

Afghan Minorities and Ethnic Tension in *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns*

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Abstract: Purpose: *Afghanistan has been in the spotlight for civil war and innocent sufferings belonging to various ethnicities. The purpose of the essay is to investigate how racial or ethnic identity provide the space for discrimination, oppression and exclusion on the special reference to *The Kite Runner*(2003) and *A Thousand Splendid Suns*(2007)*

Methodology: *The paper uses descriptive research by applying racial theories of prominent theorist on Khaled Hosseini's writings to critically analyse the texts.*

Main Findings:*The plight of the minorities—Hazaras and women are doubly marginalised whose root cause is ethnic discrimination against them. This bigotry is nothing but a social construct. The paper discusses the exclusion and its paraphernalia on marginalised minorities can be belittled by nullifying foreground formation of hegemonial ideology at structural level in society.*

Applications: *Discrimination based on race and colour is found at each level even in the developed nations. This research can be useful for all third world or developing nations where the ethnic discrimination is practised.*

Novelty/Originality:*In this essay, the discrimination, double marginalisation of Afghan minorities is presented in a comprehensive manner.*

Keywords:*A Thousand Splendid Suns, Ethnic Conflict, Khaled Hosseini, Marginalisation, Minorities, The Kite Runner*

1. INTRODUCTION

Afghan-American writer Khaled Hosseini has shown his interest in expounding double marginalisation in Hazara-Pashtun ethnic conflict in chef-d'oeuvre *The Kite Runner* deciphering ethnic conflict and perplexed relationships of social entities. Females in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* found their ways to survive despite being persecuted both by male and female characters whose root cause is again ethnic discrimination. Taliban's brutalities, racial rift, and the war phase had an acute upshot on the lives of minorities—women and Hazaras in the third world South Asian nation, Afghanistan which is perceptible through awestruck incidents in the novels.

Race and ethnicity are oft-referred terms in the Global history. Gordon W. Allport (1954) remarks, “[c]ivilized men have gained notable mastery over energy, matter, and inanimate nature.... But, by contrast, we appear to be living in the Stone Age so far as our handling of

human relationships is concerned” (pp. 6). Race was identified on the basis of one’s skin colour and facial features. Racism is a bitter reality which is found across time and space in some or the other form. Ethnicity, the subcategory of racism, is based on cultural differences among people of a nation-state which is also one’s cultural identity. The impact of apartheid, in the fictional world of Hosseini, generates the mind-boggling questions in the mind of readers. As per many researchers Afghanistan is an ethnocentric and more gender biased country. The supreme races, earlier, who were the Europeans with fair skin tone started considering other races as inferior and barbaric. Racism was fairly evident in Afghanistan when Soviet troops invaded it and divided humankind into four categories that included:

“First race (which is considered as very blond (Northern Europe)

Second race (Copper Red America)

Third Race (Black Senegambia)

Fourth Race, Olive Yellow (India)” (Kant, 1775).

Herbert Spencer’s idea of *Social Darwinism*, the ‘survival of the fittest’ and ‘extermination of the weaker ones’ also justify the social hierarchy. W.E.B. Du Bois’ method expounded in the *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) became a classic in American literature that presented how the racial prejudices consent a physiological sway on every individual. He specified the bearing that the blacks will always see themselves as inferior and slaves and the only reason behind it was that they see themselves only through the eyes of whites. He called this as ‘double consciousness’, the same as viewed in Fanon’s *Black Skin, White Mask*. Russell Ferguson states:

“There is no need to hear your voice, when I can talk about you better than you can speak about yourself [...] Only tell me about your pain [...] Re-writing you, I write myself a new. I am still author, authority, I am still the colonizer, the speaking subject, and you are now at the center of my talk.”(1990). “I have never worked on race and ethnicity as a kind of subcategory; I have always worked on the whole social formation which is racialized” – Stuart Hall.

2. MARGINALISED MINORITIES IN HOSSEINI’S TEXTS

Hosseini’s characters in his novels are a mirror images of miseries. Hassan’s rape by Assef and the mute witnessing of his friend Amir, his assassination by the Taliban, and the pathetic life of Mariam and Laila exemplify how the minorities tend to survive. They represent not only the ethnic conflicts but also the after-effects of war on all humans specifically the minorities comprising the women and subjugated groups. Hosseini’s narration of Afghanistan includes Afghan culture, politics, hierarchical traditions, ethnic disparities, and the pathetic condition of women and Hazaras. Amongst the ethnic communities populating the Afghan country, the Pashtun is the largest and dominant, who speak Pashto and follow the *Pashtunwali* code of conduct of integrity which a Pashtun has to follow till death. Each Pashtun has to follow this code of *Pashto* language. Hazaras, on the other hand, constitute a minority community which has been dominated politically, socially, and economically through the ages. The trees are laden with pomegranates, and markets full of shops and customers which allegorically and symbolically mark prosperity, harmony, and happiness in their community-relations. However, during this prosperity, Hassan, a Hazara, ends up as a

subservient slave who spends his life only in making Amir, a Pashtun, happy even by putting his own life at stake.

Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* portrays thirty years of Afghanistan through the narratives of women. He insistently unveils the discrimination to which womenfolk have been subjected to since the 1960s, supposedly the golden era when women enjoyed more freedom and professional liberty. Mariam and Laila are brought together by fate and compelled to live under a roof as the wives of the elderly man, Rasheed. But here, they develop a mother-daughter relationship for resisting against male dominance. The transformation of the innocent young Mariam into a self-sacrificing strong woman subverting the phallogocentric norms,

Amir in *The Kite Runner* elaborates upon a Pashtun woman whom she met in San Jose street, thick black eyebrows, her elegantly curved nostrils, and walnut brown eyes covered by using cooled lashes. She is Soraya Taheri, daughter of Iqbal Taheri, and a Pashtun. The identifiable physical features prove that the girl is a Pashtun descendant who has brown eyes and a hooked nose. Mariam in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* depicts "a handsome little boy, with a slim nostril, brown hair, and dark, slightly sunken eyes" she noticed in a photo of Rasheed's departed son named Yunus, a Pashtun in Rasheed's room. There are many instances in the novels where the Hazaras are treated like peripheral beings. The reason is that they are Shi'a Muslim and are immigrants and outsiders. Right from the beginning, they were employed as cooks or labourers, slaves who were deprived of the right of education and even right to life. Pashtuns are Sunni Muslim.

Afghanistan has always been arbitrated by numerous incidents like the Soviet invasion, civil wars, Taliban regime and ethnic conflicts. Ethnicity comes from the Greek word *ethos*, and it may relate to distinctive features of a particular culture which may vary from other in terms of food, clothes, looks or traditions. It includes a shared cultural identity where a group of people follow a particular way of culture.

Numerous forms of violence faced by Afghan children, women, minorities, especially ethnic lower groups, are portrayed thoroughly in the novels. Hassan somehow becomes the victim of the bullies and finally could not escape rape at the hands of Assef, the descendant of a Pashtun father and a German mother. As a victimised, Hassan faces all forms of hideous violence—physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological. As the perpetrator himself, Assef reveals his ethnic superiority by making sardonic comments over Ali's limp and Hassan's flat nose features which resemble the characteristics of the Chinese. The Hazaras are, owing to their physical features, depicted as the Mongolian progeny. For Assef, the Hazaras are the mice-eaters who do not belong to their community. Ali and Hassan are called *Babalu*, or *Boogeyman* for being Hazaras.

Some had taken to calling him Babalu, or Boogeyman. "Hey, Babalu, who did you eat today?" they barked to a chorus of laughter. "Who did you eat, you flat-nosed Babalu?" (Hosseini, 2003, p. 8)

This is how Hosseini describes Hassan in the novel: “[S]unlight flickering through the leaves on his almost perfectly round face.” It describes how Hassan(Hazaras) looks like. He has “perfectly round face” for a child. He has “a face like a Chinese doll” (Hosseini, 2003, p. 3) along with his other physical features like having a flat-nose, slanted eyes, and low-seat ears.

3. CONDITION OF HAZARAS AND WOMEN UNDER TALIBAN REGIME

The Taliban autonomy imposed a set of rules on the Afghans, and their mode of operation was exactly like the Nazis. The Taliban worsened the situation as it belonged to the Pashtun community, and, belonging thus to a superior race, they took everything under their control. As a Taliban, Assef’s brutalities are horrifying in its exultant manner, particularly when this non-religious man all of a sudden turns very obsessive and moves on with his cleansing mission—slaughtering Hazaras, stoning adulterers, raping children, and whipping women. A mission, he calls, of nation-building which is actually a gross misuse of power, the ability to strike fear in others, especially in the weaker ones. Violence is experienced both by the perpetrators and the victims, and, in the process, transforms both of them. The Hazaras—Hassan, Mariam, Laila, Nana, Sanubar, Sohrab, Ali, are victimised by the Pashtuns—Assef, Amir, Baba, Rasheed, Jalil and, prominently, by the Taliban. As Assef says: “Afghanistan is the land of Pashtuns. It always has been, always will be. We are the true Afghans, the pure Afghans, we are ... not this Flat-Nose here” (Hosseini, 2003, pp. 35).

