



“WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND”: TRACING INSTANCES OF KARMA IN KHALED HOSSEINI’S *AND THE MOUNTAINS ECHOED*

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ABSTRACT

When it comes to families, Hosseini's *And the Mountains Echoed* delves into the many ways they care for one another, how they hurt one another, betray one another, honor and sacrifice for one another. Readers will often be amazed by the deeds of those closest to them when it matters most. The fundamental principle underlying the concept of karma is that positive intentions and actions lead to positive karma, which in turn leads to future happiness; conversely, negative intentions and actions lead to negative karma, which in turn leads to future suffering. In a similar vein, the book by Khaled Hosseini contains a few instances that, when examined closely, illustrate the concept of karma compellingly. Certain characters' actions toward other characters bring about the inevitable consequences that they deserve as a result of their choices. It is almost as if fate is punishing those characters for the misdeeds and malicious intentions, they have had toward other people. The purpose of this paper is to examine specific events from Khaled Hosseini's book *And the Mountains Echoed* to determine the factors that contribute to karma and its effects.

Keywords: Karma, And the Mountains Echoed, Sacrifice, malicious, and Khaled Hosseini.

Introduction

The historical drama subgenre is utilized throughout Khaled Hosseini's third novel which was published in 2013, titled *And the Mountains Echoed*. The book was written by Khaled Hosseini. *And the Mountains Echoed* by Khaled Hosseini is a loud and clear statement that every choice taken for another person has a cost, and fate will certainly give a charge for everything. One of the themes explored in this book is the contrast between loud cowardice and quiet devotion, as well as the value of cheap words paired with expensive deeds. So, this goes hand in hand with the idea of karma, "Good intent and good deed contribute to good karma and future happiness, while bad intent and bad deed contribute to bad karma and future suffering" (www.studymode.com, n.d.). Abdullah and Pari are the protagonists of "And the Mountains Echoed," and the central story revolves around their separation and reunion, which is told through a range of characters who each have a similar story to tell. Even when they are in other relationships, the characters still feel an intense pull from their family ties. When it comes to family relationships, it's not just about how long they spend their time together or their shared interests. The theme also focuses on how a person's upbringing is shaped by their family's

love. Every character has conflicting feelings about their family in this story. There are always consequences for the way people act, be it good or bad, and this is what this paper attempts to explore in the context of *And the Mountains Echoed* by Khaled Hosseini.

Act and Consequences: The Unraveling of Both

The first thing that needs to be brought to everyone's attention is that when Hosseini mentions these characters, he is not merely referring to them in the context of Afghanistan. According to Hosseini, if he does that, his work becomes very agenda-driven and tainted, and he does not want that to be the case. He says in one of his interviews, "I've never tried to educate anybody about Afghanistan because I think the moment that becomes _sort of _ the engine that propels you then you just your writing becomes very agenda-driven and it's tainted because then you have an audience in mind and I believe that every writer should have an audience of just themselves." Almost all of the main characters are unsettled by their desires as well as the way society treats them. The tension arises from the sense of limitation one experiences as a result of socially imposed notions. Nila Wahdati is a prominent illustration of this phenomenon. Nila liked to write, "Nila wrote most days, either in the



living room or else on the veranda, pencil in hand, sheets of paper spilling from her lap, and always the cigarettes” (Hosseini, 2018, p.95). Nila became defiant because she did not have a parent who loved her. The word "rebellious" does not adequately describe her. Nila engages in behaviors that she believes would stun his father. The woman referred to as Wahdati is Pari's adoptive mother. It might appear at first that the young girl has found a solution to the emptiness in her life, but it turns out that this solution is only a temporary one. Nila is somehow unsuited to do the duties that would be good for her daughter. It is said in her regard that,

“Mr. Wahdati’s dismissal of visitors relieved Nila of one discomfort but presented her with another. By holing up in Pari’s room and closing the door, she had kept herself at a remove not only from the disagreeable mother-in-law but also from the mess that her husband had become. Now the house was vacant, and she faced spousal duties for which she was uniquely ill-suited. She couldn’t do it. And she didn’t.” (Hosseini, 2018, p.123)

When her husband becomes ill, she decides it is best for her and Suleiman if she leaves for France in seek of a more hedonistic way of life and leaves Nabi in charge of caring for

Suleiman. She was a terrible mother because she was irresponsible and tended to prioritize her love life and poetry over her daughter Pari. She requires immediate medical attention and frequently visits the emergency room. Her daughter has been asked to take care of her while she is there. Despite Pari's undying love, she makes it clear that she believes both of them should not be together because, contrary to popular belief, they are not related to one another by blood. In the very end, she takes her own life. Hence, Karma punishes Nila for her misbehavior as a bad mother and as someone who has forbidden desires. Naila is an unfulfilled woman who is incapable of finding happiness even with Pari by her side, and that leads her to her tragic fate as a consequence. “She is dead now, this I know” (Hosseini, 2018). Suleiman Wahdati, on the other hand, keeps his homosexuality a secret and lives a solitary life because he is unable to communicate his feelings for Nabi. However, there is a conversation between him and Nabi that Nabi tells the readers about,

