

A Study of Novel “The Kite Runner” As a Work of Nostalgic and Lost Childhood

Abstract

Novel is an instrument that brings a drastic change in society. This genre began in the 17th century when poetry and prose were the real masters in literary world. As novel came it took world its stride and on the very onset it achieved prestige status for itself. In the early times novels were on adventures and incidences. Daniel Defoe, father of fiction launched real life presentation in story-telling. With this perspective novel reached its apex. In the 20th century this domain talks on each and every angle of human predicament.

Keywords: Predicament, Sinful, Racism, Xenophobia, Reconciliation, Ethnic, Massacres.

Introduction

The orthodox customs and obsolete culture which are not important components of any society should be got away from lives at the right moment. If these would not have been removed those components would seep into society and society could be died. The orthodox custom gives birth to barbarity and archaic culture overlooks the growing unrest among masses. The novelist Khalid Hosseini focused on these two elements in his award winning work “The Kite Runner”. The story set in Afghanistan the country that lost its pristine glory and struggling to get back some of its decline magnificence.

Aim of the Study

The present paper attempts to discuss the novel The Kite Runner as a work of nostalgic and lost childhood. The novel will be studied from many aspects but the main motif of work concentrated on home sickness and lost human relationships.

Violence is a sinful act. It disbars the development of human mind and civilization. It too dissuades the entry of modern technology in society. The violence in form of racism, xenophobia is existed extensively around society. One of the survey conducted by UNO declared that two lakhs people are being affected by human made catastrophe every year. The current examples can be cited from Palestine, Syria, etc. To bring down the graph of provocative violence many writers plunged in to writing field especially novelists who regard novel as powerful mechanism for awaking people against violence. One such writer is Khalid Hosseini, a novelist with a purposeful writing lashed over the ideologies of fanatics who are bent on destroying the world. He also blurted out on criminal psyche of some Afghanis and on those who have vested interest. They have been indulged in committing atrocities on commoners under the disguise of religious reformation. His novel “The Kite Runner” is a typical exposition of violence, fundamentalism, hatred and duality in Afghanistan. Before 1970’s Afghanis were too innocent they harvested pomegranates and other dry fruits as Russian war imposed on them. Since the day Taliban gained ascendancy the horrible journey of Afghanis has commenced. Amir the main protagonist and Hassan the doppelganger¹ in story described events that led to destruction in Afghanistan in their own words. Amir belonged to Sunni family. His Father has status, position and power in society. Amir was introvert he never disclosed his thoughts in front of her father but one incidence brought him close to his father that when he won the competition of kite-flying. The reconciliation came in his life with the help of his servant friend Hassan. Hassan was a son of male servant. Both Hassan and Amir are childhood friends. Hassan helped Amir to win tournament, Hassan did it out of his sheer love for Amir but Amir turned his back on Hassan but he wanted him urgently. Actually Hassan was being raped by the village bully Aseef who hated the presence of Hassan in village because he was shai. Through this unavoidable incidence writer brings a reality that on one hand kite tournament has dissolved trifle between son and father duo on the

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other hand a wedge has come between two friends. The writer by means of this event conveyed how our society shows prejudices towards Hassan, that Amir and Hassan are morally related to each other in spite of that Amir ditched Hassan in his lurch only because of his shai identity. Amir did not come forward for his rescue because Hassan is a Shai. No Sunni comes to rescue for any Shai in any circumstances, As Afghans believe Shai's blood is impure and they occupy secondary place, moreover they never be at par with Sunnis. Under this he (Aseef) who is van antagonist uttered insulted words for Hassan like that " A Local Hazara, Loyal as a dog"(68)². On this incidence Khalid revealed man's birth is his identity what he is doing, it matters less where he took birth considers important more. Indian novelist MulkRaj Anand of pre-independence time put similar doctrine in his prestigious work "Untouchable " where the leading character Bakha is a real victim of caste-discrimination. Being a sensible child he could not come to terms with what he lacks, why he is being insulted at every step of life. He always pondered upon the words which are utterly humiliated " touched me and defiled me, you cockeyed son of a bow-legged scorpion."(38)³. Even after this incidence whenever Hassan tried to come close to Amir he avoided him as he felt his guilt conscious pricking him his inside. The guilty of having not saving Hassan from bully Aseef's grip promoted Amir to take decision that either of them would stay in the house. Amir made a plan to sending away Hassan from his house Amir left no opportunity to create such chances where he heaped sack of blames on Hassan and hoped due to the blames his father might have threw him out of his house. After moving out of Hassan Amir and his father had to move from their homes as the city was under the threat of insurgency they decided to take shelter in Pakistan. The journey they took from their homes was full of hardships and hurdles. Actually during the journey the pain experienced by Amir experienced by writer himself and through the mouth of Amir, he narrated the anguished pain of migration. Everybody in Afghanistan has experienced such kind of eviction and exodus. He described the journey was blood-curdling and dangerous. Even to avert the encounter with Russian army Amir had taken shelter in a basement and spent few time in sub-human conditions. Khalid revealed man is hopeless in some circumstances when he fails to escape those adversities he only flows with the tide. Amir and his father did the same way. One of the Indian novelist Basharat Peer in his work "Curfew Nights" talks about alienation among Kashmiri community. Kashmir is their birthplace but the destruction is too huge that entire community felt dislocation from their motherhood. The gun culture was the order of the day. Some people picked up gun not to chase away the other community but to escape the injustice mete out to them. Their agenda instead of fulfilling the demands of people went strayed. This happened due to negligence on part of erstwhile govt in valley. Basharat Peer profoundly talks about human predicament in man -made menace. How could a man hide himself from any crisis? The commoners have

