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The theme of Vindication and Atonement in the Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini

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Abstract:

Guilt is the most prominent and central theme of The Kite Runner, but Vindication is the author's ultimate goal in the novel. He aims at achieving this goal through the protagonist of the novel, Amir. This theme is inter twisted with another significant theme of salvation. However, the intermeshing of these two themes is not separable since the effect of Vindication is the consequence of the choice made by the protagonist. The ominous offense is committed first, and then the protagonist repents his mistake, referred to as Vindication. This article evaluates various dimensions of the protagonist's character and mentions these themes as a demonstration. To address the problems above, interrogation is made in this paper at the careful understanding of some critical issues. In what ways are they (guilt and Vindication) manifested? What are the triggers of guilt and subsequent Vindication? What is the role of betrayal as a harbinger of guilt and Vindication? To what extent do interventions by the guilt address the issue of guilt? This paper will attempt to answer these questions. Although there are emerging motifs, such as man's humanity to man, bigotry, master and slave relationships, coming of age, and prejudice, this paper will focus on betrayal, guilt, and redemption.

Keywords: Vindication, guilt, betrayal, treachery, salvation, kite-runner.

Introduction:

Khaled Hosseini (2003) is an Afghan-American author. The Kite Runner is the most famous masterpiece of 'antithesis.' Millions of copies of this novel were sold worldwide. It attracted the attention of critics and was categorized as one of the classic novels.

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Discussion:

Many critics have appreciated the novel, but critic like Harold Bloom asserts that 'the novel is not a superior one and its importance will fade away by the time.' He further says that The Kite Runner is a grindingly sincere narrative. Here Bloom is repeating Oscar Wild's statement, "all bad poetry is s.....regard it as writing" (2009, p. 7). Literary fiction continues Bloom, "requires mastery of language and its nuances, sustained cognition, skill in characterization" (2009, p.7).

Khaled Hosseini had to leave the United States after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. The Kite Runner solely deals with the theme of Vindication and salvation. The novel begins concerning a sin committed by the father against Ali (Hassan's father) and other sins committed by Amir against Hassan. However, it ends with the acts of Vindication and salvation by Amir. The Kite Runner is the story of redemption, atonement, of healing: two sets or rounds of sinning and redemption on several stages. At first, audacity, shamelessness, coarseness, and subversiveness are regarded by the guilty as the norm. In his foreword to the 10th-anniversary edition of the novel, Hosseini writes, "In these letters regret, friendship, love forgiveness, atonement." (Hosseini xi). On the first page of the novel (second paragraph), Hosseini writes in a flashback technique, "One-day last summer, my friend Rahim Khan called me from Pakistan. He asked me to come to see him ... I knew it was not just Rahim Khan on the line. It was my past of unatoned sins." (Hosseini 1).

Several similarities between the life of Hassan and that of Hosseini are noticed in the novel. In an interview with Hermione Hoby, Hossein stated - "My dad was a diplomat, no access to schooling". As Foster (2008, p. 67) observes, — "Narrators are like cats. Many events in The Kite Runner echo the life of Khaled Hosseini." However, this is not the purpose of the present paper. In his introduction to the 10th anniversary of The Kite Runner, Hosseini wrote:

My childhood and Amir's mirrored each other in many ways. Hosseini was brought up in the Wazir Akbar Khan area like his protagonist. . He finished his first novel in 1988. The house was adorned with rose bushes that his father had handpicked from Isfahan in Iran. Behind the house, there were.....regarded as privileged. (Hosseini 4-5)

Reparation for a wrong can be a tumultuous affair and heart-wrenching. It is about reconciliation and the expiration of sin. It is a manner of getting justice. A sense of salvation and atonement causes some relief and peace when the person believes that he has started a new journey and adventure towards peace at hand. The main task for Amir is to motivate Hassan to

