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The Phenomenology of the Hunted Past: A Critical Synthesis and Rhetorical Reconstruction of Postcolonial Trauma in The Kite Runner

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Abstract

In Khaled Hosseini's The Kite Runner, the past hunts the postcolonial subject across time and space. This study uses the 'hunted past' theory to examine trauma in a society split by imperial interference and domestic colonization. Instead of seeing the flashback as a static symptom, this study proposes that the 'hunted past' is a narrative mechanism that brings the 'silenced' history of ethnic erasure into the present through guilt. Frantz Fanon's postcolonial psychopathology and Cathy Caruth's traumatic belatedness theory are used to critique the novel's Pashtun-Hazara division as a 'Manichean' fissure. It claims that Amir's betrayal of Hassan is a ritualistic replay of Afghanistan's structural ethnic hierarchies—a 'micro-colonialism' where the favored subject sacrifices the subaltern to survive. The 'Great Game,' the Soviet invasion, and the Taliban ascendancy have left the Afghan mentality structurally 'unhomed,' generating a diasporic condition marked by a continual flight from history, according to the research. Importantly, this study challenges the novel's redemption narrative. It shows the text's ideological blind spots—the marketing of Afghan pain for Western consumption and the blatant erasure of the female subaltern—by rigorously criticizing 'auto-Orientalism' and gendered silence. The story seeks reconciliation by rescuing the future generation, but the 'hunted past' resists assimilation. The research reveals that redemption for postcolonial subjects is a risky negotiation with a history that refuses to be buried.

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1. Introduction

While we are rather enamored with the histories we possess, the pasts we lack must inevitably be ghostwritten by our own subconscious. These repressed pasts fight their way into the present with remorse and violence. To understand the narrative, meet these spirits. Khaled Hosseini's compelling description of this war in *The Kite Runner* (2003) shows how sorrow changes you forever. Hosseini illustrates the difficulty of atonement with the tragic narrative of Amir, a privileged Kabul child who betrays his Hazara friend Hassan. The work reflects Afghanistan's post-colonial attitude, not just a confession. Afghanistan altered from the monarchy's collapse to the Soviet invasion and Taliban control. After two empires and ideologies decimated Afghanistan, it feels like a sad turning point. The country's struggle to identify with foreign troops and home issues is tragic. Not just backgrounds, but personalities are built here. Broken politics enable severe, tight hierarchies to control the country. Hosseini shows trauma by showing how personal and political calamities harm the mind and follow the diaspora. I suggest that *The Kite Runner* reveals how postcolonial identity is founded on a persecuted history and collective anguish from political instability, ethnic separation, and cultural displacement. Amir must face his inherited history to be forgiven and saved. It means that only addressing your past ghosts can change you. Since 2003, Kite Runner research has changed. Researchers in traumatology, postcolonial theory, diaspora studies, and narrative analysis appreciate the book.

The most popular complaint is that fiction and psychology focus on pain, blame, and redemption. Amir's psychological development is shaped by Hassan's rape, according to Metcalf (2012). Amir's disintegration to recovery is shown by Sahoo (2018) using trauma theory. Bromander (2012) studies memory and empathy and suggests the novel's narrative structure mirrors trauma. These studies provide valuable insights into the text's psychological aspects, but they disregard trauma's relationship with Afghanistan's postcolonial environment. This study expands on their findings by linking individual trauma to historical collective violence. The main things that psychological and narrative criticism look at are trauma, guilt, and redemption. Metcalf (2012) posits that Hassan's rape represents the central trauma in the novel that influences Amir's psychological development. This is the main study he did on betrayal trauma. Metcalf's analysis presupposes the novel's significance. Sahoo (2018) utilises trauma theory to demonstrate Amir's transition from a condition of fragmentation to completeness. Bromander's (2012) research on memory and empathy suggests that the narrative in the book resembles a traumatic memory. These studies offer psychological insights into the text; however, they predominantly focus on trauma as an individual experience, neglecting Afghanistan's postcolonial context.

