own eyes" (Hosseini, 22).

In *The Kite Runner*, Hosseini aims to show how the indigenous culture transfers from one generation to another under the colonial influence. The novel tackles the old generation, which is represented by Amir's father (Baba), who witnessed the living conditions of the Afghans during the time of the monarchy. And the generation that followed it is reflected by the protagonist Amir. The father-son relationship translates to the process of transferring the culture from one generation to another in Afghanistan after the overthrow of the monarchy in which the country was under colonial hegemony.

The author of the novel examines the transfer process of the indigenous culture from the old generation into the following generation under the imperial influence. The novel starts with the sentence said by the protagonist, "I became what I am today at the age of twelve, on a frigid overcast day in the winter of 1975" (Hosseini, 1). It shows that the current identity of the protagonist is constructed after the year 1975 when he was twelve years old. Till the age of twelve, the protagonist is seen to be searching for his identity in the Afghan context within the life of his father. In the present time context of 2001, the protagonist recoils into the past after a call from his father's friend. It triggers his memory of the years before 1975 while he is in America. He remembers his life in Afghanistan and about "Hassan... about Baba. Ali. Kabul. I thought of the life I had lived until the winter of 1975 came along and changed everything. And made me what I am today"

(Hosseini, 2) to look back for the roots that might help him to reconstruct his new identity to face the past sins with a redemption process.

The novel highlights the relationship between the protagonist and his father in which the father is unable to see his son as a mirror to him as Amir confesses that "... I could have done was to have had the decency to have turned out a little more like him. But I hadn't turned out like him. Not at all" (Hosseini, 19). The father is depicted as physically strong as Hosseini describes him as "a bear wrestler," and his nickname is "Toophan ... , or Mr. Hurricane... (he) was a force of nature" (Hosseini, 12). Amir tries to identify himself as the true son, but their relationship is almost broken, and even he "was always learning things about Baba from other people" (Hosseini, 18). Amir's father complains to his friend Rahim Khan about the weak physique of his son and his lack of self-defense within the Afghan society, which is characterized by muscle power rather than intellectuality. Therefore, the protagonist is portrayed to be raised in a society unfit for his characteristics leading him to have an identity crisis.

The main point in the development of the plot of *The Kite Runner* is the past sin that the protagonist committed just to win his father's heart as he sacrifices his Hazara friend Hassan as he mentions, "Hassan was the price I had to pay, the lamb I had to slay, to win Baba" (Hosseini, 77). Winning the kite flying tournament and the sacrifice of Hassan made the father and son finally establish a bond between two that can be identified easily. Still, Amir fails to identify himself with the Afghan context. Even at the time of leaving Kabul, Hosseini shows how Amir lacks physical strength as he suffers from car sickness, which causes embarrassment to his father in front of the people in the truck (Hosseini, 110).

The American society is fitted to accommodate the protagonist, who fails to identify himself within his original society, so he assimilates the American culture and adapts it easily without much effort. It is a new beginning for him to bury the old memories and move on. Therefore America, for him, is "a place to bury [his] memories," unlike his father, who considers it "a place to mourn his" memories (Hosseini, 129). Baba refuses to adopt the American culture and decides to continue his life with indigenous culture. They are living away from Afghanistan increases the bond between the two in which, their relationship becomes so mutual and powerful. Amir considers America as "more like home" while his father sees "Peshawar was good for [him]. Not good for Amir" (Hosseini, 129). So, the old generation thinks that the far point that can be reached is near the Afghan borders in order to be still connected with their roots. The protagonist's father (Baba) represents this trend when he is unable to connect to his roots while his is in American which leads him to a health declining.

Amir overcomes the barrier of learning the English language, which gives him a new identity by joining a new school. He begins to identify himself as a successful writer in the new culture giving him the self-confidence to continue the path of success, unlike his father, who failed to accustom to the new cultural environment leading him to physical weakness and death subsequently. Before his death, he used to go to the flea market every Sunday to meet the Afghan immigrants. It was like a tiny signal as he could remain connected to Afghan culture in the new land. His identity is known among the Afghans as "a great" person who gives him a sense of happiness.