Why did you hire me, then I asked. He turned his face to me. ‘Because you walked in, and I thought to myself that I had never seen anyone as beautiful. (Hosseini, 2018, p.136)

Suleiman Wahdati is a man who enjoys being alone; however, he is secretly head over heels

in love with his chef Nabi, and he will only allow Pari and Nabi to be in his presence. When he becomes paralyzed, Nabi is the only one who tends to him, and as time passes, the two of them begin to take on the appearance of an elderly couple because their lives are inextricably linked. In the end, he requests that Nabi let him pass away, and he leaves all of his wealth in Nabi's will. The consequence of wishing for death seems to be the Karma of both, him and his wife. The story of Parwana and Nabi is an additional illustration of Karma that can be found in the book. Parwana is Masoona's twin sister. She spent most of her childhood being overshadowed by the charm and attractiveness of her sister, but despite this, the two of them were still able to form a unique connection. Unfortunately, when Masoona eventually confessed that she wished to marry Saboor, Parwana shoved her off a tree branch where they had been sitting out of jealousy.

And then the part that Masooma knew nothing about. While her sister was facing away, searching her pocket, Parwana planted the heels of her hands on the branch, lifted her bottom, and let it drop. The branch shook. Masooma gasped and lost her balance. Her arms flailed wildly.” (Hosseini, 2018, p.76)

Masooma was thrown to the ground as a result of this. As a result of the fall, she sustained paralysis; therefore, Parwana was responsible for seeing to her medical needs. In the end, Saboor decided to make her his second wife, and during their time together, the couple welcomed two sons: Omar and Iqbal. Iqbal was the only one who made it to adulthood, unfortunately. When it comes to tracing Karma in light of this event, Parwana's punishment was that she had to put up with her sister's disability for a good while, but then she was rewarded by getting married to the man she wanted because she had paid her debt. This was because she had done what Karma required of her: she had paid her debt. On the other hand, Nabi left the small village, and he did not continue to care for his disabled sister after he moved away. He headed in the direction of the city of Kabul. There, he obtained employment in the Wahdati household working both as a cook and a driver. During the time that he spent working closely with Mr. Suleiman Wahdati, he fell utterly in love with his boss's wife, Nila. What happens is that Nila travels to Paris after some time, leaving her husband behind. In the same way that Nabi left his sister, the woman he loved did not reciprocate and left him behind. So, again, Karma hits him hard as he is left to stay with his homosexual and ill boss. So,



“Every action that you take in life has a certain consequence to it and bad actions have natural bad consequences” (Gura, 2015).

The story of Baba Ayub, which is told at the beginning of the novel, contains the only Karma in the book that is completely and utterly beneficial. Even though Baba Ayub and his wife were aware that they needed to obey, they also recognized that this was a difficult task for a parent, and as a result, they had no choice but to select a name at random. The one that was drawn was Quais, Baba's favorite son, and because of this, Baba gave his life as a sacrifice even though it broke his father's heart. However, because of the intense love that existed between them, the elderly man decided to go after the Div and exact revenge for his son. Quais had forgotten about his family and was now living in a place where there was plenty of food, which surprised him. Quais was still alive. The malevolent spirit was so taken aback by Baba Ayub's performance that he agreed to give the child back. The father decided to leave without his son even though doing so would require removing him from a happy life. To help Baba get through the painful separation, the Div performed one final act of kindness by wiping his memory clean. As a result, Baba Ayub has been rewarded with the knowledge that his son is still alive and doing well, and

the fact that the memory of his son has been erased is the best thing that could have happened to him in this situation. So, what goes around comes around.

Conclusion

The novel “And the Mountains Echoed” isn't just about the family and the struggles that everyone in the family goes through; it's also about how Karma is operating in some way or another to achieve a kind of literary justice. The novel isn't just about the family and the struggles that everyone in the family goes through. This paper covered several instances from the book that show the reader how the characters went through certain evil thoughts as a cause of anger and how they acted upon these thoughts and suffered the consequences. The reader can see how these characters went through these thoughts because the paper covered these instances. On the other hand, some characters can repay their debts and are subsequently rewarded by obtaining the thing that they desired the most in the beginning. When Khaled Hosseini writes something, he is not solely addressing the people of Afghanistan; rather, he is addressing the entire global community. The narrative centers on their split up and subsequent reunification and it does so through several different characters,

all of whom have their version of events to relate. The characters continue to experience a powerful tug from their familial ties, even when they are involved in other romantic relationships. When it comes to the connections that people have within their families, it's not just about how much time they spend together or the things that they have in common. In this story, every character has a complicated relationship with their family on some level.

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