

I: Film adaptation of *The Kite Runner*

This research as a comparative study over novel and its film adaptation critically examines the film version of *The Kite Runner* by Marc Forster through the lens of terrorism interpreted by the west presenting Muslims with the negative stereotypes as war mongers, terrorist, and fundamentalist. It focuses on film adaptation that highlights terrorism more than the novel to make the Muslims barbaric, insane, inhuman and terrorist in nature. This study shows the transformation of the novel *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini into its film version having the same name. This study locates the question that, to what extent elements are adapted while making the film and those adapted one are faithful to its source or not. Are the adopted elements exactly as they are in the novel or presented by distortion. Furthermore, the film directed by Marc Forster (2007), after the 9/11 attack, portrays the Muslims negativizing them by highlighting their terrorist nature. Therefore, this film representation rather being faithful turns out to be misappropriation. Hence, this inappropriation remains the aim of this research study. This study further clarifies how terrorism is interpreted by the west and how it tends to view the rest of the world following 9/11 attack.

In this novelistic genre, Hosseini presents contemporary Afghan history, the rise of Taliban and Russian invasion in Afghanistan causing civil war, hunger, terror, and refugee problem along with destruction of Afghan culture. In fact, cold war between the communist and democratic nations is the root cause for the destruction of minimal nations like Afghanistan for Hosseini. The protagonist, representing Hosseini himself along with his Baba, flees to Pakistan and then to America which demonstrates the adaptation of different ways of resistance against dominance and

imperialism created by the west but in fact falls under the clap trap of American hegemony.

As the film and the novel evolved from distinct backgrounds and different traditions, this project makes a focus upon film adaptation by Marc Forster highlighting some of the events thereby reducing the originality of the novel by Khaled Hosseini. These two forms of art belong to two different timelines and locations both of which portray the Afghan history and civilian in two different ways which is the issue to fathom out in this research. Hosseini, in the novel, depicts the Afghan history, culture and degraded life of Afghan Muslims because of war. In fact, its adaptation in film version by Marc Forster demonstrates from the western perspective presenting Muslims stereotypes as war mongers, terrorist, fundamentalist and so forth following 9/11 attack on the World Trade Centre.

Visual genre of *The Kite Runner* in comparison to the novelistic one highlights few of the issues which oversimplifies the issue of terrorism negating the Muslims by their presentation and behavior. After the Russian invasion in Afghanistan, the protagonist Amir along with his father flees to Pakistan and then to America as a refugee to save his life. The novel exposes the events that are hidden behind the curtain by the film art. Some of the events are: Hassan crying in the film hall because of the soldier's bad words about his dead mother and the surgery of Hassan's lips has not been presented in the film. In the same way, Amir and his father along with Rahim Khan, uncle and aunt's trip to Jalalabad where they talk about his victory in the kite running tournament has been erased. Baba, during escape to Pakistan, wrapped round Karim's neck by his hand against wall because Karim didn't fulfill trip where he had to take. The medical checkup of Amir and Soraya for not having child is described in the novel where the doctor offers the couple for the child's

adaptation. In the same way, Farid, while helping in his travel, says 'Muslim helps the Muslim'. The story of Sanaubar who is Hassan's mother is found by Hassan in front of Agha's house with front teeth missing. She is cared by Hassan and his wife as well. After her death, her dead body is buried by the pomegranate tree. On the street, Amir meets a beggar but in fact the beggar's reality was that he was a past university teacher who taught Amir's mother which Amir knows after his conversation with him. After the attack on Amir by Assef, Amir is admitted in a hospital in Peshawar for treatment. Rahim Khan's letter along with a key is given to Amir for some financial support. Amir, after treatment, goes for taking Sohrab with him where Sohrab gets lost. Amir finds him on the mosque but this event is distorted in the film presenting Sohrab, the boy sitting on the staircase of a hotel.