nothing to do with any politics; they have basic needs to cater upon. He told he felt that in his childhood he was witnessed of bloodshed and believed it the entire lapses could be barred at right moment but the wave of gun was too strong that swept everything along with it. Even Kashmiris wanted to stop the bloodshed they could not do it as some mercenaries who worked for the foreign country added oil in the troubled water. The situation in valley went bad to worst instead of coming to track again. The locals were doubly affected one from militants and other from army that raided houses after any militant attack. These attacks make fearsome to any man in valley. Basharat Peer defined the meaning of fear "The fear they reached another village but still follow them"(45)⁴. Same fear felt by Afghans. Under the threat of raids Amir and his father decided to leave their homeland. Even Afghans have hatred towards Russian soldiers. Amir father nurtured such a deep animosities for Russian Soldiers that he refused to get himself treated under Russian doctor when he detected cancer. After leaving homeland Amir often wondered what his father earned after the struggling life. With a straw everything dashes to the ground. Basharat Peer supported the same view that many local Kashmiris have left their state have been settled across the globe but still the tinge of separation has made a permanent place in their hearts. Not only this Basharat described the hardships of a militant on humanitarian grounds and urged that militants are perverts beings " Being a militant wasn't only about getting arms training and fighting, it was about being excluded from the joys of life" (212)⁵. The anti-social elements terrorised the general masses to such extent that those who had left the country felt scary to go there. One of the relative informed Amir that Talibans killed many people incessantly and made many women widow. Sohrab son of Hassan gives the picture of orphan children whose parents are died in attacks and they are living like vagabonds. Even if mothers are surviving they cannot provide meal and better life to children because Taliban has put ban on women employment and education. The writers gave nostalgic feeling of Amir He desired to come back to country to find out Hassan's Son. Basharat explicit same nostalgic feeling when he made to leave his house for a night as paramilitary force was on search operation. To evade humiliation in hands of forces his family run to neighbouring village when he returned next day he realised the importance of home. He says "Longing for home when he left home and reached after spending a night at a stranger place. But it was home my only home"(140)⁶. Eventually Amir put his foot on the land of Afghanistan. As he reached there and saw his ruined house he wept. He found Afghanistan has become a safe haven for militant groups and they keep silent all those voices which have been imparting secular thoughts. They also are responsible for ethnic cleansing. They massacred Hazaar people in Hazaar district. Those people were eliminated because they are shais, their killings are justified on the ground that they born shais not sunnis. Moreover Taliban had committed crime on the name of religion only. The religion they dissimilated among

masses entirely baseless because particular religion focuses on equality, sympathy and love it neither emphasis on genocide of any community. Basharat brought a popular incidence in Ayodha Babri Mashid demolition and aftermath incidences followed violence across the country against specified sect. Taslima Nasrin's novel "Lajja" depicted terrorized minority community in Bangladesh especially in wake of chains of events after the sad episode of Babri Mashid ruination. In the book through her mouthpiece she says "On the same day around midnight, approximately 2,500 armed people attacked the Sadarghat Kalibari with bricks, entered the main temple and broke and destroyed the idols.(92)⁶.

The story Kite Runner gives the glimpse of love, brotherhood and repentance. The writer Khalid described the events through his protagonist Amir by the technique of to and fro called stream of consciousness. Amir recollected the major occurrences of his life while living with his father in America. Amir loved Hassan, he even did not think himself without him, and the circumstances which both confronted in wake of eruption of militancy in country made Amir Hassan his opponent. Moreover the villainous character Aseef offended directly Hassan on his caste and Amir could not do anything as he himself associated with autocratic class. Secondly the cause of separation between Hassan and Amir was first religion and secondly was guilt consciousness of Amir. He remorse on his own attitude and felt an immense deep love for Hassan. Amir reminded once he declared his love for Hassan in front of him. He says: You're a prince, Hassan. You're a prince and I love you (27)⁷. Khalid endeavoured to explain why does the wall of religious fundamentalism so strong that these cannot scale down by anyone. Amir tries to break down the wall when he decides to bring up Hassan's son Sohrab in America. Asfeez who was the strong pillar of fundamentalism in Afghanistan had kidnapped Sohrab to whom Amir made free from Aseef's captive. Aseef himself once was victimised on the name of communal clashes. Since the day he had changed himself and he became one of hardcore fanatic. Amir

believe only Taliban was the responsible for utter desolation in Afghanistan. Khalid Hosseini portrayed Amir in order to expose the illness penetrated in country by showing plight of country. The indigenous people were bearing the brunt of violence and massacres. After the coup Taliban showed not only the horrid face to people but they have damaged the heritage of country too. One such heritage they have ransacked was the huge status of Buddha in Bamiyan. The status of Buddha was the symbol of harmony, peace but vandalism destroyed it. The vandalism not only uprooted the civilization of Afghanistan but it also tarnished the secular image of country. Khalid Hosseini has justifies the story by portraying the character of Hassan and Amir. Hassan is the shadow of Amir, Amir represented the rich class where Hassan was the scum of society.

Conclusion

The Kite Runner gave two strands in story one is of family where Amir is struggling against all odds of life and other part depict political crisis which Afghanis confronting after the fall of Soviet Russian. Whatever will be the fate of humanity, somewhere man finds solace. Amir cannot reverse the circumstances but he longs to have peace in his life. The peace he finds in upbringing of Hassan's son Sohrab. He expressed happiness in these words " I ran with the wind blowing in my face and a smile as wide as the valley of panjsher on my lips" (140)⁸

Endnotes

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3. Anand MulkRaj, *Untouchable*, Penguin Random House India, 1935.
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