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**COMPREHENDING HUMAN BONDAGE THROUGH KHALID HUSSEINI'S
NOVELS, *THE KITE RUNNER*, *A THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS*, AND
*THE MOUNTAINS ECHOED***

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Abstract:

The present paper investigates the effects of war on human relationships. In his novels, Khaled Hosseini depicts the crisis scenario in Afghan culture and illustrates how it affects human relationships. He has elaborated on the Afghanistan war and its effects on the Afghan people and society. All of Hosseini's works are set against a backdrop of political instability and upheaval and further, it examines how diverse characters in Hosseini's novels form alliances to combat the tyranny that has persisted in Afghanistan for many years. Additionally, it investigates how this territorial struggle wreaked havoc on the lives of the Afghan people.

Keywords: *War, Human Relationships, Struggle, Tyranny, etc.*

Aristotle was correct when he described the man as a social animal. It is necessary for him to live in a community where he is dependent on the actions and resources of other people for him to continue existing. He keeps a wide variety of friendships and professional connections with his peers. A connection between two people may be described as a relationship. We have relationships with our families, with our friends, and most importantly, with God. He is the most significant person in our lives. Relationships are inherently social in character and emerge as a direct consequence of the interactions and exchanges that take place between a myriad of individuals. Even though individuals come from diverse backgrounds, cultures, ethnicities, races, nations, and socioeconomic levels, this contact links them together emotionally. Whenever two people engage with one another, they do it following a set of behavioural standards and conventions. Because of this, human connections cannot remain in a state of emotional emptiness or a vacuum.

The conflict has a profound impact on human relationships, and as a result, many authors choose to centre their stories around this central theme. One of the authors who has written on the influence that war has on human relations is Khaled Hosseini. Other authors have also written about this topic. He was born in Afghanistan, and throughout his career, he has shown the turmoil that has gripped Afghanistan. The books written by Hosseini are all set in Afghanistan and represent the country's rich historical past.

There is a wide variety of human connections. They may be classified into two broad categories, internal and external. Siblings and parents are the first people a person forms close bonds with, on the inside. The shared experience of being human makes them inseparable. Each member of a family takes on a unique function and develops unique bonds with each of their relatives. Relationships with people one doesn't live with or have a blood link to are considered external.



Relationships based on shared interests or activities are hence examples of extrinsic bonds. In addition, marriage might pave the way for the development of new friendships and romantic partnerships. In addition to the husband and wife, marriage also unites two sets of parents and their children.

Relationships, whether internal or external, are crucial to a person's well-being and survival. However, one's closest personal ties, such as those with one's family, are of the utmost importance. A person's life might be thrown into chaos if any one of these connections is compromised or disrupted. So it is stated that a society where people have healthy, fulfilling relationships would be peaceful and prosperous. The human connections that make up a society are what give it its complexity. This method aids man in leading a fulfilled and successful existence on this planet. Man is inherently interconnected with his environment. Only by interacting with other people and learning from their stories can his human nature grow, and society provides him with the means to do so. A sense of belonging and solidarity is fostered by human characteristics such as compassion, generosity, mutual connection, and understanding.

Literature paints an accurate image of the range of emotions that people experience throughout their lives, including the highs and lows, pleasures and sufferings, and the diversity of life itself. The most significant aspect is that it addresses the topic of human relationships and the dynamic nature of such connections. The inner and exterior behaviour of the characters in a writer's works is both vividly portrayed in the writer's work. A writer takes his own experiences, creatively re-creates parts of them, and uses all of these things to represent characters in his work. The world of literature is replete with a wide variety of intricate male-female pairings.

In addition to being able to portray it accurately, the novel as a genre has played a significant part in both the fascination and comprehension of modern society. It facilitates the growth of our awareness of the facts of the world that surrounds us, which is quite helpful. A sensitive writer will often find that the ethos of a country, which is typically intertwined with cultural heritage, affects their writing. In addition to this, the author analyses how human connections contribute to the development of shifting perspectives and preferences within a certain culture. A writer's ability to perceive and envision the world around him is directly correlated to the experiences and interactions he has had throughout his life. The vast majority of the time, he tries to get a sense of the flavour and pulse of the society, which is following the culture that prevails at the moment. A significant number of authors in the field of literature have addressed the topic of human connections in their works of fiction, which serve as the foundation for their stories. Jane Austen, Virginia Woolf, Henry James, Iris Murdoch, and D.H. Lawrence are some important authors who have dealt with the topic of human relationships deftly and skillfully in their writing.

