

Social Conflicts in Khaled Husseini's The Kite Runner

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الملخص

من خلال ثلاث شخصيات رئيسية ، أمير وآصف وحسن ، تصور رواية عداء الطائفة الورقية كيف نشأ الصراع المجتمعي في أفغانستان. تعرض هذه الشخصيات العلاقات الشخصية بالإضافة إلى الاضطرابات الشخصية والاجتماعية. بسبب الاختلافات العرقية ، اختلف آصف مع حسن ، بسبب وضعهما الاجتماعي ، يتناقض أمير وحسن عن غير قصد. إنه يوضح أن الصراع الاجتماعي يمكن أن يتجلى ليس فقط من خلال مجموعة اجتماعية ككل ، ولكن أيضًا من خلال تفاعل اجتماعي واحد ، لأن الفرد يجب أن يخطر في نشاط اجتماعي ، وقد تكون هذه المشاركة انعكاسًا للبنية الاجتماعية للمجتمع.

نتيجة لذلك ، قد يرمز الصراع الشخصي إلى صراع مجتمعي يحدث في الحياة اليومية. آصف يعارض حسن ، وأمير يعارض حسن في الصراع المجتمعي. يؤرخ هذا العمل أيضًا قصة الارتباط الاجتماعي لطفلين ، والتي تورطت في صراعات مختلفة في ذلك الوقت. الصراع الاجتماعي الذي يحدث في هذه القصة مثير للفضول للباحثين للتحقيق فيه. تسعى هذه الدراسة إلى معالجة الصراع الاجتماعي كما وصفه أمير وآصف وحسن

تم توضيح التوتر الاجتماعي الذي ظهر في هذا العمل من خلال العلاقات الاجتماعية بين أمير وآصف وحسن بحسب نتائج الدراسة. إنه يدل على وجود الانقسامات الاجتماعية التي تؤدي إلى الصراع الطبقي والاستغلال والنضال. كما تساهم الاختلافات في الدين والتاريخ العرقي في أفغانستان في الصراع الاجتماعي. ثانيًا، أصبحت القوة الاقتصادية والمصالح الفردية في أفغانستان مصدرًا رئيسيًا للصراع الاجتماعي. بناءً على خلفية الرواية ، توضح الدراسة أيضًا كيف يؤثر الاقتصاد على الصراع الاجتماعي.

Synopsis_

Through three key characters, Amir, Assef, and Hassan, *The Kite Runner* novel depicts how the societal strife in Afghanistan arose. These characters exhibit interpersonal relationships as well as personal and social turmoil. Due of their ethnic differences, Assef has disagreed with Hassan, because of their social position, Amir and Hassan are inadvertently contradicting each other. It demonstrates that social conflict can be manifested not just by a social group as a whole, but also by a single social interaction as the individual's actions within a certain social scope decides or determines the social structure of the society.

Furthermore, the inner conflict might symbolize a social conflict that occurs in everyday life. Assef opposes Hassan, and Amir opposes Hassan, in the societal struggle. This work also chronicles the story of two children's social connection, which became embroiled in different conflicts at the time. The social struggle that happens in this story is intriguing for researchers to investigate. This study seeks to address the social clash as portrayed by Amir, Assef, and Hassan.

The social tension shown in this work was illustrated through the social relationships of Amir, Assef, and Hassan, according to the findings of the study. It demonstrates the presence of social divides, which leads to class strife, exploitation, and struggle. Differences in religion and ethnic backgrounds in Afghanistan also contribute to the social strife. Secondly, economic influence and personal interests in Afghanistan have become a major source of social strife. Based on the novel's background, the study also demonstrates how the economy influences social strife.