Furthermore, the event occurred in the American Embassy in Islamabad is highly presented in the novel but in fact this issue is totally omitted during film adaptation. In the Embassy, Amir and Sohrab pass through several road blocks and three different security officials conduct a body search on them by metal detectors. After that, he meets an officer named Raymond Andrews whom he reveals the entire story that he faced in Afghanistan. Andrews asks him whether he is Muslim or not. He further advises Amir, "We strongly discourage US citizen to adopt Afghan children." Finally, he asks Amir to take help from immigration lawyer, Omer Faisal in Islamabad. But, in fact the lawyer advises him either to put the boy in asylum or in orphanage or to spend two years in Pakistan living with Sohrab day and night. Then only it will be possible to some extent to take the boy to America with him. Because of this reason, Sohrab attempts suicide. Amir, after the boy is admitted in ICU, reads a story of Rustom and Sohrab for him which he used to read for Hassan during his childhood. The event occurred in the American Embassy which had troubled him a lot

for being Muslim during his return to America is totally erased by the visual art. This too exposes the westerners' negative attitude towards the Afghan in particular and the whole Muslim race in general following 9/11 attack.

Moreover, few scenes presented in the novel are also presented in the film but by highly magnifying. The kite flying tournament is exposed as an old Afghan tradition which is later banned by Taliban. Because of the civil war in Afghanistan, Russian invasion occurred. Russian soldiers come to control the civil war but in fact, this invasion took the war towards a negative way. Hence, Taliban fought with Russian soldiers and finally Russian soldiers were compelled to leave Afghan land. After their escape, Taliban banned the old Afghan tradition and this issue is highly focused by the film version. By the same token, Hassan's sexual exploitation by Assef is shown. In his childhood, Assef being a Pashtun seduces Hassan for being Hazara. Later, Assef being a Talib leader physically exploits Sohrab and orphan children as well. Hence, by showing Assef as Talib in particular and Muslim in general, Marc Forster as a whole presents the Muslims with negative prototype as barbaric, fundamentalists, warmongers and terrorists. In the same way, Russian invasion in Afghanistan is the issue that has been acutely shown. Their destruction over Afghan city, brutal killing of Afghan people, sexual exploitation of Russian soldiers towards Afghan civilian etc. are the issues highly focused in the film version. This shows the negative attitude of democratic nation like America towards the communist one like Russia. Hence, cold war is also one of the prominent causes for the destruction of minor nations like Afghanistan. It is well highlighted by the character Agha Sahib, Amir's Baba who is projected from the American perspective by Marc Forster as a democratic. He being a refugee escapes to America and in the bar after drunk spells with hatred "fuck the Russia" (115). During his treatment, he rejects the doctor for

being Russian as well. Brutal killings in the Ghazi Stadium are the other incidents which expose the negative characters of Muslims. Because of committing adultery, a man and a woman are killed by hitting on their back head by stones saying “who throws stone at the window of god’s house we shall throw the stone back” (236). The orphanage built by Agha Sahib has been destroyed and the orphans are living homelessly. In the same way, most of the characters in the film are presented as barbaric, poor, insane and so forth. One man hung in front of the restaurant and the other selling his artificial leg demonstrates the poverty of Afghan people on the one hand and Muslims’ barbaric nature on the other.

Moreover, Muslims like Talib are projected with long beard and rough dresses. Talib soldiers even patrol in streets and if one is seen without beard, he is killed. This shows the negative character of Talib in particular and the whole Muslim race in general as barbaric, fundamentalist, war monger and terrorist promoted by America’s war on terrorism campaign following 9/11 attack.

The novelist not only writes back to his nation but also tries to let the rest of the world know about Afghanistan. He portrays his city Kabul in its color, tone, mood and texture as if it is a painting or a musical composition. He presents a verbal illustration of the city that it appears as a reconstruction of culture, custom, and cuisine. Of course, there is one direct way of storytelling and it appears as a simple plot but there are many aspects beneath the novel which make it multidimensional. One can be curious about it, “isn’t it a story narrating about the nation?” Doesn’t it report about the past? As a writer, being miles away from his motherland, Hosseini’s memory of his nation and writing back to visualize his past is certainly what we seek in diasporas. The trend set by established writers is not violated here even if it is not followed exactly. He renders in the beginning of chapter one in *The Kite Runner*: I

remember the precise movement, couching behind a crumbling mud wall, peeking into the alley near the frozen creek. That was a long time ago, but it's wrong what they say about the past. I've learned about how you can bury it because the past claws its way out" (1).

The purpose of Hosseini as migrant writer is to bring back reorganization to his land. He articulates in the *Kite Runner*: "Iran was a rising power in Asia and most people around the world couldn't even find Afghanistan on a world map" (50).

