

The the violent conflict in afghanistan, through

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The Kite Runner addresses many controversial topics such as religion, gender roles, and the violent conflict in Afghanistan, through the eyes of a young boy named Amir. This novel centers around the coming of age of a boy named Amir.

Amir witnesses many injustices, that form him into the man he is by the end of the novel. Amir endures a tough life, even after fleeing his hometown after the Soviet invasion. Amir experiences many of the injustices occurring in Afghan society first hand. In the novel *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini, there are various levels within the social hierarchy, where you are born into this hierarchy determines your future as well as your place in society. This hierarchy comes into play through the characters Amir, Hassan, and Baba. Throughout the novel it becomes apparent that religion is one of the major factors contributing to this social hierarchy. Baba holds a very high spot on the social hierarchy, which allows his family to live a life of luxury. Baba owns a nice house, as well as employs two servants.

Baba holds many strong opinions about the issues plaguing the current state of Afghanistan. Often Baba shares these opinions and views with his son Amir, and servant Ali. Baba was born into a family that belonged to the Sunni branch of Islam, and as a result Baba is a Sunni Muslim. Baba expresses his strong view on religion when telling Amir, "They do nothing but thumb their prayer beads and recite a book written in a tongue they don't even understand." "God help us all if Afghanistan ever falls into their hands." (Hosseini pg 17) In the story *The Kite Runner*, you are given a status based on the religion you partake in. Because of Baba's religion, his family is provided more opportunities, and respected by the rest of the community.

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Although Baba identifies as a Sunni muslim, he does not practice his faith, instead he follows his own moral code. Among many of his teachings, Baba tells his son that “ There is only one sin, only one. And that is theft. Every other sin is a variation of theft...

When you kill a man, you steal a life. You steal his wife’s right to a husband, rob his children of a father. When you tell a lie, you steal someone’s right to the truth. When you cheat, you steal the right to fairness.

“(Hosseini Pg 17-18) This quote provides the reader with a strong understanding of the moral code and ethics that Baba follows. It is visible that Amir is favoured by society from a very young age. Amir is raised in the optimal circumstances for a boy in this region of the world. Being raised in a wealthy home, and associating with the religious majority, Amir is provided with a premium education. Amir grows up in wealth and privilege as a member of the Pashtun family, the higher social class in society. As Amir’s family associates with the religious majority, he avoids the discrimination felt by many Hazaras including his servants. The young Hazara servant that works for Amir’s family, is often teased and abused by the boys in the area due to his religion.

Amir occasionally ridiculed aswell for associating with a Hazara. Amir never defends his companion due to a variety of possibilities, one being that Amir feels to be superior to his friend, because of his social rank in society. “ A voice, cold and dark, suddenly whispered in my ear, what does he know, that illiterate Hazara? He’ll never be anything but a cook. How dare he criticize me.” (Hosseini pg. 36-37) This quote from Amir displays his blatant opinion

of his friend, as well as reveals his beliefs on Hazaras and the social classes beneath him. As Amir grows and changes throughout the novel, a visible change occurs as the reader witness's him finding his faith nearing the end of the novel.

“ I see now that Baba was wrong, there is a God, there always had been. I see Him here, in the eyes of the people in this corridor of desperation. This is the real house of God, this is where those who have lost God will find Him”(Hosseini Pg. 301) As Amir grows his views and opinions change. This change regarding his faith parallels his change in beliefs of Hazaras. By the end of the novel, Amir cares for Hassan's son, Sohrab, the son of a Hasara.

Hassan is a shia muslim, also known as a Hazara. As Hazaras are the religious minority of Afghanistan, they are often discriminated for their beliefs. As well as facing constant verbal and physical abuse, Hazara hold a very low position on the social hierarchy. As a result of their spot on the social hierarchy, Hazara's do not have access to the same level of education that the rest of the population receives.

Due to the lack of education, a large percentage of Hazaras are uneducated and illiterate. This is the situation Hassan has been born into, with no education, he and his father work as servants. Throughout Hassan's entire life he experiences injustice and discrimination due to his religion. Hassan's religion is what ultimately leads to his death, as he is murdered by the taliban. The general hatred of the Hazara faith was even taught in school, as Amir's teacher expresses his disgust.

“ He wrinkled his nose when he said the word Shi’a, like it was some kind of disease.”(Hosseini Pg 24) Through the novel, it becomes clear, that one’s success is determined before one is born. It becomes apparent in this novel that you are born into the life that you will lead, and there is not that much you can do to change it.