Keywords

Afghanistan, Khaled Hosseini, *The Kite Runner*, ethnic distinctions, racism

Social Conflicts in Khaled Hussein's *The Kite Runner*

The manifestations of social changes and conflicts have been represented and imagined in literary genres, drama, poetry, and prose, in the different ages of the history of literature. Adolescents are more likely to favor a literary work that expresses their creativity and interpretive materials, such as novels written in prose. A literary work in prose is referred to as a novel. A novel may appeal to certain readers due to the story's intricacy and imaginative potential. As a result, as a reader, one can feel immersed in the tale and is able to investigate the story's content depending on their own view of the situation. (Kent, 1985: 307-313)

A contemporary narrative written by an American author who grew up in Afghanistan, *The Kite Runner*, portrays events and characters in Afghanistan. The findings reveal that society is basically divided into two main groups: Pashtun and Hazara. According to *The Kite Runner*, they live in Afghanistan. Basically, these two ethnic groups represent the social structure of Afghanistan. The Pashtuns are the dominating upper class, while the Hazaras make up the bottom class, as Marxist theory dictates. It depicts the socioeconomic situation in Afghanistan following the Russian invasion of the country's regime. The author focused on friendship, love, bravery, and treachery as the central topic. The novel depicts the story of Amir and Hassan, two children of different ethnicities and tribes who grow related in Afghanistan.

At first look, this work is said to be a mirror of Afghan life. It also depicts the socioeconomic and political situation in Afghanistan a few years back. Afghanistan plays a major role in the story. The work also educates the reader on Afghanistan's culture, religion, politics, economics, and history. Friendship, betrayal, sorrow, atonement, and the uneasy love between father and son are important themes. Furthermore, the story shows the state of society in which some factions are in conflict with one another. The variety of socioeconomic position and religion in Afghanistan is a good example of this phenomena. The personalities of Amir, Assef, and Hassan, on the other hand, demonstrate how social

conflict is caused by disparities. This issue arises because Afghans are unable to identify the many socioeconomic statuses and continue to classify people as Pashtuns or Hazaras. As presented or rather manifested in the novel Hazaras are considered inferior to the Pashtuns who represent the ruling ethnic group in Afghanistan. Amir and Assef are representatives of the dominant class and the class conflict in the novel is relevant to these characters. (Rubiyanto, and Restu Arini, 2016: 125-132)

The author describes a tragic friendship in the middle of fighting in Afghanistan, which is one of the novel's most intriguing aspects. Amir and Assef are two tribal dignitary's offspring. Hassan is a low-caste Hazara. Afghanistan society was divided and in conflict in the middle of the battle. As a result, Hassan purposefully holds different social statuses, and they are unaware of the violence that has erupted in their nation.

There are various difficulties related to cultural perspectives, such as civil war, ethnic conflict, and inter-religious conflict, which are all caused by different ethnics and inter-religions. Hassan is someone Amir admires, yet with whom he has an internal struggle. Amir devises all means possible to rid himself of Hassan. As a result of his disagreement, Amir feels guilty and sins against Hassan.

The novel embodies the concept of conflict based on the ethnic distinction in Afghanistan as shown in the analysis. People in Afghanistan either separate or die in this novel. Poverty stems from a lack of money, and many people's homes were destroyed as a result of the fighting. This dampens the people's spirits and causes them to be traumatized. Many individuals were detained and removed from Afghanistan throughout the fighting in order to provide a safe haven for Afghans.

The PDPA (People Democratic Party of Afghanistan) introduced a huge number of political and social changes in Afghanistan, including the cancelation of strict and social practices. These actions infuriated Afghans who believed in the enforcement of strict long established conventional, social, and religious rules. These groups began to put pressure on the government, and in 1979, the Soviet Army invaded Afghanistan, marking the dawn of a decade-long occupation. The departure of Baba and Amir from Afghanistan is the historical

occurrence depicted in *The Kite Runner*. Internal Muslim troops fought back against the Soviet occupation for the next 10 years. In *The Kite Runner*, Farid and his father are instances of these mujaheddins, or warriors fighting on the side of Islam. Because of its own anti-Soviet views, the United States was one of the nations that helped the resistance. Afghanistan stayed under PDPA for three additional years after the Soviet soldiers left in 1989. The mujaheddins at last vanquished Afghanistan and went it to an Islamic state in 1992, following the breakdown of the Soviet Union and Soviet support for the public authority. There was a lot of infighting among competing militias in the years after the Soviets left, making living in Afghanistan dangerous. (Aubry, 2016: 25). Rahim Khan describes the dread in Kabul at the period in his novel *The Kite Runner*. He remembers:

The infighting between the groups was wild and nobody knew whether they would live to see the day's end. Our ears became constant to the thunder of gunfire, our eyes acquainted with seeing men getting bodies out from underneath heaps of rubble. Kabul was just about as close as you could get to that supposed terrible. (p. 112)

Taliban thereafter took control of Kabul in 1996. The populace hailed the coup after so many years of uncertainty and conflict. In the words of Rahim Khan: "**We as a whole celebrated in 1996 when the Taliban came in and shut down the day-by-day battling.**" (p. 186)

The Taliban were a gathering of Pashtun patriots who combined and oversaw Afghanistan. Notwithstanding the warm welcome they got from the outset, they quickly made living in Afghanistan perilous once more. They killed Shiites, especially the Hazara people, because they were Sunni fundamentalists. They also passed fundamentalist legislation, including bans on music and dance, as well as regulations restricting women's rights. We can plainly see how the Taliban utilized fear and brutality to dominate the Afghan people in *The Kite Runner*, such as the killing scene in Ghazi Stadium. (Aubry, 2016: 33)

Hosseini depicts his country's suffering under the dictatorship of the Taliban, a challenge that Amir confronts when he finally goes home in his attempt to save Hassan and his family. The novel's canvas darkens. In the end, the story is filled with unsettling pictures:

a man, frantic to take care of his youngsters, attempting to sell his fake leg on the lookout; a double-crossing couple battered to the point of death in an arena the football match was going on; a rouged little fellow constrained into prostitution, moving the kind of steps once performed by an organ processor's monkey. (p. 118)

However, even as dramatic as the events depicted in *The Kite Runner*, they are only a portion of the tale. The thread that binds the novel together is a natural storyline that arises from Amir's strong connection with Hassan, the son of his father's servant. As they witness their prior lifestyle go, the young men's bond, represented by the kites they fly together, is scrutinized.

The Kite Runner is additionally a story of the breakdown of common society and the subsequent infringement of the essential basic liberties - ethnic and racial segregation, strict bigotry, ladies' and kids' mistreatment, war outrages, and the enduring of outcasts. Afghan workers escaping the Taliban's reign are additionally casualties of basic liberties infringement in this story, including Baba and Amir, who live far away, banished in shame in Hayward, California-for Amir, it's his first time in the United States.

{A} spot to cover [his] recollections"; for Baba, "a spot to grieve his"; (p. 112). In Hayward, nonetheless, there are "homes that made Baba's home in Wazir Akbar Khan resemble a worker's cottage " (p. 118).

As can be seen, Baba and Amir approached a Russian soldier at a checkpoint on their way out of Afghanistan after two years of Soviet occupation, who, having recently been given pay off cash, requested further circumstances for their break:

{a} half hour with the woman toward the rear of the truck". Baba told the transporter: "Ask him where his disgrace is." To which the Russian trooper answered: "There is no disgrace in war." Angrily, Baba countered: "let him know he's off-base. War doesn't discredit respectability. It requests it, considerably more than in the midst of harmony". (p. 100)

Baba's words are compatible with international law, which demands humanitarian norms of armed combat in international and civil battles in both treaties and custom. We can see a contempt for the Russians

throughout the novel, which originates from their attack and control of Afghanistan in 1979. The US assisted in arming and training the mujahideen who made Taliban rule feasible. Children in Afghanistan have been disproportionately affected by years of civil war and cruel government. As Zaman, the overseer of the halfway house where Amir went looking for Sohrab puts it:

A significant number of [the children] have lost their dads in the conflict, and their moms can't take care of them on the grounds that the Taliban don't permit them to work. There is next to no asylum here, basically no food, no garments... . and so on What I have in adequate stock here is youngsters who've lost their adolescence. (p. 222)

As we can see, Sohrab subsequently expresses the same feeling when he states: "**There are a ton of kids in Afghanistan, yet little adolescence.**" (p. 277)

As it is clearly shown in the novel, the social activity of the characters, eventually, determines the social conflict amongst them. Furthermore, because the novel under consideration is a novel about social life and two types of Islam (Sunni and Shi'a), I use secondary data from Islamic values and principles, as well as journals, articles, and internet sources, to provide a complete picture of the social conflict.