The protagonist in the novel is a writer by profession and people expect him to write about Afghanistan. Perhaps Hosseini has his own conditions and expectations with him. In this situation, the protagonist is being asked: "Do you write about Afghanistan? May be you should write about Afghanistan again...tell the rest of the world what Taliban are doing to our country" (206).

As a sensible writer, he pen downs the devastating history of his country over last thirty years. He returns to his homeland to recognize old neighborhoods, to see his old school, street and old house where he had played in his childhood. His stories of family, friendship, love, betrayal, social norms and discrepancies are set against a backdrop of intrusion, violence, war, destruction and migration that present political turmoil of Afghanistan occupied by Russia and later on Taliban's destruction of art and culture turning the country to a land of nightmare and by causing people's dream fade away. The position of Hosseini as a writer from Afghanistan living outside the country of origin situates him under the category of Diasporic writers. Hosseini deserves a psychological reading and an emotional attitude to reach up to these internal experiences of the nation. He presents such a scenario that reflects much concern about the nation.

His work gives a complete in and out description to develop an understanding about Afghanistan, its rich past and distorted present and recovery of the tradition. He is a writer who trusts to serve the refugee and victims from Afghanistan. The hard luck of Hosseini is that the nation does not recognize him, does not get approval in his own nation and had to fight for the rights and freedom as fundamental rights.

In fact, many critics claim Hosseini for not writing the true Afghan life story. After the political asylum, his father moved to America and lived the life as a refugee. During that period, Hosseini was just 12 years old. He spent his whole life living in America. At this condition, how can he explore the picture of the contemporary history of the Afghanistan by presenting the real story. Hosseini, acknowledging that he had received the hate mail after *The Kite Runner* was published. He told the Time Magazine reporter,

I guess I misunderstood what the role of fiction was. Because I never thought it was about writing things that... make everybody feel warm and fuzzy inside. I guess it's my western sensibility, now that I've lived here for so long, that I feel like these are things we should talk about. (17 May 2007)

Despite being different in the medium, the film and the novel have close affinity since the film's birth as an art form. First of all, both are narrative works of art; the narrative is the backbone. According to Keith Cohen, "narrative is the most solid medium link between novel and cinema, the most pervasive tendency of both verbal and visual languages." (qtd in Dudley 425) Giving the momentous status to the fact of merging cinema and narrativity, Christian Metz in his essay "Some points in the Semiotics of Cinema" writes, "The merging of cinema and narrativity was a great fact, which was by no means predestined- nor was it strictly fortuitous. It was a

historical and social fact” (169). At this point, he asserts that merging of film and narrativity is a great fact. It is neither predestined nor accidental or happening by chance rather merging is historical and social fact.

The similarity between novel and film lies in the novelistic intention of a writer and the cinematic intention of a director. The often-quoted statement of Joseph Conrad and D.W.Griffith are apt to mention to the point in case. Joseph Conrad, stating his novelistic intention, remarks “My task which I am trying to achieve is, by powers of written words, to make you hear, to make you feel- it is before all to make you see” (qtd. in Brian 3). The same idea echoes in D.W.Griffith’s statement that, “The task I am trying to achieve is all above all to make you see” (qtd. in Brian 4). The differences are only in the way of seeing in the words of George Bluestone “between the percept of visual image and the concept of mental image” (4).

Moreover, film language consists of verbal and/or written language while the novel is made up of words, and the words can conjure up anything- images, feelings, ideas, qualities, things etc. The film is made up of any images with some words, sounds and music and it is very visual as well as compelling. Film uses many codes and techniques such as camera angles, planning, lighting and the speeds of cuts, color, and association of images and so forth to get its meaning across. However, these are not in the novel.