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come back to his central fold of humanity because Amir realizes his sin. He also comprehends that it is coming closer to Hassan again. The sense of atonement and salvation is the most valuable price and perception Amir aspires to pay to Hassan. Amir advises Hassan not to torture and harass him. Amir then says, "I wish he would give it right back to me, break the door open and tell me off- it would have made things easier, better." (Hosseini 88). Later on, Amir and Hassan go out together for the first time after the rape incident; Amir again provokes Hassan so that the latter can retaliate. This would have eased Amir's psychological pressure, but he did not. Amir asked Hassan to hit him back, but he did not; "I wished he would give me the punishment I craved so maybe I would us" (Hosseini 92). However, of course, Hassan did not make any retaliation leaving Amir extremely frustrated to the core; "But Hassan did nothing as I pelted him again and again. —You are a coward! I said —Nothing but a goddamn coward!" (Hosseini 92). Amir's cowardly nature is expressed when he confides in Rahim Khan that 'it is the strength of will that is —missing in Amir.' He is unable to defend not only himself but also his friend, fearing he would get hurt instead.

Ironically, Hassan might have tolerated insults and attacks directed toward him or his family members. For example, his father (Ali), mother (Sanaubar), and wife (Farzana), all of whom suffer humiliation and insults by the Pashtun ruling majority or Taliban. However, he never tolerates an insult or injury against Amir or his father. Hassan is struck dumb when Taliban soldiers curse him, and his father also beats his wife in cold blood. As a Hazara weak citizen, Hassan tolerates all these insults so that he and his family might escape ill-treatment by the aggressive Taliban. However, Hassan could have risked it all for his friend when it comes to Amir or Amir's father. . On one occasion, Assef and their friends mocked both of them, with Hassan getting the most significant share of insults. Assef raped him to defend Amir's kite but never let them take it. Incidentally, the only time we see Hassan as a coward (as he mentioned in the letter he sent to Amir) was the time the Taliban officers beat his wife.

The other day, I accompanied Farzana Jan (his wife) to the bazaarbut because my wife has a husband and my son is not an orphan. (Hosseini 216)

This is the only time we see Hassan the coward, not Hassan the brave, who used to defend his friend, Amir, repeatedly. This scenario of being in a powerless state almost akin to cowardice is a concrete example of Hassan's innocence of succumbing to mistreatment. It could be argued that Hassan found himself in a situation that he could not comprehend. He makes a positive attempt to avoid the temptation of compromising his security and that of his wife. At this point, overwhelmed by the love for his wife, he metamorphoses into —Hassan the coward, justifiably so nevertheless. This notion of —Hassan the coward is Khadawardi's argument; it is a

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temporary persona to avoid antagonists. It is an action that might draw a mixture of pity and condemnation. The full scope of his action sinks when we see him and his wife safe from the Bazar. He has saved a potentially tragic situation from the Taliban.

Conclusion:

Themes of Vindication, atonement, guilt, and salvation have been explored by studying the characters of Kite Runner and their effect upon them. The proof from their demonstrations highlights that their actions (like a friend's betrayal) negatively impact both the victim and the victimized. The mutual relation between the protagonist Amir and Hassan undergoes a sea-change while the former makes every effort to get atonement and salvation by closing their eyes to vilification. Amir makes a whole-hearted effort to get rid of his past sins. The Kite Runner presents the truth in the form of fiction, and no one is sure of the accuracy and reality happening to the characters in the novel due to the entry of the Taliban into Afghanistan. Khaled Hosseini depicts his character aptly and asserts the universality of human experiences like shame, guilt, regret, friendship, love, forgiveness, and atonement. The novel can be considered an indictment but constitutes a significant part of Afghanistan's history. It is a very long process to achieve atonement, Vindication, and forgiveness. The expectations are always related to the logical relationship between the accused and the accuser. After this tragic episode, there is no natural or normal human relationship between Amir and Hassan. All efforts made by Amir do not cast immediate positive results, and the convict of rape lacks confidence. It happens due to the internal cultural structures of Afghanistan. Any step toward rebuilding trust between Amir and Hassan was entrenched in setbacks.

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