The Afghan-American author Khaled Hosseini's three best-selling books, *The Kite Runner*, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, and *And The Mountains Echoed*, have all received widespread praise. These books are set against the war in Afghanistan. He has tackled the harsh realities of the modern world in his writings. Hosseini has addressed themes of paramount relevance in the twenty-first century.

Even though his novels are about Afghanistan, they nevertheless seem quite relevant to modern life. Rebeca Stuhr makes the following observations on the author's two books, *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns*: "Hosseini tucks within the plots and narratives of his two novels events and details that address the state of civil strife and international hegemony in Afghanistan, including the U.S. involvement there beginning in 2001. Through the details of his plots and the interaction of his characters, Hosseini presents problems of racism and ethnocentrism, as well as exile and immigration" (Stuhr, 65).

The tale of *The Kite Runner* is told from the perspectives of two young Afghan men: Amir, the son of a rich man in Kabul, and Hasan, his best friend. The book might be thought of as a bildungsroman since it follows Amir as he grows up and explores his changing connection with his



homeland. It also illustrates the socio-political structure of Afghanistan from the late 1970s up to the collapse of the fundamentalist Taliban government in 2001, beginning with the fundamentalist regime of the Taliban in the 1990s. Hosseini has addressed important topics, such as the rapid political, social, and economic transformation occurring in Afghanistan in the present day. The narrative of *The Kite Runner* is broken up into three parts, and the beginning of the story takes place in Kabul. In this section, the reader is taken back in time to the early to mid-1970s to learn about Amir, the main character of the book, and his boyhood. This segment also sees the development of Amir and Hassan's bond with one another. The second half of the story starts in 1981 when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. As a result of this war, Amir and his father were forced to leave Afghanistan and make their new home in California, where they are now members of the Afghan immigrant community. This section draws to a close with the wedding of Amir and Soraya as well as the passing of Amir's father in the year 1989. The conclusion of the narrative starts in the year 2001 when Amir travels through Pakistan on his way back to Afghanistan. Amir receives a phone call from Rahim Khan, who is not only his guru but also his father's closest friend. Rahim Khan extends an invitation to Amir to come back to Afghanistan.

The bond of love and friendship that exists between two women, Mariam and Laila, is portrayed in the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. As the book spans four decades, the experiences of these Afghan women serve as a representation of the country's history. The lives of Mariam and Laila serve as a lens through which the political instability and civil conflict in Afghanistan are portrayed in the book. The novel provides a narrative of the significant events that occurred throughout the history of Afghanistan, such as the rise to power of Daoud Khan and the incident of 9/11 that led to the downfall of the Taliban in Afghanistan. In addition to this, it shows the Afghan people struggling to reconstruct their crumbling homeland and documents the happenings, particulars, and tales of eternal mankind. The following information on the anti-Daoud rallies that took place in the streets of Kabul after Khyber was killed is provided to us by the novel: "On April 17, 1978, the year Mariam turned nineteen, a man named Mir Akbar Khyber was found murdered two days later, there was a large demonstration in Kabul. Everyone in the neighbourhood was in the streets talking about it . . . Rasheed said that Mir Akbar Khyber had been a prominent Communist and that his supporters were blaming the murder on President Daoud Khan's government" (Hosseini, 96-97).

Rebeca Stuhr makes the following observation about *A Thousand Splendid Suns*: "Hosseini provides an even fuller portrait of Afghanistan in *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, taking the reader deeper into the country's history. He sets the novel in several cities across thirty years of turmoil. The novel takes place not only in Kabul but also in Herat, Bamiyan, and Mariam's small fictional village just outside of Herat. Hosseini fills out the outlines that he provided the reader in *The Kite Runner*, working into his second novel's narrative the history of Afghanistan's long series of conflicts. Through the character of Laila's schoolteacher-father, the reader receives a history lesson along with Laila and Tariq as Laila's father tells the two children about their heritage" (Hosseini, 67).

And the Mountains Echoed is Hosseini's third novel, and it tells the narrative of two brothers and sisters named Pari and Abdullah, as well as their close relationship and lifelong estrangement from one another. The book describes how they are living in abject poverty with their stepmother Parwana and a newborn half-brother in a home that is falling apart under their financial burdens. To ensure that his small daughter, Pari, receives adequate care, Abdullah's father, Saboor, sells her to a couple. The jolt that Abdullah takes when he learns that Pari is about to be taken away from him is devastating, and he is never able to recover from the trauma of losing her.

The novels written by Hosseini depict the struggle and persecution that the people of Afghanistan face in their daily lives. The novels take place in a time and place that is fraught with



political instability and turbulence. He portrays the power of love, which assists the protagonists in surviving, helping others, and building a better future for Afghanistan after the conflict.

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