Terence Hawakes in his “Structuralism and Semiotic” draws on Victor Shklovsky’s work on the nature of narrative that makes the following distinction:

Novel and film can share the same story, the same ‘raw materials’, but are distinguished by means of different plot strategies which alter sequence, highlight different emphasis, which - in a word – defamiliarize the story. In this respect, of course, the use of two

separate systems of signification will also play a crucial distinguishing role. (23)

As in the process of film adaptation, the major task of a critique is to analyze the version of the film maker and the ways he uses the productive determinants for the contemporary society and its people. The issue here is whether the film holds the essence of the novel or not, no matter how far the film maker goes in his interpretation. As for the norms of film adaptation, Joy Gould Boyum claims:

In assessing an adaptation, we are never really comparing book with film, but an interpretation. The novel that we ourselves have recreated in our imagination, out of which we have constructed our own individualized movie; and the novel on which the film makers has worked a parallel transformation, for just as we are readers. So, implicitly is the film maker, offering us, through his work, his perception, his vision, his particular insight into his source. And adaptation is always, whatever else it may be, an interpretation. (61-62)

According to Boyum, adaptation does not render book with its film, but it is an analysis of interpretation. It is so, when a writer writes a novel thinking about the time of his own, there is his own interpretation about the circumstances he lives in, but when the novel is adapted into a film, it goes in the hand of the film maker. So, the film maker moulds the content of the novel to make it fit for the society he lives in. Hence, the present film by Marc.Forster though somehow presents the surfacial study of the novelistic genre by Hosseini depicting the Afghan history and its social reality, it distorts the essence and spirit by portraying novel from Western social reality

following 9/11 attack by misrepresenting Muslims as terrorist, fundamentalist, war monger and so forth.

The Kite Runner since its publication obtained many critical commentaries from different viewpoints. Hence, this dissertation will focus upon the terrorism and its impact and how the west defines east as terrorist, war mongers, fundamentalist and so forth after 9/11 attack on World Trade Centre. The negative perspective of the west towards the rest becomes clearer during the film adaptation of the novel *The Kite Runner* where the film version highly magnifies the issue of terrorism by negating the Afghan or Muslims with negative stereotypes. After 9/11, America directly participates in affairs of other eastern countries like Afghanistan to destroy it for taking revenge in the name of War on Terrorism. But in fact, this way of participation turns out to dehumanization, exploitation and suppression of the third world nations like Afghanistan. Hence, this way of dehumanization is seen as the negative attitude of the westerners even in media or the film version of the novel by the western director directed after 9/11.

Terrorism by nature is difficult to define. The act of terrorism conjures emotional responses in the victims (those hurt by the violence and those affected by the fear) as well as in the practitioners. “The word terrorism was coined in the guillotine days of the French Revolution, though the practice of it is much older” (*International Encyclopedia of Terrorism* 845). For Hans Morgenthau, “Terrorism is what the bad guys do.”(qtd. in B.V.Muralidhar and M.A. Hussain 34). By the same token, Vinaya Kumar Malhotra says, “For a last few years, terrorism has become another great problem in international relations.” “Today terrorism is not just confined within the territorial limit of a nation but literally “international” is that its range is trans-national, its membership is worldwide, its networking is global and targets can

be anywhere anytime- from Nairobi to Oklahoma, Beirut to New York, Dar es Salaam to Kashmir”(563). In opposition to this, after the 9/11 terrorist attack on Twin Towers of the world Trade Centre, in the evening of the invasion, President George W. Bush in broadcast announced the war on terrorism saying, “We have seen the first world war of the 21st century.” Furthermore, in the speech on September 20 to joint session of congress, he announced the start of a “War on Terror” (584). Shortly after the September 11th attacks in the United States, US officials publicly speculated that the battle against terrorism would likely spread in the Southeast Asia. The terrorist attack on the Twin Towers of the World Trade Centre; New York and Pentagon; Washington DC on September 11, 2001 has created a special kind of alarm bell before the international relations.

Discussing about counter terrorism, we can define it from two aspects. The first is to make citizens safer from terrorist threats through screening of airline passengers, placing video cameras and metal detectors in public places, and by the random patrols of bomb-sniffing dogs etc. The second is neutralization of terrorists, through arrests, prosecutions, assassination, raids on terrorist facilities, military action etc. Now the government of the United States of America has decided to rule the world under the slogan “War on Terrorism”. So, America, in the name of counter terrorism, is making a harder target for threat reduction and actively going after terrorists. At present the word “Terrorism” has become subject of heated arguments the same way as the ‘God’ was subject of heated argument at the time of the religious wars of the past. At this point, M.S.N. Menon argues, “Terrorism provided the US the opportunity to lead and prove its military might.” “America is the only super power. It is highly arbitrary. No wonder, it is hated. It threatens to take law into its own hands if

it is not allowed its way... America creates bushfires all over the world. But it expects the world to do the fire- fighting” (12).