The characters of Amir, Assef, and Hassan become representations of societal elements as the present study proclaims, which is founded on Marxism. They demonstrate the diversity that is based on social status due to their social action. It depicts a societal dispute that has an impact on Kabul's social situation. In terms of class conflict and social disparities, the portrayal of social rank causes social conflict. Class conflict, exploitation, and class struggle are all examples of social conflict caused by socioeconomic disparities. The social strife that ensued was sparked by the economic dominance of two divergent factions of society.

In *The Kite Runner* Amir, the protagonist belongs to the superior Pashtuns class whereas Hassan was from the marginalized Hazara community, that's why despite being his best friend, Amir felt that he

was better and superior than him. He tricked, exploited and made fun of Hassan at every opportunity that he got. The class difference that was spread all over the country also had its effect on their friendship. Since childhood he understood that there was an ethnic and socio-economic division between him and Hassan and also between his father and Ali. The characters of Ali and Hassan are double marginalized as they belong to the religious/ethnic minority as well as the lower class. Firstly, they are Shia in a country which is dominated by Sunnis, and they belong to a poor Hazara Family, while Amir and his father live healthy lives in big mansions, they live in poor economical and health conditions, and this discrimination is shown to be wide spread throughout all Afghanistan. In fact, it is the rape of Hassan by the hands of Pashtun majority boy that is the main event around which the book is centered. (Salah, and Mahnaz, 2001: 5)

Class conflict and social gaps are two types of social conflict that arise in the new conflict. The high-class society, represented by Amir and Assef, exerts pressure on the lower-class society, represented by Hassan. The exploitation, or Hassan's class struggle, was regarded as a source of social strife in this sense. Due to his illiteracy and simple character, Amir or Assef took advantage of Hassan as Hazara. Others treated him with contempt since he was a lower-class individual. The way people are treated as a result of their ethnicity or religion reveals a societal divide between Pashtuns and Hazaras, as well as Hassan's struggle to cope with the circumstance. In the novel, Amir and Hassan are represented as the two opposite pillars of the same society; the wealthy and the poor, Sunni and Shi'a, Pashtun and Hazara, powerful and dominant. as shown in the novel and from the very beginning of the story the theme of ethnicity and racism is explicitly mentioned by the protagonist (Hosseini, 2016 P: 33-40.):

I became what I am today at the age of twelve, on a frigid overcast day in the winter of 1975. I remember the precise moment, crouching behind a crumbling mud wall, peeking into the alley near the frozen creek (p.14).

As a child, Amir fails to save Hassan in an act of cowardice and eventually suffers from painful guilt. Even after leaving the country,

moving to America, marrying, and becoming a successful writer, he fails to forget the scene. One big secret he knew from his father's best friend, Rahim Khan that Hassan is actually his half-brother cause Ali was being sterile and wasn't Hassan's biological father. Hassan's kindness and sacrifices surprisingly make Amir always haunted by guilt for the rest of his life. Amir himself felt very coward, he could not become as his father always aspired. The Bond of brotherhood becomes ignited when the selfish and superior Amir knows that Hassan is actually his brother a fact that was never unfolded by Baba. Baba himself is also a coward father who hid the fact. He doesn't have enough bravery to show and admit that he has another son of the mother of a Hazara beside Amir in the upper classes, the Pashtun. In Kabul, Afghanistan, ethnic differences and religious views have become a major source of social strife. The society appears to be incompatible with the separation of two social parts. People are judged according to their social standing. Amir is arbitrary towards Hassan because of Pashtun's social standing in Kabul as a financial power and a dominant ethnic group. In this case it becomes very easy to victimize Hasan. (Agustina,2015. P: 44)

