

The History of An Afghans' Nirvana In His Spirit ---A Ideal Portrait Of The

Author Himself

Keqing Chai

school of foreign languages Jiujiang University Jiujiang China 332005

ckqaie@126.com

Keywords: *The Kite Runner*; Amir; Khaled Hosseini; Nirvana In Spirit

Abstract. The paper explains the relationship between the author and the hero in the novel from the angle of their societies, which is an autobiography about life and spirit. After deep analysis of the novel, we find that the author and the hero Amir are not only alike in their experiences, but he describes Amir as his ideal about himself, so that a completely new Afghanistan American rises before the western world and naturally win their dignity and respectable status.

Introduction

The Kite Runner is written by its author Khaled Hosseini in first-person in the form of a semi-autobiographical novel, a living and spiritual autobiography, and to a certain extent, it is a typical, Afghanistan-American real-life performance. Though he is an obscure writer, his debut (first) novel, it has been so much buzz in the world, and at the same time it has obtained rave reviews. But criticism of the work tends to be confined to the kite image alone and evaluate the work itself, perhaps it is also the need to popularize the work. (*The Kite Runner* 2006.5 Khaled Hosseini, translated by Li Jihong, comments part) If we make an analysis of the works in the characters and plot from its author's life experience and social development status, before us will be rendering another scene: the author through the hero Amir this 'I' in the novel, expresses (show/tells us) his own life experience, spirit of evolution and his life pursuit, thus completes remodeling the perfect personality image in his mind, so that he can actualize the perfect personality in the hero in the novel which cannot reach in daily life, in this way the author has completed the remodeling of the author's ideal character image so that people in the West can come to know a brand new Afghanistan-American image which is totally different from that that Westerners can imagine, changing the Westerners ideas about Afghanistan-American by the Taliban since the 9/11 terrorist attacks that lead to the very negative impression about Muslims. In this way Muslims living in Western society can get the respect they deserve. We can explore and analyze on the following aspects: the personal experiences of the author, the main character in the novel Amir's growth, the international community and Afghanistan social development, the character's activities in the novel and the author's social activities after his works publication. From the overlapping or similarity or coincidence of the author's and Amir's experience and the differences of the two we hope to dig deeper rich connotation of the inner world of the author.

Literary works *The Kite Runner* cannot be interpreted by such extreme theory as Roland Barthes' idea in his later years that "the author is dead", and "the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the author" (to quote Zheng Hangsheng, P345, 1988 years). Understanding of the works *The Kite Runner* should also adopt this attitude. We must raise the author in the works, dialogue with the author, to understand the main character that "me" Amir. We

engage in dialogue with the author through his works, with the reader's understanding of the characters in the works "consulting" the author. When we compare Khaled Hosseini's life experience with that of the main character Amir, we have really found in Amir the similarity of Khaled Hosseini's life experience. The story of *The Kite Runner* is not Khaled Hosseini's fictional story, but should be the focus reflect of the inner feelings from his life experience in the transformation of the social environment, which he bestows on the protagonist the "I" Amir in the works, so the author describes Amir as the ideal representative of Khaled Hosseini. That's the reason why the actual life of Khaled Hosseini is not exactly the same as Amir's.

A high degree of the similarity in the experience of the author and the protagonist

We know about Khaled Hosseini from a lot of information: Khaled Hosseini was born on March 4, 1965, in Kabul, Afghanistan's capital, who is the eldest of the five children in the family, a son of a diplomat of Afghanistan's Foreign Ministry; His mother, a teacher of a girls' school in Kabul taught Farsi language and history; his family belongs to the prestigious Afghanistan upper-class families, but being a diplomat's son, his life is not very stable, and in ten years he has lived in three countries. In 1970, he went to Iran with his father, and the family returned back to Kabul in 1973, and in 1976 his father was sent to work in Paris, France. In 1980 when he was ready to return home, but due to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Khaled Hosseini's family sought asylum in the United States and was granted. After that they settled in San Jose, California, the United States. Early in the United States due to poverty, they applied to the Government of the United States for food stamps and welfare checks. Although life was so difficult for the Khaled Hosseinis they revived. Khaled Hosseini graduated from Independence High School in San Jose in 1984, applied for Santa Clara University and obtained Bachelor's degree in biology in 1988 and the next year he entered the University of California, San Diego, School of medicine, in 1993 he obtained M.D license. He Completed his practicing physician in internal medicine at Cedars-Sinai Medical Centre in Los Angeles in 1996. He had been practicing medicine until the novel *The Kite Runner* was published. 1.5 years later he specialized in fiction. In 2006 he received the United Nations humanitarian award, and was invited to serve as Goodwill Ambassador for the United Nations refugee agency. He and his wife, Roya, their two children are currently living in Northern California. He is an Afghanistan-American. He sets up a Khaled Hosseini fund, through which Khaled Hosseini has been to Afghanistan to provide humanitarian aid. When he was a child with his father in Iran there was a Hazara named Hosseini Khan working in his home for many years but the Hazara was much older than Hassan. He was 38 years old. They became good friends. He helped Khaled flying kite, and Khaled taught him to read. Khaled childhood read a large number of Persian poetry and Persian translation, such as Alice's adventures in Wonderland etc. This is Khaled Hosseini's resume.