Highly acclaimed as the first Afghan novel written in English, *The Kite Runner* became an international bestseller, publishing in 40 countries. Author Khaled Hosseini was born in Kabul; he was a son of a diplomat. His family received a political asylum after the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan. Then along with his family he escapes to United States in 1980. At that time he was 15. Hosseini studied medicine and became a doctor by a profession. But after his publication of *The Kite Runner* (2003), he began to devote his time fully to writing. The book is neatly divided into three sections. The first section narrates the childhood of the socially privileged Amir growing up in Kabul. His best friend is Hassan, the son of Ali, who is the servant in Amir's house. The two boys grow up together. They freely roam on the streets of Kabul almost as brothers. Hassan is totally dedicated to Amir. He has been Amir's kite runner, retrieving downed rivals kites, and defended Amir from bullies like Assef. During kite running tournament, one horrific incident occurs. After running kite, Hassan runs towards the fallen kite. There he is caught by the bullies lead by Assef. There Hassan is raped by Assef. At this point, Amir, though seeing the rape scene he does nothing. Here, he betrays Hassan. So, deeply troubled by guilt, Amir devises a plan to ultimately rid himself of the source of his torment by driving Ali and Hassan out of his house. After the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, Amir flees to America with his father. The second part of the book records Amir as an adult; his once fragile relation with his father and their struggle for new life in a distant land. Before his father's death from illness, Amir gets married and realizes his dream as a writer. The third part of the book depicts Amir's journey back to the new Taliban controlled Afghanistan to fulfill a mission that would ultimately lead to his

personal redemption. Through vivid description and deceptively simple language, Hosseini depicts poignantly the friendship of Amir and Hassan, the loyalty of Hassan and the betrayal by Amir, and ultimately the separation of the two childhood friends. The political upheavals are used as a backdrop, adding texture to the story. The book is not about the Soviets or the Talibans. It's about a father-son relationship, family, friendship, love, and loss. Above all, it achieves the life-long haunting consequences of one's action or inaction, the apology of wrongs done, and the necessary journey in search of redemption. Relatively second section seems to be weaker, overall *The Kite Runner* is beautifully written, an interesting and satisfying in reading.

Transferring the story to screen, director Marc Forster has taken advantage of the visual element by bringing the event and incidents portraying the negativeness of the Muslims. The movie attempts to present the cultural sights and sounds of Afghan life on a very small scale because Marc Forster while adaptation makes some distortion thereby highlighting some of the issues of terrorism to demonstrate Muslims with negative stereotypes. Amir escapes to America along with his father as a refugee because of Russian invasion in Afghanistan. After the Russian invasion, in opposition to it, Taliban soldiers fought with Russian soldiers for the freedom of Afghan civilian. Hence, the film at a point shows the degraded life of Afghan people because of Russian destruction. Even the Russian soldiers are negatively shown which becomes clear from the conversation between the driver, Karim and Russian soldier who asks half an hour with the lady for a safe passage. Furthermore, Taliban ban of kite flying which was one of the old Afghan traditions, massacre of the Hazara by Talib in Marzar-i-Sherif is the other incident which shows the inhuman and brutal in nature of the Muslims. The physical and sexual exploitation of Hassan and Sohrab in

particular and the orphanage children in general is the issue which film valorizes to the higher degree. In the same way, brutal killing of a woman and man in Ghazi stadium for committing adultery is the scene that is highly focused or remains the central focal scene for demonstrating the Talib in particular and whole Muslim race in general. Most of the characters in the picture are shown disable. Hence, this incidents where most of the characters being disable in the story devaluates the Afghan people for being Muslim basically after the 9/11 attack on The World Trade Centre. Presenting the consequences of story, the film presents almost all the situations in Afghanistan under the grasp of terrorism.

Khaled Hosseini's first novel, since its publication in 2003, the novel receives many critical eyes from different perspectives. They have focused on different issues like Trauma of the protagonist, Afghan Diaspora, migration, family relation, hypocrisy of those hiding their sins under the cloak of religious righteousness and the betrayal of friendship. Such perspectives and approaches are mostly readers oriented and author oriented but they have not talked about the issue that this research is going to explore.