This study also says that personal trauma is always connected to violence on a larger scale in the past. There are fewer studies on innovative writing methods. Caruth's (1996) theory of unclaimed experience clarifies the novel's segmentation into discrete temporal segments, whereas Vickroy's (2002) trauma fiction framework corresponds with Hosseini's narrative techniques. The two frameworks help you understand the book. But Hosseini's criticism has not looked at how symbolism, metaphor, and narrative structure can show what trauma is like. A huge amount of scholarship exist, but some key views remain: How the novel may Westernise Afghanistan to attract

Western readers. How gender affects everything and blocks Hazara women's voices. Amir and Hosseini's status and story authority Diaspora, memory, and Afghan identity examination: a deep understanding of 'hunted past' This research overcomes shortcomings utilizing postcolonial critique, trauma theory, and thorough inquiry. It always spots the novel's ideological holes. This paper applies 'hunted past' theory to postcolonial subjectivity, critically examines Hosseini's diasporic position in his Afghanistan writing, examines gender and class's effects on trauma representation, and meticulously examines how literary techniques can convey traumatic consciousness.

This study examines *The Kite Runner* utilizing postcolonial and trauma theories. The novel represents personal and national catastrophes, therefore we must study it from two angles. No single phrase captures the book's intricacy. Together, the frameworks explain how trauma and historical events may damage brains and emotions. Postcolonial philosophy reveals the novel's politics and history. Three theoretical principles guide this analysis: In his influential article *Orientalism* (1978), Said explains how Western language portrays the 'Orient' as strange, backward, and different, justifying colonial authority. Said's approach is helpful for two reasons even though Western forces never conquered Afghanistan. Afghanistan's buffer status in the 'Great Game' between the British and Russian empires left it subject to imperial pressures and interventions. These pressures and interventions eventually led to the creation of the country's current political structure (Said, 2002). Second, and maybe more important for this analysis, we need to look at *The Kite Runner* as a piece of writing that was written by an author who is from a different country and mostly for Western readers. Hosseini's novel became a best-seller in part because it was written in English and published by a major American press. It also let Western readers see an 'exotic' Afghanistan at a time when the U.S. was getting more involved in the area after the 9/11 attacks. This study uses Said not only to learn about Afghanistan's past but also to look closely at how the book could be used to talk about Orientalism while also trying to make Afghan experiences more relatable. The book's graphic violence scenes, its focus on ethnic violence (especially through the character of Assef), and its story arc that leads to American refuge may unintentionally make Westerners consider Afghanistan to be a place of inexplicable cruelty that needs outside help.

Fanon's 1961 book *The Wretched of the Earth* explains how colonialism generates mental trauma and oppression that people accept. Fanon claims that colonialism creates a 'Manichean world' of opposites like coloniser/colonised, civilised/savage, and superior/inferior. These dichotomies are internalised by the colonised. Fanon's ideas explain internal colonialism in Pashtun-Hazara relations, even though Afghanistan was not colonised. Hazaras have been enslaved, kept out of politics, and considered inferior. This displays the colonial setup. Amir believed Pashtuns were superior; therefore, he initially did not recognise Hassan as his equal, even if they were buddies. This shows how ethnic hierarchies develop psychologically. Hassan accepts being lower than Amir and never questions the social system that places him in service to Amir, demonstrating Fanon's 'internalised oppression'. Fanon's understanding of violence as part of colonial ties helps us comprehend the novel's rape scene and Taliban ethnic cleansing. These are logical expansions of a dominant system, not anomalies.

Bhabha's (1994) ideas of 'hybridity' and 'unhomeliness' provide ways to understand the diasporic experience, which is the main focus of the second half of the

book. The term ‘unhomeliness’ refers to the psychological state of being both inside and outside of one's culture, while ‘hybridity’ denotes the condition of postcolonial subjects who inhabit the space between cultures and do not fully belong to either. Amir's life in California is a great example of both of these ideas. He is not completely Afghan or American. He lives in a liminal space where his Afghan identity is both kept alive (by the Afghan immigrant community in Fremont) and changed (by his education, language, and marriage to Soraya). He is not completely Afghan or American. This hybridity entails the amalgamation of cultures and a profound destabilization of identity. Bhabha argues that this ‘third space’ of hybridity could be useful, which would lead to new ways of acting and fighting back. Conversely, hybridity initially functions as a mechanism of escape for Amir, enabling him to evade the confrontation of his past experiences. His ‘unhomeliness’ shows up as a deep disconnect from both his American life (which never really feels like ‘home’) and his Afghan identity (which he cannot fully claim because he feels guilty about it). This means that the novel does not show hybridity as a solution; instead, it shows it as a problem that needs to be worked through by facing the past that has been hunted.

