
ERASURE OF ETHNIC HAZARAS IN KHALED HOSSEINI'S 'THE KITE RUNNER'

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Abstract

Afghanistan had a very vast and ancient heritage of its literature. They had an ethnic heritage which got dispersed with the frequent wars of Soviet Russia over Afghan and also by the civil wars stimulated by the Taliban or the warlords. The struggles of the Afghans are expressed by most Afghan writers like Atiq Rahimi, Mohammad Hussain Mohammadi and Khaled Hosseini of all these writers the work of Hosseini takes the front part because his works express the depth of troubles of Afghan and moreover he has witnessed the perilous sides post-war Afghan. His three novels "The Kite Runner", "Thousand Splendid Sun" and "And the Mountains Echoed", all these novels are set in Afghan each dealing with the problems faced by the native Afghans under Russian invasion and also under Taliban rule.

The novel 'The Kite Runner' is a semi-autobiography of Hosseini, it's the nostalgic memories of the writer himself how he fled to America after the Russian invasion and it also depicts the arduous life of the native Hazaras. The present paper focuses on how the regime of Taliban leads to the complete erasure of Hazaras the ethnic race, in order to make Afghan, a pure country. The Taliban were of the thought that Hazaras weren't pure and Afghan was impure because of this race. The plight of Hazaras is brought in to the novel through the character Hassan who is a Hazara and he is a loyal servant to his master Amir, but his loyalty towards his master made a drastic impact on his life and Taliban wrecked off the family of Hassan by killing him, his wife and abusing his only son Sohrab.

Keywords: *literature, struggles, Taliban, .etc*

"I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become reality...I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word".

-Martin Luther King, Jr.

The novel '*The Kite Runner*' by Khaled Hosseini is a befitting novel which is based on the historical setting of Afghanistan starting from the 1970s – 1980s under the Soviet Invasion and also in the hands of tyrannic warlords .i.e. the Taliban. Hosseini himself witnessed the terrors of the land and went to America after Soviet invaded Afghan; the same storyline is reflected through the character of Amir. As Afghan is the culmination different diversities of culture which consists of Pashtuns, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, and other small groups, taking into account the language spoken by these people most of them speak Parsi and about 35% of people speak Pashtuns, Hazaras speak Parsi and Uzbek speak a different dialect of Turkish. ("*Afghanistan: Azhivillirundhu Vaazhvukku*"). Hosseini in this novel brings the socio-political problems of the Afghanis who are divided on the basis of their looks, their language and also the minute differences which they follow in their respective religious practices of these there was a serious division within the Muslims they were further divided into Shi'a Muslims and Sunni Muslims, people who were Shi'a Muslims were Hazaras (Low caste) and Sunni Muslims (superior caste) were Pashtuns. *The Kite Runner*,8).

In the novel, the character of a staunch Muslim conventionalist ideology is given through the portrayal of Assef who is also a Pashtun he has the thought that Afghan is being polluted by these downtrodden Hazara community hence he takes important measures to eradicate this race even from his childhood: "Afghanistan is a land of Pashtuns. We are the pure Afghans, not this Flat-nose here. His people pollute our homeland our *water*. They dirty our blood. Afghanistan for Pashtuns, I say. That's my vision"(KR, 35).

Amir describes Assef in the novel as a 'sociopath', he is the more manifest of dictatorship it is expressed when he met Amir and Hassan and said that the next king Daoud Khan will come to his house for dinner when he comes he will talk to him about Hitler "A great leader.A man with a vision. I'll tell Daoud Khan to remember that if they had let Hitler finish what he had started, the world would be a better place now"(KR, 35), this makes one thing clear that just like Hitler erasing the entire jews from Germany Assef wanted to erase the entire Hazaras from Afghanistan, "to rid Afghanistan of all dirty, *kasseef* (filthy) Hazaras"(KR,36).

Meanwhile during 1979 to 1980 Soviet brutally invaded Afghan they entered Afghan by the result of Afghan-Soviet Non aggression pact for the benefit of combined military action between Afghan and Russia in 1921 by the then king Amanullah Khan but after a certain period of time the treatise created a great havoc to the people of Afghan in May 14, 1988, Russian missiles and rocket launchers destroyed the cities of Kabul:

This marked the beginning of the downfall of the ethnic tribes of Afghan though it was suffered by both the Hazaras and the Pashtuns but the most affected by this effect was the Hazaras "Roussi army marched into Afghanistan, long before villages were burnt and schools destroyed,

long before mines were planted like seeds of death and children buried in the rock-piled graves, Kabul had become the city of ghosts..."(KR, 119).

After Amir moves to America the life of Hazara Hassan and his father Ali becomes miserable. In 1995 Russia let Afghan be an independent country and they left the whole of Afghan and it was given into the hands of tyrannic Warlords .i.e. the Taliban. Taliban were the conventionalist Muslims who wanted Afghan to be pure and free from the inferior breed (Hazaras) so most of the Hazaras moved Hazarajat to save their lives. Afghan was once a modern city but after the capture of Taliban they made serious laws some serious accusations were made on women like, they were allowed to move out only with a male escort; they were deprived of their education; they were not allowed to move outside without burqa even if little skin is exposed they would be beaten to death; many were forced into prostitution.

Hazaras were dominated by the Taliban and also by some of the Pashtuns they were thrown into trap by the religion and also by the politics by applying Louis Althusser's concept of 'Repressive State Apparatus' which is in order made to dominate the working or the subordinate classes by the timely intervention of politics also accompanied by the violent and non violent methods handled by the government, court, police and also any kind of armed forces. During the Kite festival which took place years before Hassan was made to take the last kite home and present it to Amir, on his way he had to fight with Assef and his gang but he was helpless and he was raped by Assef and his gang this was witnessed by Amir himself from behind the alley but he never came forward to help Hassan because the class consciousness struck him hard that whether to help a Hazara or to run for life, "I had one last chance to make decision ." (KR,68).

The vengeance of freeing Afghan from Hazaras stood very firm in the heart of Assef hence when he grew big he became the leader of Taliban and then he successfully made his goal done by killing Hassan and his wife Farzana in 1988 a rumor spread that a Hazara family was living in the Wazir Akbar street two Talib officials interrogated them(Hassan and his family) and the Taliban accused that they were thieves but when Hassan opposed "...they took him to the street—and order him to kneel—and shot him in the back of the head. Farzana came screaming and attacked them—shot her too. Self-defence, they claimed later--" (KR, 192), they took Hassan's son as a sex slave to Assef the condition of the orphanages were very perilous to the children. But not always ...He took Sohrab a month ago"(KR, 224-25). Assef asserted that this was a kind of purifying Afghan from all such impurities he termed it as 'ethnic cleansing', Amir questions "What mission is that? , Stoning adulterers? Raping children? Flogging women fro wearing high heels? Massacring Hazaras? All in the name of Islam?"(KR,248) and in the end just like a saviour Air was once again saved by his friend's and half brother's son Sohrab who blinded the left eye of Assef and saved Amir like his father used to do and at the end of the

novel Sohrab is taken back to America with Amir where he leads a peaceful life and trying to eradicate his bitter past and living a new life in a new land.

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