The critic Ronny Noor sees the novel by focusing on the sin and redemption:

A novel of sin and redemption, a son trying to redeem his father's sins. This lucidity written and often touching novel gives a vivid picture of not the Russian atrocities but also those of the Northern Alliance and the Taliban. As far as the Afghan conflict is concerned; we got a selective, simplistic, even simple minded picture. (148)

At this point, Noor sees the novel by focusing the issue of Amir and his Baba. Hassan, who is son of Ali, the servant of Baba is in fact illegal son of Baba. He loves Hassan

and treats him equal to that of Amir but does not reveal the real identity of Hassan and his relation to him. At this condition, Amir not knowing the reality about his father and his relation to Hassan hates Hassan because of his possessive nature. He feels that his father loves Hassan more in comparison to him. So, being egoist, he makes a plan to let Hassan leave his house. After going to America, he realizes his mistake which he had done to Hassan during his childhood. Rahem Khan phones him and asks him to come back and take Hassan's son with him to redeem his sin. Amir comes back to his homeland. There he knows the real identity of Hassan and his relation to Amir. Knowing that Hassan is his half brother, he wants to take Hassan's son with him to America by adopting, to redeem his father's sin. Beyond this, the novel gives the vivid picture of Russian invasion, Taliban bad deeds towards Afghan and conflict in Afghanistan. It gives simple and selective picture while concerning about Afghan conflict by Noor.

Similarly, the critic Geraldine S. Pearson responses text from the perspective of psychiatric and mental trauma:

From a psychiatric nursing perspective, this novel illustrates numerous clinically pertinent themes. Amir's exposure to the traumatic assault on his friend, Amir, haunts him for most of his life and this childhood event has a powerful impact on his adult decisions and feelings. Pfefferbaum (2005) notes that symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder are mediated by the event, exposure, and a subjective reaction. (66)

Here, S. Person, the other critic, responses the text from the perspective of psychiatric and mental trauma. In the novel, Amir and Hassan both are the traumatic characters. Hassan is traumatized because of his mother's elopement. Furthermore, he is badly

criticized by others because of the same reason. By the same token, Amir is traumatized because he commits a sin by betraying Hassan during his childhood. This sin remains in his mind creating a powerful but negative impact on him. Even in his adult life, his decisions and feelings are effected by his sin that he has committed during his childhood says Geraldine S. Person.

Interpreting the text from the perspective of the betrayal of friendship, Bob Corbett remarks, “This is a beautiful and informative story of Amir, an Afghan boy who betrays his close friend, Hassan, when they are just 12 years old. He lives with the guilt for many years, paying deeply in pain and suffering, always wanting to redeem himself for his betrayal” (31).

The above mentioned critics have concentrated their views on various aspect of the novel but none of them has a sufficient focus on the comparative study on novel and its film adaptation with an issue of terrorism. This research is the comparative study on both the novel and film version of *The Kite Runner* where its focus is towards the visual one. The adapted film by Marc Forster (2007) highlights terrorism more than the novel does. While transferring the novelistic genre into visual one, the later one must not differ from its source novel. This study further questions that, to what extent the elements are adapted during film making and whether those adapted ones are faithful to its source or not. Is the adapted film is exactly same to that of film or it is presented by distortion. The film directed by Marc Forster (2007) differs from its source novel written four years earlier by Afghan writer, Hosseini. Forster in the film basically shows the issues from the American perspective. After 9/11 attack in the Twin Towers, America views towards the rest of the world changes. It defines Muslims as a crazy terrorist. In the name of ‘war on Terrorism’, it destroyed many Muslim nations and Afghanistan is one of them. Afghan American writer, Hosseini

writes the novel showing Afghan culture, destruction of civil life in Afghanistan because of Russian invasion. It also describes the indirect American support to the Taliban against Russian. On the contrary, American director, Marc Forster makes *The Kite Runner* an Americanized version. After 9/11 how the West and the Westerners view the rest of the nations especially Muslims can be clearly seen in the film. Hence, it portrays the Muslims negativizing them by highlighting their terrorist nature. Therefore, this film adaptation rather being faithful turns out to be misappropriation. Hence, the issue of terrorism in both the verbal and visual text yet untouched will be fulfilled by the research.