The Taliban fundamentalists enforced segregation of the sexes by confining their duties and codes of conduct everywhere. As a part of this fanaticism, most of the general hospitals treated only men. Only a limited number of hospitals, that too in far-off areas with scarce medical facilities, treated women. Laila is in labour and she has to undergo the caesarian operation without anaesthesia. Even inside the operation theatre, the lady doctor is not allowed to remove her *burqa*. Taliban guards are put on surveillance inside the hospitals like Foucauldian Panopticon. The incidents described by Hosseini here are not entirely fictional. They were inspired from the real-life incidents.

The people who had heaved a sigh of relief at the Soviet withdrawal found Shari'a laws more suffocating. After takeover by the Mujahideen, the condition of women deteriorated with time and change of regime. In the entire history of Afghanistan, women were not treated as badly as they were during the Taliban fundamentalist regime. Through Shari'a, they created a system which confined women's status and debased it to the level inanimate objects, in a way ‘objectified’ ...her wings are cut and then she is blamed for not knowing how to fly.”—Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*. Their entire world was confined within the boundaries of their homes thereby valuing them only as a procreating device, and if they wanted to earn pennies to get bread for children, they had to accompany a male relative. Women without any male member in the family often succumbed to starvation. The Taliban instructed women that, "You will not, under any circumstance, show your face. You will cover with burqa when outside. If you do not, you will be severely beaten "(Hosseini, 2007, p. 271).

4. RESULT & DISCUSSION

Minorities of Afghanistan and their Socio-Political and Religious Marginalisation

Afghanistan is an Islamic state since the constitution does not recognise the rights of any minority group, therefore there are no minority rights. Yinger (1976) says, "A segment of the larger society whose members are thought, by themselves and/or others, to have a common origin and to share important segments of a common culture and who, in addition, participate in shared activities in which the common origin and culture are significant ingredients" (p. 4). Historically they have always been victimised, and most of the time the reasons are racial. They have been deprived of powerful positions within the government and white collared jobs and opportunities for education. To quote The State of Minorities in Afghanistan:

On ethnic grounds, there is no single group that represents more than 50% of the population, even though the largest group, the Pashtuns (40%), has tended to play a dominant role. The Tajiks (33%) come second. There also exist the Hazaras (11%), Uzbeks (8%), and Turkmens (2%). The Kyrgyzs, Balochs, Aimaqs, Ismailis, Brahuis, and Nuristanis etc comprise 1% or less each (The Asia Foundation 2014).

Although the Afghan Professional Alliance for Minority Rights (APAMR) has persistently directed its efforts on the minority rights, there is still not much help from the part of the Government. Moreover, the social structure allows the dominant ethnic groups to be considered as superior, and minorities like Hazaras are assumed to be inferior, and thus fuelling the inter-community conflicts. Such prejudices, as noted by Tischler (2010), is "an irrationally based negative, or occasionally positive, attitude toward certain groups and their members" (p. 222). Lauer, in *Social Problems & The Quality of Life* (2004), suggests two reasons: support by social structural factors and psychological factors that instigate racism (p. 222). The prejudices are aftermath of stereotypical thought processes of socio-political institutions and such psychological aspects are backed by damaging stereotypical social thinking. According to Macionis (2011), "racial discrimination causes genocide or ethnic cleansing, slavery, and oppression. It also causes tremendous moral, cultural, and economic suffering to a country. In conclusion, it negatively affects to society" (p. 328). The Afghan society is very stringent and fundamentalist as far as class, race and condition of women are concerned. The Pashtuns live in luxurious houses, but for the Hazaras, a little mud hut in the corner of the backyard of a Pashtun house is they have. Hassan also suffers mental trauma after he is raped by a Pashtun, "Ali paused with a log in his hand. A worried look crossed his face. Lately, it seems all he wants to do is sleep. He does his chores - I see to that but then he just wants to crawl under his blanket" (Hosseini, 2003, p. 88).