The trans-generational gap clearly exists between the two generations in which the son belongs to a different culture. Hosseini shows that their living together in America affects Amir's new identity to be reconnected with his indigenous culture. It is clear that Amir has a hybrid identity as a combination of the two cultures. After Rahim Khan's call, Amir recollects his past, and it helps to restore his indigenous identity along with what he gets from his father's identity. He goes through a process of redemption to redeem his past sin helping him to get his identity back.

Redemption in postcolonial literature is the act of a character returning to their own people or another person's culture, with awareness and understanding gained through experience. This is a useful way of thinking about the redemptive process in literature because it allows considering both fiction and reality. A theme common to all postcolonial literature concerns the idea of escaping a history full of colonization and some form of oppression by those who colonized an area. One interpretation of redemption in postcolonial literature is that instead of seeking revenge or atonement from the colonizers, the colonies instead tried to find a proper way to justify their identity. This type of literature suggests that in order to thrive as a culture, characters need to look at their past and understand where they came from in order to find meaning and purpose.

The theme of redemption is one of the key issues in *The Kite Runner*. The redemption process in the novel appears as a solution to the identity crisis that the protagonist faces in the course of his life. After adopting a new Western identity and getting stable life in America, the protagonist realizes that his identity needs to be redeemed from the unatoned sin of childhood as he sees himself "psychically stranded between Afghanistan and the United States" (Bloom, 51). Rahim Khan's call evokes the protagonist's conscience and childhood memory. He thinks of how a single event in 1975 changed the course of his life and shaped his current identity as he puts on, "I thought of the life I had lived until the winter of 1975 came along and changed everything. And made me what I am today" (Hosseini, 2). There is a significant indication of the year 1975 in the novel, which is a turning point in brewing the conflict and causing an identity clash in the novel. It is the period when the protagonist starts to adopt a new identity in addition to the one he had before this year. The year 1975 marked the beginning of the struggles and the changes that took place in Afghanistan, pushing the people to leave the country behind and search for decent shelter. Hosseini connects the fate of his protagonist with the fate of Afghanistan, in which both of them need to be good again. Amir thinks of salvation and redemption as he says, "But all I heard—all I willed myself to hear—was the thudding of blood in my head. All I saw was the blue kite. All I smelled was a victory. Salvation. Redemption" (Hosseini, 65).

3. From Redemption to Resistance (Adepting Stage)

The novel records a long journey of the protagonist going back, searching for the lost part of his identity to rescue his nephew, the son of his Hazara half-brother Hassan. His journey is considered a journey of redemption from the old sins that the protagonist committed when he was a child. He committed the first sin when he saw Hassan helpless under Assef's brutality, and he showed no offer of help to his friend, whom he realized later as his half-brother. Again he commits another sin when he becomes the cause for the displacement of Hassan and Ali from the house which they considered their whole life as the place of their origin. He accuses Hassan of stealing his belongings which makes them leave the house with sorrow. Amir realizes the mistake and describes the meanness of his behavior towards them by saying, "... how I'd betrayed Hassan, lied, driven him out, and destroyed a forty-year relationship between Baba and Ali" (Hosseini, 165). These events haunt and torment him for several years. For atoning the sin, he committed, Amir decides to take the risk of going back to Afghanistan searching for Hassan's son and bringing him back to America as a way of redeeming his past sins and his father as well.

Hassan has been depicted as having lovely humanistic features. He sacrifices all that he has for the sake of his friendship with Amir as Rankin-Brown states describing Hassan, "he is the all-sacrificing Christ-figure, the one who, even in death, calls Amir to redemption." Amir sees that it is a final chance for him to redeem the sin by helping Hassan's son and says, "... the past that had come calling. And from this one last chance at redemption" (Hosseini, 231).

The Kite Runner gives importance to the theme of redemption as a way to provide the protagonist with a stable way of life by having stable identity construction away from the psychological symptoms such as nightmares, amnesia, and guilt, as Hosseini mentions through Rahim Khan's letter to Amir talking about his father towards the end of the novel:

Sometimes, I think everything he did, feeding the poor on the streets, building the orphanage, giving money to friends in need, it was all his way of redeeming himself. And that, I believe, is what true redemption is... when guilt leads to good. (Hosseini, 302)

At the same time, it represents the way of restoring the past to get connected regularly with the indigenous culture again and erase all the colonial effects.