What about the protagonist Amir? *The Kite Runner* describes this clearly. Amir was born in the summer of 1963, an only child in his family, whose father was a respected successful businessman, who donates an orphanage. Amir's mother taught classical Farsi literature at the University but died of dystocia when she gave birth to Amir in 1963 (not in 1965), who is a descendant of the Afghanistan Aristocrats. Amir's family belongs to the Afghanistan prestigious upper-class. His family is wealthy. In 1970, he had been in Tehran for a month, watching a game of The Soccer's World Cup. He experienced the coup in 1973 and witnessed the invasion of Russia in 1978. In March 1981 he with his father fled Kabul in a Russian shabby truck, by Jalalabad to Peshawar Pakistan. Half a year later, they went to The United States, and lived in Fremont California. Their early life in America was hard, receiving food

stamps from the Government of the United States. In the summer of 1983 he graduated from high school, then to a junior College majoring in English, began practice writing. Then he enrolled in San Jose State in English major. In the summer of 1988 he completed his first novel. His wife Soraya likes education work, has been teaching in a school. They have no child, and later they have adopted nephew Sohrab. Amir and Soraya organize fundraising activities helping a small hospital located in the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Amir when a child read Masnavi, the writer Saadi, Victor. hugo, Jules. Verne, and Mark. Twain and Ian Fleming. He is good at telling stories and writing stories.

The main character Amir is embodying the Nirvana of the author's spirit

We, by comparing their experiences, can easily find too many similarities or even the same points. Just as Khaled Hosseini said in an interview that Amir's experiences in Kabul in the 1970's all come from Khaled Hosseini's childhood experiences: he saw the movies, flew kites and loved to tell stories, everything from Khaled's childhood experiences. Amir and Khaled Hosseini's similar experience can be interpreted in the words above. And at the same he said that the stories are fictional. The key is the differences in their experiences where are the imagery and ideals that the author tries to express.

Reading the story roughly and sketchily, we find the protagonist and the author's experience are similar, but with careful in-depth reading, we know that they are quite different: Amir is the only child in the family, and when his mother died of childbirth, and his father becomes a widower, never marry again. An only child often want to have an exclusive paternal love psychologically rather than share fatherly love, and he hoped that "I want Baba all to myself" P13. For a widower, a shiny, strong and energetic man who is able to fight with the black bear, it seems natural and logical to have a love with a woman. The author designing the main characters' lives in such a way is to achieve his desired result that it is understandable (in Western culture) that the father and his son's betrayal of Islam, making these betrayals, reasonable and. Amir's father has betrayed the teachings of Islam both in life and religion's belief. As Amir heard mullah's words in the Islamic class "Islam considered drinking a terrible sin; those who drank would answer for their sin on the judgment day. "P15-16 this is Islam. But his father drank at home and told Amir "You'll never learn anything of value from those bearded idiots." P17 "Now, no matter what the mullah teaches, there is only one sin, only one. And that is theft. Every other sin is a variation of theft." P17 "If there's a God out there, then I would hope he has more important things to attend to than my drinking scotch or eating pork. "P18His betrayal of the Islam had not been punished because of his success in life. And this is his life. In fact, he used the same thought and action to mold Amir. As the author describes out of the protagonist's mouth: "Baba was always telling us about the mischief he and Ali used to cause ... But in none of his stories did Baba ever refer to Ali as his friend. The curious thing was, I never thought of Hassan and me as friends either. "P25 relationship between master Amir and servant Hassan, was formed in the mold of the predecessors. Both of them betrayed their childhood Playmates. just to "rescue", "atone", "makes him become someone who was looked at, not seen, listened to, not heard. "P65 kite fighting and the victory was Amir's only goal. He never cared about his friend or Playmate. Thus he became an Islamic rebel like his father without realizing it. Then came the winter of 1975 that changed everything.