Trauma theory provides the psychological and phenomenological context for understanding how catastrophic events damage consciousness and identity, while postcolonial theory provides the historical and political backdrop. Trauma is ‘an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, uncontrolled, repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena’ (Caruth, 1996, p. 11). Later trauma is experienced as flashbacks, nightmares, and intrusive memories, says Caruth. *The Kite Runner* asks you to grasp ‘belatedness.’ Years after Hassan's rape, his tale from California seems solid, yet the past continues meddling.

The novel's temporal fragmentation, which is marked by a constant shift between the past and the present, formally enacts a traumatic consciousness. Caruth also argues that trauma affects more than just one person; it also affects a group of people. In the book, personal trauma, like Hassan's rape and Amir's guilt, is closely connected to group trauma, like the wars, displacements, and ethnic violence that have happened in Afghanistan. The hunted past is active while operating at both registers at the same time. LaCapra (2001) differentiates trauma responses into ‘acting out’ and ‘working through.’ The traumatised individual compulsively reenacts the past, perpetually lacking critical distance. The subject faces the trauma to acquire sufficient distance for its integration into a life narrative. The difference makes Amir's mental journey clearer. Amir ‘acts out’ his trauma by feeling guilty and ashamed and avoiding it for decades. He can not talk about Hassan, go back to Afghanistan, or be honest. Rahim Khan tells Amir to face what he has been avoiding. He deals with his trauma by going back to Afghanistan and saving Sohrab. LaCapra, on the other hand, warns against stories that say you can heal completely. Live with trauma to overcome it. This is complex, as the novel's uplifting finale illustrates.

The postcolonial-trauma ‘hunted past’ is a powerful theoretical synthesis. Past violence impacts us today. There are three layers to this idea: Unresolved violence, ethnic hierarchy, and migration create ‘hunted pasts’ in postcolonial nations. Afghan history is indelible due to imperial meddling, ethnic oppression, and conflict. Psychological: Trauma theory explains how events from the past can still affect people

today. Because of the ethnic violence and historical conflicts that frame Amir's betrayal of Hassan, Amir's individual guilt is shaped by and inseparable from these phenomena. The literary techniques utilised by Hosseini are representative of the phenomenology of being hunted, including the temporal disruption, the compulsive return, and the inability to escape. The 'hunted past' describes both a condition (postcolonial subjects are haunted by unreconciled histories) and a method (examining how literature represents the past's active pursuit of the present). Without taking into account the traumatic legacies that actively shape subjectivity, it is impossible to comprehend postcolonial identity. This framework makes it possible to analyse how *The Kite Runner* demonstrates this point.

Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*'s protagonists' wounds are rooted in tragedy. The patterns of foreign invasions and domestic power struggles that have occurred throughout Afghanistan's history have resulted in the nation's fragmentation and the weaponization of ethnic biases, which has created conditions that have enabled the rise of the Taliban. This chapter argues that postcolonial history catalysis the narrative's personal and societal suffering. It is clear that the nation is struggling with both external dominance and internal conflict, as evidenced by the socio-economic hierarchy that exists between Pashtuns and Hazaras, the political events that have caused instability, and even the symbolic violence that occurred during the kite tournament. Critically, Hosseini's representation of Afghan history is shaped by his position as a diasporic author writing for Western audiences, which influences which aspects of Afghan history are emphasised and narrated.

Afghan politics and international stature were impacted by its buffer state role during the nineteenth-century 'Great Game' between the British and Russian Empires. Afghanistan notably resisted colonialism, but the Anglo-Afghan Wars caused internal instability and a centralised state that clashed with its varied ethnic populations (Barfield, 2010). This 'postcolonial without colonialism' situation allows imperial powers to shape national development without direct administrative control. This surface conceals deeply ingrained ethnic hierarchies that are direct legacies of this historical process. The opening scenes of the novel take place in Kabul before the Soviet Union gained control of the city. These scenes look modern and calm. The relationship between the Pashtun and Hazara in the book is an example of internal colonialism, in which one ethnic group rules another without any outside help. Hazaras are Shi'a Muslims who look Asian. They have been persecuted, enslaved, and pushed to the edges of society for hundreds of years. Most Pashtun stories have shown them as outsiders or people of a lower race (Mousavi, 1998).