Overall, the movie to some extent provides the glimpse of the book but is an inadequate adaptation because it only highlights the issue and evidences that proves the Afghans as barbarian, fundamentalist and terrorist through their dress ups, gestures and so forth. Muslims like Talib are projected with long beard and rough dresses. Talib soldiers even patrol in the streets and even if anyone is seen without beard, he is killed. This shows the negative character of Talib in particular and the whole Muslim race in general as barbaric, fundamentalist, warmonger and terrorist promoted by America's war on terrorism campaign following 9/11 attack.

In conclusion, the modern version of the novel *The Kite Runner* as a film varies from the novel itself because of the intention of selecting the setting of the story as pre September 11 in the novel by Khaled Hosseini whereas post September 11 in its film adaptation by the American film director Marc Forster. During adaptation, Forster misrepresents the novel by demonstrating how America views the Muslim countries as the world of crazy terrorist. With the attack on the Twin Tower on September 11 by the terrorists, America's views to the Muslims changes suddenly. Further, the role of America towards rest of the world also changes. In this context,

anyone who does not agree with America is its enemy, fundamentalist and terrorist and so forth. To support this point, Forster also depicts the film from American perspective by misrepresenting the novel during film adaptation. The three main areas of this dissertation are accommodated in three chapters. The above chapter is a general introduction of Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* and its film version by Marc Forster. The first part of the thesis elaborates the statement of problem and hypothesis as well. The second chapter is textual analysis that makes a significant contribution in the two areas of critical concern. Firstly, the novel and its film version are discussed in different titles. The criticism related to both titles are brought and introduced in the section. Secondly, after the discussion of both the version, it brings out the comparative study on the novel as a verbal text and its adaptation into visual one. Here, the visual genre is focused for the critical analysis than the source novel. Some significant parts of the novel are being excluded and distorted and the issues related to terrorism are highly magnified by the film which exposes the Afghan society and its people with negative stereotypes. The final chapter of this dissertation consists of short conclusion and will summarize arguments of the previous chapters. With the help of different lines and quote of the text and film it has been proved that film version becomes the misappropriation of the novelistic genre.

II: Misappropriation of *The Kite Runner* in Its Film Adaptation

In the novel *The Kite Runner*, Khaled Hosseini explores the contemporary history in the background of Afghanistan. The text paints an eye opening picture of what Afghanistan was and what it has become. It describes vividly how the combination of war can devastate a country and people. Regardless of their being distinct artistic media the novel *The Kite Runner* and its film adaptation move around same central theme at the superficial level but in fact, analyzing from the deeper level the theme generated from film version varies from the verbal one. The novel hovers around the theme associated to Afghan culture, custom, betrayal in friendship, redemption, civilian life after the consequences of war and so forth. Visual genre in an opposition to verbal one deals with the issues of terrorism following 9/11 attack. Though, examining the surface level, the film too deals with these similar aspects. In fact, analyzing connotatively, film by Marc Forster supports the American perspective of presenting the Middle Eastern nations.

The Kite Runner illuminates the fact that most Afghan refugees are just that peace loving, law abiding people who are in America because their beloved homeland has been rendered uninhabitable. It also talks about Russian invasion in Afghanistan and Taliban era in which study of Afghanistan would be incomplete without study of hunger, war, landmines, and refugees and so on. Hosseini left Afghanistan in 1976 at the age of 12 when his father was posted to Afghan embassy in Paris. Following the 1978 coup and subsequent Russian invasion, Hosseini immigrated to the United States receiving political asylum in 1980. By the same token, the film version of *The Kite Runner* as well gives the historical background of the Afghanistan and its people. The civil war, terror, hunger, destruction, etc. are shown by the movie but the way of presenting the movie differs from the novelistic presentation. Hosseini, in the novel,

excavates the Afghan historical background with the Muslim sympathy towards his nation and people. But Marc Forster in the visual form of art shows the same issues and incidents by just highly magnifying in negative way that devalues Afghanistan in particular and the whole Southeast nations as uncivilized and barbaric in general.

The beginning lines of the novel show the Afghanistan of the 1970s.

I became what I am today at the age of twelve, on a frigid overcast day in the winter of 1975[...] That was a long time ago, but it's wrong what they say about the past. Because the past claws its way out. Looking back now, I realize I have been peeking into that deserted alley for the last twenty-six years. (1)

The afore mentioned lines are the beginning lines of the novel. Here, the novelist as the protagonist, Amir speaks to himself. At present he is in America and has passed 26 years living there. Though living there for a long period, he does not forget past historical days in his homeland. Rather, he feels as if living in the deserted alley for the past twenty six years. He still remembers the precise moment of his past life in Afghanistan. By these lines he clarifies his hatred towards the narrow streets of California and love and longing towards his motherland.