Assef is the personification of all that is wicked in Afghanistan. Assef is first acquainted as a forceful, intolerant adolescent who gets his social power from his financial and racial personality and wishes to remove all Hazaras from his country. The assault of Hassan by Assef is a clear and clear outline of individuals who enjoy social benefit manhandling the people who don't. Assef grows up to become head of Taliban and keeps on embracing Afghanistan's most appalling and biased thoughts, at last turning into a representation of extremism and mercilessness. Another scene that portrays Amir's acceptance of his dominance and authority over Hassan and other Hazaras is when Assef and his friends, who are all Pashtuns, through the ignorance of Amir find this opportunity to rape Hassan. In addition, at the hospital in a dream Amir is reminded by Assef that they are both two Pashtuns who had the same reaction toward Hassan: **"We're the same, you and I. You nursed with him, but you're my twin"** [16]. Assef did not make any difference between Amir and himself; both of them were Pashtuns and from wealthy families and both committed the same act; Hassan was raped by Assef and with the Amir's silence he was supported. Thus, this fact is disclosed that although Amir was aware of the violent act of Assef, he was just a viewer

and did make any attempt to help Hassan. Assef is also a character that strongly desires the elimination of the Hazara from Afghanistan. He is a German-Afghan guy that is exactly what John Arthur says about racist people. Assef with blue eyes and blonde hair holds "attitudes [that] include unjustified hostility toward a racial group" [18]. He strongly dislikes Hazaras and some sort of sense of violence could be seen in his behavior toward them. In *The Kite Runner*, Assef desires to remove all the Hazaras from the region of Afghanistan and actually it is as a mission for him since Afghanistan was the ground of the Pashtun people and Pashtuns were the real Afghans and the true heirs of it. Assef also blames Amir and his father, Baba, and calls them "a disgrace to Afghanistan" [14] for their support of Hassan and his father because they are Hazaras. In adulthood, Assef joins Taliban, who were mostly Pashtuns, in order to fulfill his mission. He tells Amir that **"Afghanistan is like a beautiful big house that was filled with garbage (Hazaras)"** (p:16) and it is his duty to remove the garbage. Eventually he is led to kill many Hazaras in Hazarajat, the hometown of Hazara ethnic group, in a massacre that was arranged against the Hazaras. Assef considers this massacre as an honor and accuses Amir of treason because he escaped from his country and left it for Hazaras. (Gallagher, Niamh Maisie. "Social class and environment in the moral development of children in The Kite Runner." *Literary Cultures* 3.1 (2020).

"Why is a kid like you here during this time searching for Hazara?" his look waited respectfully on my cowhide coat and my pants cattle rustler pants, we used to call them. In Afghanistan, claiming anything American, particularly in the event that it wasn't secondhand, was an indication of riches.

"I need to find him, Agha".

"What is he to you?" he said. I didn't see the mark of his inquiry, yet I advised myself that eagerness wasn't going to make him let me know any quicker" (P.69)

A ton of Assef's characteristics are like Amir's. The two kids are naturally introduced to a, key, influential place, and when they misuse it, they hurt Hassan, a socially and financially oppressed Hazara. Amir is in the long run battling the most horrendously terrible piece of himself that unwanted Hassan as he battles Assef to save Sohrab. Assef is the most

undeniably underhanded person, as confirmed by the way that Assef's youth legend is Adolf Hitler. Assef doesn't pass on in the story, inferring that the cruelest parts of Afghanistan can't be basically or totally destroyed.

"If it's not too much trouble, let us be, Agha," Hassan said in a level tone. He'd referred to Assef as "Agha" and I pondered momentarily what it should be prefer to reside with such an imbued feeling of one's place in an order" (p.42).

Conclusion

The novel's social tensions are largely influenced by the role of economic power. Ethnic atrocities, exploiters, and class struggles, such as Assef, the leader of the Taliban's campaign against the Hazara, as well as his crime committed in the name of Islamic law, are examples of social strife fueled by economic interests and power. The conflict is depicted here by Amir and Hassan, who fulfilled a Marxist notion in seeing society, namely, that the existence of diverse backgrounds and interests causes conflict in society, and that economic power has an influence on society. influences the superstructure, i.e., individual ideology, as a result of competing interests, there will be conflict. The Marxist notion of the link between social identity and economic power affecting societal conflict is quite suitable with the social conflict representation.

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