Assef is the most extreme example of this historical division of ethnic groups. His vicious xenophobia, which included calling Hassan a 'flat-nosed Hazara' and promoting Hitler-inspired racial purity, was the natural extension of historical prejudices (Hosseini, 2003, 40). Assef uses Hitler to connect Afghan ethnic hatred to genocide and fascism around the world. This link shows how Afghanistan's internal colonialism is similar to ideas about racial purity and ethnic cleansing from the 20th century. Hosseini's emphasis on Assef's extremism is effective; however, it may portray ethnic violence as individual pathology instead of a systemic issue, thereby obscuring the social complicity in the marginalization of the Hazara. The characters' surroundings show how the world is divided by class and race. Amir lives in luxury, while Hassan

lives in a mud hut and cannot go to school, even though they are very close. 'Intimate colonialism' is when ethnic hierarchy and economic privilege operate together. Amir cannot realise how unjust this is and may adore Hassan despite his inferiority. In a good situation, Amir does not see how systemic inequities hinder the boys' friendship.

The book covers Afghanistan's darkest periods, including the 1973 revolution that ousted the monarchy, the 1979 Soviet invasion, the civil war, and the Taliban ascent. Political instability kills and displaces people. The characters' journeys from safety to peril demonstrate how the nation has suffered. The 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan generated several challenges. The Cold War proxy invasion reveals how global forces exploit postcolonial nations as instruments rather than freeing them. Baba and Amir were among millions of Afghans who escaped in gasoline tankers and crossed perilous borders, causing everyone agony (Edwards, 2002). Flight—leaving people, places, and history—is the ultimate identity loss. Refugees must reinvent themselves elsewhere. Baba's path helps trauma recovery. An accomplished Kabul businessman, he currently runs a fuel station in Fremont, California. Moving made him unhappy and weak. Baba struggles to assimilate to American society because he is torn between his Afghan past and an unfamiliar present. The diaspora may slowly kill those who are too devoted to their home country to relocate, as his death showed soon after Amir's wedding. These tendencies ended once the Taliban assumed power. Amir's return to Taliban-controlled Kabul exposes a world of public executions, torture, and fear. The story foreshadows genocide by depicting the Taliban's slaughter of Hazaras through Hassan and his wife's terrible executions (Rashid, 2000). Assef's return to Taliban leadership ties personal anguish to governmental brutality. The bully who sexually abused Hassan as a child can now commit ethnic cleansing in a prison. This link demonstrates the connection between political violence and violence against people.

Kite fighting may look like fun, but it shows how cruel Afghan society is. The tournament is competitive and has a hierarchy, but it also values skill and culture. The ultimate power is to break other kites with strings that have glass on them. In this game, you have to kill other players to win. This is a strong metaphor for the fight for power and control in Afghan society. It is clear that the kite runner is less important. Like all kite runners, Hassan picks up kites that have fallen to honor the flyer. In his role, he is always under Amir's control. Hassan is raped while trying to get Amir's winning kite, but he will not give up. This proves that hierarchical violence and tournament sexual violence are linked. Hassan is in trouble for loyalty, proving the game cannot protect the weak. Betrayal and trauma destroy the kite, which symbolises Afghan culture and Amir's idyllic upbringing. Social hierarchy may undermine even the most valuable practices. Later in the tale, the kite becomes a major symbol. Amir will never forget the blue kite that made him smile as a youngster and let him make Baba smile. He would constantly think of Hassan's rape and feel guilty. When Amir flies a kite with Sohrab at the end of the book and says, 'For you, a thousand times over,' the kite symbolises unity and healing. This metaphorical salvation is fleeting. Sohrab's trauma and quiet suggest healing may be impossible.

