

Hybridity as Resistance in Khaled Hosseini's *Thousand Splendid Suns*

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Abstract

Khaled Hosseini's *Thousand Splendid Suns* depicts the realistic life background of women in Afghanistan, whose life lies shattered with in multiple laws and divided rules. Reflecting the impact of instability in women's life around the disrupted political and cultural scenario in Afghanistan., the novel show cases the evolution of woman life from the state of passive repression to un conditional level of resistance amidst the baffled state of existence. The paper focuses on two women characters, Mariam and Laila, the women representing two generation and intends to showcase the effect of hybrid existence in these characters life. Adopting Homi.k Baba's concept of hybridity, the hybrid existence in the study is not between the binaries of oppressor and oppressed, instead between mutually reliant identities whose cultural taming of identity establishment and ideological perception contradict each other. Hybrid existence of these woman characters results in shaping of a new identity which elevates them from the state of subjugated passive, where their life of submissiveness guaranteed by their cultural continuation is challenged.

Keywords: Disposition, Hybridity, in Betweenness, Objectification

Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini reflects the baffled life of two women characters whose life get shattered around the insecure national and unstable political laws that lies with in the special context of Afganistan. Laila and Mariam, the two woman self shaped by contradictory views of life live together at a particular point, where their identities are reshaped ,refigured and restructured. Mariam being the product of patriarchaly biased culture is been brought up with an identity establishment which defined her self as "Harami" or illegitimate. Her own cultural upbringing identified her as an undignified object which can neither demand nor defend but act as an object who is supposed to satisfy others. Nanna, Mariam's mother though uses the word harami to alienate her from all patriarchal instincts, Mariam gets tamed through the word that her objectified condition is repeatedly reinstated. Thus Mariam's identity formation turns to be closely linked with her social and cultural upbringing. Mariam's passive state of unidentified object is further intensified when she is married out to Rasheed contrary to her wish and opinion in order to protect the prestige of Jalil's family.

Mariam's faith in her paternal blood, gives her confidence to reassert her position as daughter of Jalil, instead of harami. Her effort is rejected when Jalil denied her parentage. Mariam's disposition from Herat to Kabul after her marriage, places her in the midst of strangeness. The strangeness of Kabul life placed her in a state of loneliness. The conflict between Mariam's low tajik background and Rasheed's high pastun background intensified her sense of loneliness. Mariam's isolated self tried to adapt and adjust to the new surroundings. Her path towards attaining the state of hybridity is seen in her effort in training herself to wear burqa in spite of all limitations. Mariam tried to follow Rasheed's rules with sound knowledge that she is getting objectified without any dignity and love. Mariam's adaptation to the mechanized status of life enable her to survive with Rasheed for a long period of thirty years.

Her adaptation to the status can be marked as her strategy to survive with Rasheed as she never wished to return back to her status as harami. Mariam's co existence with Laila marks a shift in her life. The co existence of contradictory identities tamed and developed in diverse cultural backgrounds intersects each other. While Mariam's cultural background tamed her to be an obedient, passive lady, Laila was brought up as a revolutionary girl with a spirit to question, challenge and react. Laila's life with Rasheed compelled her to hide her identity. She acted as an obedient wife before Rasheed as she was denied of any other option. The social situation never guaranteed any protection to woman and Laila was forced to adjust in order to survive. Laila slowly tamed herself to be Mariam for her existence. Mariam's life with Laila changed a lot , where she realised that her long thirty years was spent in a dishonourable undignified manner.

Their effort to move to Pakistan reflect their urge to survive. The resulting failure was welcomed by brutal physical tortures and house arrest. Mariam's mind which has evolved to a state of maturity out of long passive and silent sufferings react, resulting in the death of Rasheed. Mariam appeared to be a contented individual during the last moments of her life. Laila's life with Tariq in Muree is also marked by emotional conflicts. Her inclination towards her roots urged for a return to her homeland. Through her return to Kabul, and Heart after ten years, Laila tried to have a reconciliation with her lost bondings. While living in Kabul, Laila could sense the presence of Mariam every where.

Mariam's direct exposure to the world outside is marked by the arrival of Laila in her life. Laila with her wide exposure towards society through her father Babi could present before Mariam the true standard of living. The intersection of these two characters, influence them that both of them adapt and adjust each other. The mutual adaptation procedures places them with in a stance of connected identity. While Laila realised how endurance can act as resistance, Mariam realized the value and power of questioning. She felt her long years with

Rasheed as a defeated one. It is the power instilled by Mariam that enabled Laila to lead a good life in Muree. But Laila could not live there comfortably as she felt a life isolated from Mariam as incomplete. Her urge for reconciliation could destroy all barriers of time, place and distance. She felt herself complete while at Kabul. Thus in the final reconciliation through Mariam's thought Laila tried to place her as a complete, successful, happy woman. Their hybrid state turns them complete, strong and powerful.

Within the milieu of cultural and national displacements various studies are done in the ground of hybridity to explore the effect of in-betweenness. The present paper initiated an effort to link the status of hybridity or in-betweenness to emotional co-existence. The effort was to showcase how emotional inclination shapes and contributes the formation of identities. Mariam and Laila, couldn't affirm a place of their own in their isolated state. Thus their hybrid existence offered them a space to redesign and reaffirm their conceptual taming.

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