

THE KITE RUNNER

BY - KHALED HOSSEINI

E Iswarya

Prist University, Puducherry.
iswariya7571@gmail.com

Abstract

The most elaborate theme and which is the central building block in The Kite Runner is that of guilt. This paper argues that transgression and ultimate transvaluation is essentially the goal of the author, and that, he aims to achieve this through the protagonist, Amir. This theme is closely interwoven with yet another prominent one—the theme of redemption. The starting point of this paper begins with a postulation that the interlocking of these two themes is inseparable since the outcome of redemption is as a result of a choice made hitherto before it. Although a truism that an enormous offence is firstly committed and subsequently followed by some kind of remorse which in this paper is referred to as redemption, the paper examines Amir's characterization and character as a clear manifestation of these recurring motifs. For the purpose to address the aforementioned problems, interrogation is made in this paper at careful understanding of some key issues. For example, in what ways are they (guilt and redemption) manifested? What are the triggers of guilt and subsequent redemption? What is the role of betrayal as harbinger of guilt and redemption? 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, prejudice, this paper will remain focused on betrayal, guilt and redemption.

Keywords: Redemption, guilt, betrayal, treachery, atonement, kite-running.

INTRODUCTION

The Kite Runner was written by Khaled Hosseini, an Afghan living in America. It is a novel about a heartbreaking story in Kabul, the capital city of Afghanistan. A 12-year-old boy named Amir was determined to win the competition and run for the last kite successfully, in order to win the approval of his father, one of the richest and most respected merchants in Kabul. His loyal friend Hassan, his half-brother, the son of his father's servant, and the best kite runner that Amir had ever seen, promised to help him. Hassan always helped Amir out of trouble. For him, a thousand times over. However, Hassan was raped by Assef on the way to catch the kite for Amir, Amir hid and kept silent. Amir felt grievous and guilty for his cowardice and he could not confront Hassan, using something contemptible to let Hassan and his father leave his home. Not long, a war broke out in Afghanistan, Amir and his father had to escape to America. He couldn't forgive what he had done to Hassan before. Once in a while, he got the truth that Hassan was the son of his father and the wife of Ali from his teacher, he returned his hometown, which was badly destroyed by the war. While, Hassan, his brother and he and his wife died, left their son Sohrab alone. Rahim requested him to rescue Sohrab. This time he fought for Sohrab and finally got Sohrab back and took him to America. Chinese Professor Nie Zhenzhao pointed out, "To some extent, literature was originally created solely for ethical and moral purposes. It provides moral examples for human beings to understand society and life from an ethical perspective, moral guidance for material and spiritual life of human beings, and moral experience for human self-improvement." The Kite Runner is a great work full of moral enlightenment, in which the experience of the Afghan people described can give readers a strong resonance. The novel successfully reproduced an unique ethical picture of the the Afghanistan as well as the ordinary Afghans hard life situation for more than 30 years to the readers, and revealed those that lived at the bottom of society in Afghanistan suffering from the dual oppression of race and religion. Critics have explored the author's questioning of Afghanistan's traditional notions of national and religious hierarchy from the perspectives of theme research, prototype criticism and symbolism, and reflected on the Afghan war and Taliban rule. Nie also pointed out that, to analyse the ethical fate of Hassan's in literature ethics criticism method, it must be "returning to the scene of the history of ethics, standing at the time of the ethical stance on interpretation and interpretation of literary works, analysis works leading to social events and the factors affecting the ethical fate of the characters, with the ethical point of view and give explanations of events, characters, literature, insist on a realistic moral values described in the literature of moral phenomenon make value judgment." This paper analyses the influence of family ethics, national ethics and religious ethics on the tragic fate of Hassan from the perspective of three-dimensional ethics. Through this novel, the author not only questions and criticizes the traditional and rigid ethical concepts, but also reveals his own humanitarian ethics.

<https://www.gapinterdisciplinarity.org/>

METHODOLOGY

Secondary data was undertaken through desktop review from existing studies, scholarly articles, media features, websites and baselines on *The Kite Runner*. This continued to provide extensive data on background information on the life in Kabul, Afghanistan and kite running as a sport. My methodology included close and comparative reading of *Kite Runner* analyses elsewhere from around the world. My key focus was on the thematic patterns of guilt, redemption and atonement and ultimate forgiveness. This process helped me to identify the relationship between the primary nature of sin and how atonement can be exemplified in various ways. I analysed *The Kite Runner* as the source text and made interrogations from it. Once data was collected it was used to analyse themes, ideas and patterns in the data. Narrative analysis focused on speech and content, such as word usage, meanings of situations, and the social, cultural and political context of the narrative.