Analysis

The Kite Runner blurs personal and political. Amir's remorse, humiliation, and secret memories illustrate a country in crises' moral issues. His betrayal of Hassan and

his lifetime endeavor to forget it reveal how the affluent remain silent, go along, and deliberately forget horrible things. This chapter argues Amir's trip, lack of action, attempts to forget the past, and narrative telling indicate how trauma affects people's thoughts and national history influences their daily lives. The book's most terrible episode is Amir's mute witness to Hassan's rape. This moment illustrates that dominating groups are lacking in morality to resist injustice, not simply one person's timidity. Hassan is a mistreated Hazara. Amir, on the other hand, is a Pashtun and cares about his social standing. Amir's lack of action is not only a betrayal of him, but it is also part of the abuse that happens to ethnic minorities all the time. He thought about heading into that alley to protect Hassan, just like he had protected me many times before, even if it meant getting in trouble. I could get away. Hosseini says, "Finally, I ran." (p. 77) This makes me think of times in our country's past when people chose to stay quiet instead of fighting back. This scene is a clear example of how Afghan society did not deal with ethnic hatred, which led to genocide. Many Afghans did not speak out against the rising ethnic violence that would destroy the country because they had similar reasons or because they were already biased (Metcalf, 2012). Amir is afraid and does not want to do anything because he wants to stay safe. The book mostly does not talk about gender and instead shows the rape through the shame and trauma of men. People do not talk much about Hassan's abuse, the problems he is having inside, or the mental pain he is still in. It also does not say anything about the stories of women who were raped during the many wars that have happened in Afghanistan.

Amir chooses to actively repress and erase the trauma after Hassan rapes him. He frames Hassan for stealing so that he has to leave the country because he cannot stand the betrayal. After a traumatic event, countries, like people, often try to avoid facing the uncomfortable truths of their pasts by making up official stories that conveniently leave out shame, collaboration, and internal conflict (LaCapra, 2001). By framing Hassan as a microcosm, Amir is trying to rewrite history by making Hassan look like the bad guy and getting himself off the hook. Repression, erasure, and creating false memories After Hassan's rape, Amir chooses to actively suppress and eliminate the trauma. He makes it look like Hassan stole something so that he has to leave the country because he cannot stand how he betrayed him. Countries, like people, often try to avoid facing the uncomfortable truths of their pasts after something bad happens by making up official stories that omit shame, cooperation, and internal conflict (LaCapra, 2001). Amir is trying to change history by making Hassan look like the bad guy and taking the blame off of himself by framing him as a microcosm.

The novel explores how personal and collective suffering are intertwined, creating a frightening and unavoidable web of sorrow. Twenty years after his life-changing events, Amir recounts them in the US. This is related to Caruth's (1996) trauma theory. She describes trauma as a hidden wound that returns in hallucinations, nightmares, and flashbacks (p. 4). The exhortation from Rahim Khan, 'There is a way to be good again' (Hosseini, 2003, p. 2), evoked repeated interruptions that trigger memory (Vickroy, 2002). This intentional collapse forces readers to confront trauma's confusion and temporal disintegration. *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini depicts the characters' buried suffering through stunning symbolism, metaphors, and a shattered narrative framework. These methods externalise internal psychology. Hosseini's principal tool for expressing remorse, humiliation, and grief is symbolism. Like Amir's

mental condition, the book's principal emblem, the kite, goes from bliss and childlike innocence to anguish and guilt.

Another powerful emblem is the pomegranate tree where Amir and Hassan inscribed ‘Amir and Hassan, the sultans of Kabul’ (Hosseini, 2003, p. 27). As children, the tree symbolised their friendship's power and potential. Amir returns to Afghanistan years later to find the tree dead and leafless. This shows that his treachery, time, and strife destroyed their connection. Hassan's cleft lip indicates his poverty and difference. After Baba pays for his operation, his lip is fixed, proving social hierarchies can be broken. After the rape, the scar symbolises lost innocence and a lasting physical and mental identity change. Assef's brass knuckles, which he used to beat Hassan and Amir, symbolise fascism and systemic brutality. The emblem ties his childhood brutality to state-sponsored horror when he returns as a Taliban official, illustrating that violence is personal and group. Hosseini organises the novel with extensive metaphors. Images and storytelling hint at the ‘hunted past’ without mentioning it. Not as something Amir recalls, the past continuously chases him. The book's first words illustrate this concept. I saw his face,’ Amir claims before Hassan's rape. Saw the resignation letter. I recognised the appearance. Lamb's appearance ‘(Hosseini, 2003, p. 76). Hassan's crime is compared to Eid al-Adha's lamb sacrifice. This implies the rape was necessary. As a witness and participant in a sacrifice, Amir joins a larger cultural or cosmic order. Finally, the metaphor implies Afghanistan's horrific past. Trauma becomes increasingly vivid as the narrative jumps between Amir's boyhood in Kabul in the 1970s and his adulthood in America after 9/11.