The 18 years old Amir and his father fled to the United States .The new environment, new culture seems to relieve him of the sin which is quite different to his father. So it is "For me, America was a place to bury my memories. For Baba, a place to mourn his. "To Hero Amir The United States is the hope of life, but to hero's father it is not. Father seems to understand this. He said "Now

America. One last gift for Amir. His father can't stand the United States. He lives in his memory .He did not want to learn English, even when he became the gas station's Manager. "He missed the sugarcane fields of Jalalabad and the gardens of Paghman. He missed people milling in and out of his house, missed walking down the bustling aisles of Shor Bazaar and greeting people who knew him and his father, knew his grandfather, people who shared ancestors with him, whose pasts intertwined with his. "P125 But he greedily sucked up anything he could in the United States. He graduated from high school, went to College majoring in English, drove in The United States feeling it. "I GOT BEHIND the wheel of my Ford ... and drove for hours, from the East Bay to the South Bay ... I drove the Torino up the hills of Los Altos, idling past estates with picture windows and silver lions guarding the wrought-iron gates, homes with cherub fountains lining the manicured walkways ... I'd get up early some Saturday mornings and drive south on Highway 17, push the Ford up the winding road through the mountains to Santa Cruz. I would park by the old lighthouse and wait for sunrise, sit in my car and watch the fog rolling in from the sea...in the early evening, I parked the car and walked up a freeway overpass ... I'd try to count the blinking red taillights inching along, stretching as far as my eyes could see. BMWs. Saabs. Porsches... Almost two years had passed since we had arrived in the U.S., and I was still marveling at the size of this country, its vastness. Beyond every freeway lay another freeway, beyond every city another city hills beyond mountains and mountains beyond hills, and, beyond those, more cities and more people. "P130-132 this is not the country he can fully feel. In his view "America was a river, roaring along, unmindful of the past. I could wade into this river, let my sins drown to the bottom, let the waters carry me someplace far. Someplace with no ghosts, no memories, and no sins. If for nothing else, for that, I embraced America "He's forgotten the past, buried the past and longed for the future. He is in constant breakthrough of Islamic culture, deviating from Islamic culture, which can be proved by the most obvious example that Amir fell in love with Sonaya, which is the American way. Soraya's comment on Amir is "You're so different from every Afghan guy I've met. "P174 Amir and Sraya's uneventful marriage does not make them uncomfortable, till 1989 they wanted to have children but could not so they had to see a doctor but found nothing, which means they don't know why Soraya can't be pregnant. Amir thought "something, someone, somewhere, had decided to deny me fatherhood for the things I had done. Maybe this was my punishment, and perhaps justly so. It wasn't meant to be, Khala Jamila had said. Or, maybe, it was meant not to be." P183 their lives went on with "emptiness". For him all the hope seems to come to an end. The most developed country in the world's medical science could not let the two of them have a kid, a child of their own. Afghanistan's culture was acting at this time in Amir's mind. All the past came to his mind, so clear. There was a fierce collision in his mind between Afghanistan's culture and American culture: for Americans, adoption of a child is not a problem. "Combination for love", family, grandparents don't work. But for Afghans it is completely different. In such a fierce collision, he realized that the two cultures have split his own personality. So he went to look for his root in Afghanistan, making him a divided ego into a complete, rich, not paranoid Amir, who could recall the past and confront the past, which led him to try to find a way to be good, a journey to reintegrate his spirit, a trip to temper, a rebirth in purgatory after experience, a new Amir. This may be a true reflection of the author's spiritual journey, an Afghanistan-American's description with Afghanistan root and the American culture. And Nirvana course of his spirit is tortuous. On his journey to Afghanistan he was constantly hesitating at first. He was reluctant to go to Afghanistan .He always thought of the easy life in The United States and his personal future (P219).When he summoned up the greatest courage to decide to travel to Afghanistan, an immediate decision, he hurried off. Because he was