A DEFORMED FAMILY ETHIC ORDER

Hassan, born with a cleft lip, was the son of Amir's father and the wife of his servant, and abandoned by his biological parents. His mother abandoned him and eloped with other man seven days after he was born for her own happiness, while his biological father chose to abandon him for his honor. Hassan spent his childhood in the absence of maternal love, he had not been able to experience his mother's thoughtfulness and caring like other children. More sadly, he had to endure the others' jeers and insults for his mother's scandal. On the face, Hassan seemed to have never lost father's love, but in fact Ali was only the father in name, and Amir's father was Hassan's biological father. In the social context of the time, Amir's father could not acknowledge the fact that Hassan was his own son, because Hassan was born to the wife of his servant Ali. To the Pushtuns, this immoral sexual relationship was an unforgivable sin. To protect his own reputation, Amir's father's had to abandon Hassan. He was often bullied and ridiculed by people around him because he was at the bottom of the society, but Ali couldn't help it. Hassan would not have been bullied or humiliated if Ali had belonged to the upper class like Amir's father, or just a Pushtun. Unfortunately, Ali was also a Hazara at the bottom of society. On the other hand, Hassan and Amir didn't know about the dysfunctional family relationship. As a result, Amir could not understand his father's love and atonement for Hassan, his father's indifference to him, which greatly aroused Amir's strong jealousy, especially when dad specially invited India cosmetic surgeon to sew cleft lip for Hassan, Amir even hope himself have the similar blemish so that he could also get his father's love. Thus it can be seen that Amir is eager for father's love. Moreover, in Amir father's eyes, Hassan was brave and strong-willed unyielding like the Pashtuns, while Amir liked writing poems and had a weak character, his father was full of dissatisfaction and indifference to Amir, he wanted to cultivate Amir to love sports, strong-willed unyielding character. This unwholesome father-son relationship was so painful for Amir's young mind that he regarded Hassan for his father-loving enemy. Therefore, he tried to get Hassan out of his house, Amir did not know that Hassan was his half-brother, and that his father was not just for his kindness, but for his guilt. In fact, Hassan's tragedy was avoidable. If baba had dared to admit that Hassan was his own son, Hassan would have grown up under his father's umbrella. Firstly, Amir would not be unscrupulous and bully his half-brother. Secondly, Hassan would not be left in the war, even if he had been killed by the Taliban, who had not been discriminated against by the Hazara. Apparently, the estranged father-son relationship between Amir and baba led to Amir's jealousy of Hassan, eventually betraying Hassan, who was willing to sacrifice everything for him. And the invisible "father-son relationship" between baba and Hassan was the most direct cause of Amir's betrayal of Hassan, and the effect of this deformed family ethic on the fate of the characters.

ETHNIC AND ETHICAL ORDER OF INEQUALITY

"The kite runner" is a novel based on Afghanistan, which illustrated the social changes in Afghanistan in the last 30 years, while there was serious racial discrimination in Afghanistan. By writing the relationship between people in the novel, the author had also revealed the complex ethnic relations in Afghanistan, namely the relationship between the Pashtun ethnic group and the Hazara ethnic group. The Pashtuns were the main ethnic group in Afghanistan and had long dominated political, economic, religious and military affairs, from the upper echelons of society. The minority Hazara, however, were dominated by the people who belong to the lower class. In such an unequal ethnic ethical order, the Hazaras, as ethnic minorities, were destined to be discriminated against and persecuted by Pashtuns. In his novel, Assef was the face of Afghan nationalism. In his eyes, Afghanistan had always been the Pushtuns, and they were the pure afghans. The Hazaras were aliens and should be cleared out of Afghanistan like garbage. In addition to Assef, the novel mentions the soldiers who humiliated Hassan or the passers-by, especially the teachers of Amir. Clearly, the Pashtuns' racial discrimination was deep-rooted and difficult to eradicate. The Hazaras were often brutally treated by Pashtuns, and they did not need a good reason to be killed. In particular, when the Taliban ruled Afghanistan, the more extreme national policies were introduced, and the idea of an unequal national hierarchy became more specific and more acute. This had brought greater misery to the Hazaras, and massacred Hazaras in 1998. In 2001, in retaliation for the long-insubordination of the Hazara clan, the Taliban indiscriminately massacred nearly a