Caruth, a trauma theorist, says that traumatic events do not usually fit into the linear stories of life. The story begins with a phone call from Rahim Khan in 2001, which brings Amir (and the reader) back to 1975 right away. The past and present are always talking to each other, remembering and working through things. This fragmentation lets readers get involved in Amir's mental battle. For most of the novel, the structure shows Amir ‘acting out’ his obsessive repetition, which keeps him from moving on from his past. The only way to ‘work through’ things is to go back to Afghanistan. This means that the broken-up story structure must eventually lead to direct confrontation.

This discussion contends that Amir's transition from guilt-laden exile to tentative reconciliation epitomises a trauma-recovery process wherein the assurance of a personal and national future necessitates confronting historical spectres. Hosseini indicates that through Rahim Khan's summons, the return to a traumatised nation, and the symbolic salvation of Sohrab, Amir's American life is turned upside down by Rahim Khan's phone call and mysterious statement, ‘There is a way to be good again’ (Hosseini, 2003, p. 2). This starts the journey of redemption. Rahim Khan, Amir's friend and link to his childhood in Afghanistan, is a symbol of how the past will not stay quiet. Amir returns to Taliban-controlled Afghanistan following this call. A dismal Kabul with destroyed buildings, public executions, and fearful people is his vision. LaCapra (2001) describes ‘working-through’ as overcoming trauma to acquire perspective and not ‘act out.’ Important scenario matches that notion. Beyond Hassan's son Sohrab He, Amir's false friend, and the next generation must confront their parents. Sohrab saves Hassan thereafter, preserving his family's legacy. Traumatising fictional character Assef depicts Taliban violence and ethnic bigotry.

While enticing, this redemption story challenges who matters. In the novel, guilt and healing save Amir. Mostly healing Amir, Sohrab has no life. The story downplays Sohrab's parents' death, Taliban sexual abuse, and suicide attempt. Amir and Sohrab fly a kite at the book's end and say, 'For you, a thousand times over' (Hosseini, 2003, p. 371). Sohrab's suicide attempt wounds linger. Ritual and memory transform trauma into honesty. History has fractured postcolonial identity, which can only be rebuilt by turning painful memories into loving and responsible actions. Amir now values acknowledgement, sacrifice, and the next generation over power and control. A close study at *The Kite Runner* reveals major problems and blind spots. Hosseini has challenges as a Western-reading diasporic English-language novelist. After 9/11, Americans became interested in Afghan culture, making *The Kite Runner* a hit. The novel humanises Afghans but risks Orientalist tropes by showing unfathomable violence, ethnic depravity, and religious extremism. Redemption is feasible from Kabul to California. People may need to escape to the West to mature ethically. Western readers may instinctively believe Afghans are behind and Americans are ahead due to this arrangement. A more critically self-aware piece may query how diaspora impacts memory or confess they represent Afghanistan to Western readers.

A majority of the book's trauma exploration features men. Relationships with men characterise Sanaubar, Soraya, and Sohrab's moms, not persons. Most significantly, no female Hazara voices. The ethnicity and gender oppression of Hazara women makes this silence even more troubling. The rape tale is dominated by Amir's remorse, not Hassan's suffering, and Afghanistan's conflicts' sexual brutality against women is never acknowledged. This shows the book emphasises how sexual assault damages men's honour, not survivors. Deeper understanding is needed to grasp Soraya's background, criminality, Afghan men and women's norms, and Afghan women's grief and relocation. Understanding class privilege's effects on knowledge, communication, and cognition is lacking in the text. Hassan's inner life is obscured by Amir. Finally, redemption may obscure systemic transformation and responsibility in the book. Amir saving Sohrab is good, but it does not fix the ethnic hierarchy, economic inequality, and political instability that caused the misery. Amir and Sohrab are in California from Afghanistan as the story ends.