afraid of the life in The United States luring him back. He no longer wanted to forget, he wanted to remember what he is aware of these day. P224, but when he returned to Afghanistan, he felt herself as a tourist.P224He said “I think a part of me always will.....still think of this place as my country”. P224-225 Farid said “You've always been a tourist here”. P225 when Farid's older brother, Wahid heard Amir came back to Afghanistan to look for his nephew, he expressed his respect for Amir, saying "You are an honorable man, Amir. A true Afghan.", Amir cringed inside. In Wahid's home that night, Amir felt Afghanistan Earth under his barefoot and felt like he was back for the first time. Memories of their families in Afghanistan from his great-grandfather till his father and himself, reminded him that this ancient land was related by blood. He felt the memory at the bottom of his heart. He did not forget Afghanistan, and Afghanistan did not forget him. P223 But when he arrived in Kabul, he could not anything of the old Kabul when he was a boy. Everything was in the past. But he met an old beggar on the streets of Kabul, who told him some stories about his unknown mother whom he always wants to know about. P240-242,When he finally stood before the gate of his father's house, he is so familiar with the place but could not in, everything that happened there in the past all came back to him, all this he didn't want to forget. P252-255 Although time was running out, he still wanted to experience all the past. And he saw the cruelty in the stadium there: a cheating man and woman were killed with the bricks hurled at them. Later he himself even directly confronted the commander of this senseless incident, Assef, facing his cruelty, but with the help of his nephew Sohrab he survived. made Assef Cyclops, scrounge a life to come. When he was wandering between life and death in the hospital, he seemed to feel the presence of God. In a daze, between coma and pain, he struggled, the memories consuming him. Everything seemed to deserve his punishment. Rahim Khan left Amir the letter which let Amir once again go through the memories of the past, get to know his father again, and finally understand his father's pain , remorse and good deeds it triggered. "When guilt leads to good...that is real redemption." P291Rahim Khan was happy to give Amir to Allah. In fact, this “good”, “redemption”, “God” are the real root of Afghanistan and its culture which he had gradually accepted and gained in this spiritual journey. He let himself go back to the past in the “dream”, through their "guilt" to "good”, which is the process of the formation of human beauty. Sohrab is the best evidence of his redemption. When Sohrab was afraid to be sent back to orphanage and cut his wrists, in the hospital, Amir sincerely prayed, recognized past his father and the error he committed against God: God really God did exist, and always there. P335-336 he asked forgiveness of Allah, asking Allah to save Sohrab. He was once again on the spiritual journey. His faith in God and loyalty to the Afghanistan culture were tested. Perhaps he moved God Allah with his sincerity and Sohrab was saved. He prayed every day without interruption, and he is very familiar with the prayer. He forgave his father, appreciated Hassan's pure and noble qualities. Such is the initiation of the forgiveness. This is what happened to Amir on his journey to be good and the process of spiritual rebirth.

The Hero Amir's journey once began, the Nirvana of the author Khaled Hosseini's spirit started. The author with Amir took the journey to Kabul, seeing old friends, hugging the Earth again already strange and beyond his recognition, feeling inseparable from this land in blood and emotion. With everything here: people, things, every issue in the past, the culture, its traditions, the religion, he regained the confidence of being an Afghan, an Afghanistan-American. This is the artistic reproduction of the author's spirit and life. He demonstrated an ideal and pure Afghanistan-American in front of the world: piety and simplicity, hard work, and pursuit of happiness, kindness, and also the American spirit. Amir is the ideal incarnation of the author, either in life, or spirit.

References

- [1](the United States) Khaled Hosseini, translator Li Jihong, *The Kite Runner* [M] Shanghai century publishing group, Shanghai people's press, 2006.5
- [2]Zhenghangsheng. *Main schools of modern Western philosophy* [M], Beijing: Renmin University Press, 1988.2
- [3] Baidu post bar: <http://tieba.baidu.com/f?kz=124704662>
- [4][http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khaled Hosseini](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khaled_Hosseini)
- [5]<http://www.salon.com/ent/movies/feature/2007/12/09/hosseini/>
- [6]<http://www.cincinncitylibrary.org/samepage/2005/tkrauthor.html>