He is encouraged to redeem his past sin by going back to politically unstable and war-torn Afghanistan searching for Hassan's son Sohrab. His father's physical strength enables him to have a bloody fight with the Taliban official Assef to save Sohrab. His hybrid identity fails to own his land due to the colonial changes in Afghanistan. Hosseini depicts the transformation of the country from the place Amir knows very well to a place that he does not recognize. The conversation between Amir and the driver goes as follows:

"I feel like a tourist in my own country" I said... Farid snickered... "You still think of this place as your country?" "I think a part of me always will," I said, more defensively than I had intended. (Hosseini, 231-232)

The dialogue reveals that people like Amir, who had lived outside the country, are unable to get a sense of belonging and feel like a tourist who disconnects from the land. Farid, the driver, also is of the opinion that the old country has lost its identity. But the protagonist modifies his view and says that there is a national spirit that still illuminates inside him. It is part of his ancestral roots, which transferred to his identity through his father's legacy. He is torn and split in getting affiliated with his country. Part of him accepts it and the other part rejects it.

The third section of the novel can be seen as a redemption journey and an encountering the reality. After a period of stable life in California, one day, Amir receives a call from an old friend Rahim Khan whose life is going to end shortly, asking him to come to see him in Pakistan. At Amir's arrival, Rahim Khan describes the horrors of the Taliban regime for him and the civil war that tore Kabul and narrates all the events after Amir and Baba had left for the US. Rahim Khan's duty in Kabul is to watch Baba's house, but then he discovered that it was a hard duty for him, so he went searching for Hassan and, as he found him convinced him and his wife Farzana to come back again to the house. During their settlement in the place, Farzana gave birth to a boy named Sohrab. Rahim Khan is forced to leave them in the house by going to Pakistan after getting sick. In Pakistan, he came to know that a group of Taliban had executed Hassan and his wife in front of the house for Hassan's denial to leave the house for them. After the death of Hassan and his wife, the Taliban group sent Sohrab to an orphanage.

These horrible events pushed Rahim Khan to ask Amir to go to Kabul, searching for Sohrab, indicating for Amir to redeem himself from past sins "to be good again" (Hosseini, 2). Surprisingly, Rahim Khan reveals the unthinkable secret that Hassan is his half-brother. In Kabul, Amir discovers that Sohrab is missing from the orphanage but learns interrogating the orphanage manager that a Taliban official had taken him away a month earlier. The manager points to Ghazi stadium, where a soccer game is held to find the Taliban official. They discover that the wanted officer executed a man and a woman at halftime of the match.

In a private meeting between Amir and the Taliban official, Amir sees Sohrab, who had been sexually abused. Then Amir discovers that the Taliban official is Assef and that he is the same Pashtun boy who raped Hassan. A quarrel between the two takes place to win Sohrab's freedom. Assef punches Amir with his brass knuckles until Sohrab shoots him in the eye with his slingshot. Assef's shouting of pain gives a chance for Amir and Sohrab to escape to Pakistan. Amir stays in the hospital for a while till he recovers, decides that Sohrab should join him in returning to the United States, and hesitantly agrees.

Conclusion

To mention the theme of inferiority, it is the feeling caught by one who feels inferior among others. The feeling of inferiority is clear in the protagonist's character and his race in *The Kite Runner*. It pushes them to treat the subaltern group in Afghanistan badly to feel superior. Hosseini reveals that it happens due to the accumulations of the colonial ideologies on the Afghan society. As they highly influenced by the colonial culture in oppressing and dominating the weak groups. But still, Hosseini shows the different responses by the people of same race. He highlights on the father-son relationship to reveal their contrastive attitudes toward the Hazaras as subaltern group in Afghanistan. The father's good behavior with the Hazaras is the cause behind the son's inferiority complex. This complex makes the son to grow differently from the other children in the same district, to have dual identity or to stand between two cultures as a state of "hybridity."

The present study concludes that Amir's transformation due to his assimilation to American culture alongside his indigenous culture to be behind his strength to accept the challenge of encountering the reality in a redemptive manner. His transformation happens due to assimilation with American culture which provides him the will, persistence and encouragement. His father's legacy as his ancestral roots, affects his character to provide him the physical strength and enables him to have a bloody fight with Taliban official who represents the dominated forces to rescue his half-brother's son Sohrab.

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