Conclusion

Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* shows that trauma is a complicated legacy that includes political history, ethnic conflict, and being forced to move, and it can lead to guilt, mental breakdown, and a haunted mind. The novel says that the only way to put together a broken postcolonial identity is to face what this study has called 't' instead of running away from it. This study shows that the book works on more than one level. It illustrates how imperial intervention, internal colonialism, and ongoing violence have historically and politically shaped Afghanistan's postcolonial state. It shows how collective historical trauma breaks up identities and keeps happening over and over again in a psychological and phenomenological way. This unified theoretical framework brings together Said's study of Orientalism, Fanon's description of colonised consciousness, Bhabha's ideas of hybridity and unhomeliness, Caruth's idea of traumatic belatedness, and LaCapra's difference between acting out and working through to show how people who have been colonised live after violence. These points of view are shown in the 'hunted past.' Hosseini, a diasporic author writing for Western

readers, may endorse Orientalist ideals. The book focuses on male pain, ignoring women's stories, especially those of Hazara women who were oppressed. It emphasises elite ideas, making it harder to understand non-elite voices and experiences.

The Kite Runner is essential because it takes place in Afghanistan and addresses concerns that impact individuals worldwide who have experienced colonialism and relocated. The difficulty of making meaning of painful history, the impossibility of escaping the past by relocating, the necessity of addressing communal violence instead of hiding it, and the reality that healing is transient and continuing are among these. Postcolonial countries must embrace their historical scars and not let them define them as victims, the book concludes. They must grieve, make new acquaintances, and transform their guilt and humiliation into next-generation tasks. This study might inform future research in many ways. It might examine Afghan diaspora authors' works to evaluate how social statuses impact depiction. To uncover universal and culture-specific trauma and identity processes, it might compare literature from various postcolonial contexts. Focusing on female Afghan writers could potentially address Hosseini's gender blindness. Finally, it may examine how second-generation diasporas like Sohrab signify inherited pain. Research on how literature reflects and builds postcolonial subjectivity in an age of displacement, violence, and imperial legacies would be helpful.

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Abstract in Arabic

يطارد الماضي الذات في مرحلة ما بعد الاستعمار عبر الزمكان في رواية (عداء الطائرة الورقية) للكاتب خالد حسيني. توظف هذه الدراسة نظرية "الماضي المُطارِد" لفحص الصدمة في مجتمع منقسم جراء التدخل الإمبراطوري والاستعمار الداخلي. وبدلاً من النظر إلى الاسترجاع الزمني (flashback) كعَرَض ثابت، تفترض هذه الدراسة أن "الماضي المُطارِد" يمثل آلية سردية تستحضر التاريخ المسكوت عنه للمحو العرقي إلى الحاضر عبر عقدة الذنب. تستعين الدراسة بمفهوم علم النفس المَرَضي لما بعد الاستعمار عند فرانز فانون، ونظرية "التأخر الصدمي" عند كاثي كاروث، لنقد الانقسام بين البشتون والهزارة في الرواية بوصفه صدعاً "مانوياً". وتجادل بأن خيانة أمير لحسن ما هي إلا تكرار طقوسي للتراتبيات العرقية البنيوية في أفغانستان؛ أي "استعمار مُصغَّر" تُضحي فيه الذات المُفضَّلة بالتابع (المهمش) من أجل البقاء. وبحسب البحث، فإن اللعبة الكبرى والغزو السوفيتي وصعود حركة طالبان، قد جعلت العقلية الأفغانية "مُشرَّدة" أي بلا وطن على نحو بنيوي، مما ولّد حالة من الشتات تتسم بالهروب المستمر من التاريخ. كما تتحدى هذه الدراسة سردية الخلاص في الرواية ، إذ تكشف عن البقع العمياء الأيديولوجية في النص — والمتمثلة في تسويق الألم الأفغاني للاستهلاك الغربي، والمحو الصارخ للتابع الأنثوي — وذلك من خلال النقد الصارم لظاهرة "الاستشراق الذاتي" والصمت القائم على النوع الاجتماعي. ورغم أن القصة تسعى إلى تحقيق المصالحة عبر إنقاذ جيل المستقبل، إلا أن "الماضي المُطارِد" يقاوم محاولات الاستيعاب. ويخلص البحث إلى أن الخلاص بالنسبة للذوات ما بعد الكولونيالية ليس سوى تفاوض محفوف بالمخاطر مع تاريخ يرفض أن يُدفَن.