The dichotomy between Sunni Pashtuns and Taliban Pashtuns, Sunni Pashtuns and Hazaras, and Taliban Pashtuns and Hazaras run continuously. Moreover, because of their differences in opinion since ages, the Taliban still accuse Hazaras of collaborating with the enemy Iranian army. The dispute between Sunni Pashtuns and Taliban Pashtuns took place because of their disagreements in religious conviction as Pashtuns believe that Taliban's fundamentalist dogma is nothing but misinterpretation of the *Quran*. The conflict started with Prophet Mohammed's death. The Sunnis chose Prophet's friend-Abu Bakar as the next inheritor,

though Shi'as preferred Prophet's cousin-in-law-Ali Bin Thalib as the next heir (Wahab and Youngerman, 2007). The Hazaras are supposed to be meek, impoverished, ridiculous, slave, and incapacitated people. Cleft-lipped Hassan and polio-ridden Ali are equated with the typecasts that work only as attendants, beggars, and servants. At the worst, they are sexually abused much to their disgrace and damage of self-respect.

The myth of 'pure race' is rejected by sociologists, race and ethnicity, created by society for its own ends, are fluid not static and biological and changeable with the geography. The so-called superior and inferior races have the geniuses and idiocies. Racism is prevalent in the world history - Nazis slaughtered the homosexuals, Jews, gypsies, and the physically disabled, as well as the clash between black and white Americans. The Taliban's genocide of minorities is 'ethnic cleansing'.

While the burqa had also existed prior to the emergence of Taliban and Mujahideen, but refusal to use it did not result in corporal and psychological penalties. The Taliban enforces the burqa on condition of spot beatings which is a way to control the women. Mariam, the young fifteen-year-old bride to the forty-year-old Rasheed endures the most difficult part of wearing a burqa:

"Mariam had never before worn a burqa. Rasheed had to help her put it on. The padded headpiece felt tight and heavy on her skull, and it was strange seeing the world through a mesh screen. She practiced walking around her room in it and kept stepping on the hem and stumbling. The loss of peripheral vision was unnerving, and she did not like the suffocating way the pleated cloth kept pressing against her mouth." (Hosseini, 2007, p. 71)

The misinterpretation of the religious texts due to indoctrination, brainwashing, threats that work on souls and lead the underdogs to dysphoria like Hassan, Mariam and Laila. The Talibanis and Mujahideen, warlords walk in the streets announcing loudly new rules to women.

The Cultural Drift Publicised through Social Status

Amir reads poems, stories, and brainteasers, knowing the fact that Hassan will always remain illiterate, unable to make any sense out of them. Amir's most liked moments in reading come when Hassan stumbles upon a word. The day Amir translates the Nasiruddin story to Hassan, he innocently asks,

"What does that word mean?" "You don't know what it means?" I said, grinning.

"Nay Amir agha." "But it's such a common word!"

"Still, I don't know it." If he felt the sting of my tease, his smiling face didn't show it. (Hosseini, 2003, p. 27)

To compensate for the guilt later, Amir offers Hassan one of his old shirts or a broken toy, and that was enough to patch painful hoax to Hassan. The Pashtun generation has been

building it up within the minds of their children that the atrocities on Hazaras can be recompensed through any of their wrecked things.

The Position of Subaltern

Afghanistan's past has designed gender nuances which influenced reputation of women in Afghanistan. The initial era of Amanullah Khan in 1923 witnessed improvements to women's lives. The next headship of the Democratic Party of Afghanistan which enforced an outline of communal alteration to permit women that headed towards the decade-long war between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union, the confinement of the Mujahideen, in addition to the dwindling of women's situation. Regardless of the downfall of these modifications, the twofold ages offer indication that Afghanistan had a past of copious vitalities to brand accessible women's civil rights in addition to recovering the footing on behalf of a further classless progress. By the side of the equivalent period, this ancient evaluation conveys to deft the consequence of the rustic/inner-city division in Afghanistan.

Even today, gender disparity is used for justification of discrimination against the other. Their individuality remains crushed and are taken to be homogeneous, anonymous masses without any desire or authority of their own. "one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman" (De Beauvoir, p. 295). The society, in which a woman is considered to be a second-class citizen, cannot be expected to treat them well during the conflict, when there is no law and order. The pitiable condition of such women who obey their *mahrims* (a close male relative) unquestionably can easily be imagined. In Afghanistan, women have to follow strict patriarchal codes, further strengthened by the war. Women in Afghan institutions are viewed as irrational, fragile devoid of equal status. Womankind associated to traditional Afghan society today has more obligations in the native affairs somewhat than their role in public domains. Since past, a boy is more favoured than a girl. Education for boys begins at eight or nine years of age whereas girl usually do not go to school, they are taught to be virtuous wives and perform household chores.