thousand Hazara members in the suppression of their armed rebellion. Therefore, to see the social roots of Hassan's tragedy, as professor Nie Zhenzhao said, "the ethical factors that influence the fate of the characters should be analyzed in the social ethical position of the time. If it goes back to the context of Afghan ethics described in the novel, it is not difficult to interpret the ethical reasons for Hassan's tragedy." In the novel, Amir Hassan's attitude and way, also reflected the social attitude and form of Hassan, because "Amir domestic inequality is between nation inequality." the idea of racial discrimination was born, and it had already taken root in the hearts of Hassan and Amir. Grew up drinking milk of the same woman, living in the same place, because Hassan was a Hazara boy, though loyal to Amir, never be regarded as a friend, because there was a racist barriers between them. The sense of national superiority made him take it for granted that Hassan "would only be in the kitchen all his life, and he would dare to criticize me? This Hazara was illiterate. Apparently, Amir seemed to play with Hassan often, and sometimes even to soothe Hassan. In fact, he subconsciously placed Hassan at the bottom of the heap. On the face of it, Amir betrayed Hassan in order to win recognition and approval from his father. In fact, the idea of racial discrimination is the primary cause of Amir Hassan betrayal, and listen to the inner monologue Amir, "In order to win back my dad, maybe Hassan is must pay the price, is I must kill the lamb," because he "was just a Hazara, isn't it?". Hassan didn't complain about Amir's treachery and framing, Hassan sacrificed himself to preserve narrow and selfish Amir because he was bounded by the class and social ethics, which made him willing to bear everything in their own ethics and class environment. As a result, Hassan had never shown any dissatisfaction with this unequal status, nor had he tried to change his fate. When Assef was raging against Hassan, he was willing to sacrifice himself to help Amir achieve his father's approval. Hassan was again persecuted by racial discrimination in order to take care of the yard and return to Kabul. They shot Hassan brutally for they thought the lower Hazaras like Hassan could not live in a house like the Amir's . There was no doubt that this inequality of the ethical order of the nation is a social cause of the tragedy destiny Hassan. Hassan was a victim of Afghanistan's ethnic tensions. His experience was a microcosm of many afghans and the vicissitudes of Afghanistan's half-century. It can be said that his tragedy is the tragedy of the whole Hazara and the Afghan society.

CONCLUSION

Through discussing the themes of redemption, atonement and guilt, this paper has examined the effects of these on the main characters in *The Kite Runner*. The evidence from their actions showed that actions (like betrayal of a friend) pose significant negative spillover effects on both the victim and the one committing the sin. The relations between the protagonist Amir and Hassan changes from a mutual one to that of adversity while the former makes every effort to get an atonement to escape vilification. Amir shows great commitment (in his own way) to be exonerated from past sin.

The Kite Runner is, of course, a fictionalization. But—as with so many events that followed the entry of the Taliban in the Afghanistan, in my view is that it can neither be characterized as accurate or inaccurate because not all facts are known. Nevertheless, Khaled Hosseini in his characterization aptly captures and acknowledges universality of human experiences like shame, guilt, regret, friendship, love, forgiveness and atonement. The author himself makes a confession and says how his life mirrors that of Amir and that fiction can affect readers and even the writer himself. In this regard, the novel can be read as an indictment. But however it is read, the novel is an essential record of an important part of Afghanistan history. Any step toward rebuilding trust between Amir and Hassan was entrenched in setbacks.

REFERENCES

- [1] Khaled, H. (2004). *The Kite Runner*. Bloomsbury Publishing PLC.
- [2] Lin, Q. Q. (2013). Analysis of Hassan's Tragedy in *The Kite Runner*. Journal of Hainan Radio & TV University.
- [3] Bell, A. 2002. *Debates in Psychology*. USA: Routledge.
- [4] Homby, A S. (Ed) 1995. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current*
- [5] English. Oxford: Oxford University Press.