Rasheed equals Mariam to a durable, horrible Russian car- a Volga. Instead, Laila is a Benz which needs certain care. Hosseini shows how women are objectified. Moreover, at any time a wife can be replaced by another one. Mariam recalls her mother Nana's voice: "A man's heart is a wretched, wretched thing, Mariam. It isn't like a mother's womb. It won't bleed; it won't stretch to make room for you" (Hosseini, 2007, pp. 37).

Laila's parents died in a rocket explosion, and her lover unwillingly fled to Pakistan due to war, leaving her alone, helpless, and pregnant. She has no choice left but to marry Rasheed who is of her grandfather's age. Rasheed is already bewitched by her captivating looks and wants to marry for the third time. Mariam's transformation from adolescent to subservient to bitter to warm and considerate and finally a murderer is due to the reason that she suffers from a constant feeling of embarrassment for being born as a female to a lower ethnic community. Educated city girl Laila, however, believes that she is not in any way inferior or less than a man.

Morton quotes the words of Spivak as: Subaltern which literally means substandard or not up to the mark kind of people who have no voice. Spivak justifies that never acquired an opportunity to take up a stand for themselves neither they were heard. She goes on to add

“the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow” (287). Joe R. Feagin, denies the idea of inferiority to superiority. Race is merely a socially constructed ideology which has no biological linkage. Culture, in this matter, is an ideology paved on false consciousness and misconception of religious texts to tyrannise the minorities. The socio-cultural structure limits their physical and cognitive participation resulting in exclusion from social, political and economic milieu. As Amir says:

An entire chapter dedicated to Hassan’s people! In it, I read that my people, the Pashtuns, had persecuted and oppressed the Hazaras. It said the Hazaras had tried to rise against the Pashtuns in the nineteenth century, but the Pashtuns had quelled them with unspeakable violence. (Hosseini, 2003, pp. 9)

There is also less description of Hazara ethnics in the Afghan history textbooks. Amir further says:

The following week, after class, I showed the book to my teacher and pointed to the chapter on the Hazaras. He skimmed through a couple of pages, snickered, handed the book back. “That’s the one thing Shi’a people do well,” he said, picking up his papers, “passing themselves as martyrs.” He wrinkled his nose when he said the word Shi’a, like it was some kind of disease. (Hosseini, 2003, pp. 9)

Accepted by Feagin that the powerful groups used the racist ideology and colonised more than eighty percent of countries in the world, he takes these racist constructions as “typically created, codified, and maintained by those at the top of society, although this construction takes place in ongoing interaction with the views and practices of ordinary citizens”. In the imaginary replica world of Hosseini too, the readers see two contrasting mainstays of the same society: Sunni and Shi’a, the affluent and the needy, Pashtun and Hazara, the dominant and the frail. Amir knows about his superior status:

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. (Hosseini, 2003, pp. 1)

For Feagin, not only the oppressed and inferior race but also the dominant are alienated as the privileged race keeps on proving its one-sided standing and the other is under challenge to surmount the oppression. Assef being Pashtun:

The curious thing was, I never thought of Hassan and me as friends either.... In the end, I was a Pashtun and he was a Hazara, I was Sunni and he was Shi’a, and nothing was ever going to change that. Nothing. (Hosseini, 2003, pp. 24)

Assef got approval for Hassan’s rape in Amir’s silence as the latter did nothing to save his buddy from a Pashtun. Assef strongly hates the people other than the Pashtuns and joins Taliban just to purify the land by means of genocide: "Afghanistan is like a beautiful big house that was filled with garbage (Hazaras)". Later, in the novel, he killed many Hazaras.

Every day, bodies were found tied to trees, sometimes burned beyond recognition. Often, they'd been shot in the head, had had their eyes gouged out, their tongues cut out". (Hosseini, 2003pp. 159)

The minorities face sacrifices, exclusion, oppression, discrimination, and alienation. Feagin negates the idea of superiority based on facial or biological differences. In *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, a young Talib, in presence of the judge tells Mariam that Allah has created men and women with distinct abilities, and to justify his argument he misleads the folk by refusing to believe in science.

I wonder," the young Talib said. "God has made us differently, you women and us men. Our brains are different. You are not able to think like we can. Western doctors and their science have proven this. This is why we require only one male witness but two female ones. (Hosseini, 2007, pp. 324)

The Giant Buddha in Bamiyan, the greatest historical artifacts in Afghanistan, had been blown apart, irrespective of the citizens of the world advocating against the act. The chanting of *Allah-u-akbar* resonated after every blast. This act of hatred was vindicated stating it as an effort to purify the nation of what they viewed as Hindu sacrilege. A threatening admonition of the Taliban disfavoring anything other than their own radical Islamic values.

Mammy always told Laila that she had inherited her hair color-as well as her thick lashed, turquoise green eyes, her dimpled cheeks, her high cheekbones, and the pout of her lower lip, which Mammy shared-from her great-grandmother, Mammy's grandmother". (Hosseini, 2007, pp. 60)

She had short, wiry black hair and a good-humored, almost perfectly round face. Her lips were much fuller than Mariam's, the lower one slightly droopy, as though dragged down by the big, dark mole just below the lip line. She had big greenish eyes that shone at Mariam with an inviting glint. (Hosseini, 2007, pp. 39)

Babi said that there were tensions between their people-the Tajiks, who were a minority, and Tariq's people, the Pashtuns, who were the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan....Pashtun kings ruled this country for almost two hundred and fifty years, Laila, and Tajiks for all of nine months, back in 1929. (Hosseini, 2007, pp. 72)

The rift continues: "Rasheed had called the customer a monkey faced Uzbek. A gun had been brandished. A skewer pointed in return." (271)

Johan Galtung's paper, "Violence, Peace and Peace Research", published in 1969, presents conflict theory with the help of structural, cultural and direct violence. Injustice and inequality in the society are implanted in society like ideology stated by Carl Marx and there is inseparable relationship between Power and knowledge as per Foucault, the Taliban's coercion in name of religion. Politicised discrimination and structural norms are so deeply embedded in the collective consciousness of the society that they seem inevitable and natural, and people evaluate all happenings accordingly in the name of cultural violence. Both structural and cultural violence lead to a visible direct violence enacted by an actor which can

be physical, mental, or psychological. Ahmad Massoud, a Sunni, is murdered for opposing the religious interpretations by the same Sunnis - Mullahs and the Taliban. Al Qaida extremists assassinated him just for different opinion about same religion:

As they're talking, a bomb hidden in the video camera goes off. Kills Massoud and one of the journalists. They shoot the other one as he tries to run. They're saying now the journalists were probably Al Qaeda men. (Hosseini, 2007, pp. 339)

Laila knew that somewhere in the city someone had just died, and there would be bodies to step around in the morning. Then Kabul's dogs, who had developed a taste for human meat, would feast. (Hosseini, 2007, pp. 169)

The Hazaras are doubly excluded, from the Pashtun and from the Taliban. Edward Said's notion of the 'Other' in Orientalism, internal colonisation, and the exploitation of Hazaras and women as ethnically marginalised considered as incapable to contribute towards social well-being. The colonisers also framed it within the civilising mission.

5. CONCLUSION

Hosseini's central characters of his fictional world, who are the epitomes of ethnocentric and gender-biased Afghan society, are actually flesh and blood creatures who are wrenchingly sensitive to their plight. The struggle for existence by minorities across the world is not new. The male writer has been able to depict with sensitivity the narrative of the women's issues. It is the Hazaras and the women who eventually pay the price, though whatever else may be the basis of the actual problems. Through the essence of double marginalisation, Hosseini has added soul to it, and rendered it in a reasonably awe-inspiring manner. The power holders - the Taliban, the Pashtuns, and the Mujahideen - are directing the nation-state for their own benefits making the condition of Hazaras, women and children pathetic. Thinking of the betterment of their lives is like a dream for the minorities who only resist for their survival throughout their lives. Both of Hosseini's best-selling novels depict the impact of apartheid and the paraphernalia on the marginalised section. This essay argues that these racist and ethnic foregrounds are only socially constructed which are imbibed in each individual since his/her birth, on the basis of which they judge themselves and others which leads them to somatic incapacitation. Biological violence can be seen in all dichotomies: men-women, top dogs-underdogs, powerholders-minorities, wealthy-needy, etc. It can be eradicated at three triads of structural, cultural, and direct violence levels by eliminating its foundation at the structural level. Physical, psychological, and sexual violence is likely to be controlled if it is stopped at the structural-ideological level. Egalitarian thinking can be promoted by negating feudalisation in petrified and hierarchical structural societies in their first run. Inequality, stratification, ethnic disparity like the Taliban and mujahideen doctrine of misinterpretation of the religious texts by indoctrination, brainwashing, and coercion are social constructions. Sometimes, congruence between discourses is attained to bring latent agreement. They work on souls and lead the underdogs from euphoria to dysphoria.

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