Marc Forster in the movie begins the story with the phone conversation between Amir and Rahim Khan where Rahim Khan from Pakistan calls for Amir back to Afghanistan saying “way to be good again”.

After the bell ring

Amir: hello... hello.

Rahim Khan: Amir jan

Amir: Rahim Khan

Rahim Khan: Amir. It is kind of you to remember. I've missed you

Amir jan.

Amir: it's good to hear your voice

Rahim Khan: you should come home.

Amir: Home? I don't know if now's such a good time.

Rahim Khan: It's a very bad time, but you should come. There is a way to be good again, Amir. (2:30 min)

Above conversation between Amir and Rahim Khan recalls the past history of the characters and their life in Kabul. Rahim Khan saying 'way to be good again' makes us think about the mistake committed by Amir during his childhood. Forster in the film begins the plot with the drawbacks of the protagonist. Living in America for 26 years, Amir as an Afghan American Muslim is still devalued in the Western land. Film begins with the flashback technique where director introduces the Muslim characters with their flaw.

While dealing with the time line, novel and film are supposed to be two distinct genres where the former deals with the past events and experiences. It is fictional and exposes past events. So, the narrativity remains the central focal point that deals with the history or the past. But on the contrary, film represents the present because it is shot in the present. Though, the story of the film depicts the history as the past event, it reaches the past. Differentiating the novel with the film in their relation to timeline, George W.Lindon explores in his book, "Reflection on Screen":

Unlike the novel, however, film does not so much pose a world as expose one. It takes us, transports us, into a land of 'once upon a time' and then returns us to our common world. But because of the peculiar nature of time and space in film, because it collapses into a fluid

present, film's 'once upon a time' is now. Novel is the remembrance of the things past; a film is the remembrance of things present. (32)

George W. Lindon's defines the novel and film in two different ways. He further differentiates novel with the film in relation to timeline. As per him, film transports us and takes us into a land of once upon a time that is, past and then returns back to our common world that is at present. Therefore, film's nature regarding time and space collapses the past and transpose itself into a fluid present. So, he calls novel once upon a time that is associated to past whereas film's is now.

Khaled Hosseini in his novel describes about Afghanistan. He as well describes Russian invasion and the rule of Taliban in Afghanistan. Amir in the novel, with his Baba and Rahim Khan are sitting in the dining room and waiting for the Sun to rise. They felt that this night is the last night of their life. If it was not the end then certainly April 1978 with the communist coup d'état be the end. These lines prove how the Russian attack in Afghanistan was like.

Huddled together in the dining room and waiting for the sun to rise, none of us had any notion that a way of life had ended. *Our* way of life. If not quite yet, then at least it was the beginning of the end. The end, the official end, would come first in April 1978 with the communist coup d'état, and then in December 1979, when Russian tanks would roll into the very same streets where Hassan and I played, bringing the death of the Afghanistan I knew and marking the start of a still ongoing era of bloodletting. (32)

In fact, this is the issue which is highly focused by the film director. While filming, many events are erased by him but this one is presented by highly focusing. At this point, Beja Morris on the film adaptation reports that: "since the inception of the

Academy Awards in 1927-8, more than three-fourths of the awards for “best picture” have gone to adaptations... [and that] the all-time box-office successes favor novels even more” (78). Hence, film version by Marc Forster though focuses few of the issues and gets awarded, novel remains at the prime level of focus. In the film, Tanks are shown, Russian armies marching ahead with night visions in dark night, Afghan people, and women and innocent children running to save their lives from danger etc shows the Russian invasion in Afghanistan. This way of presenting justifies the America’s negative attitude towards Russia and Afghanistan. The cold war is the root cause for the destruction of third world nations like Afghanistan. Because of civil war in Afghanistan in 1956, 1972 and 1978, peace treaty was held between Afghanistan and Soviet Union to resolve the war. Therefore, in 14 April, 1979, Soviet Union with soldiers and fifteen-twenty air craft’s entered to Afghanistan to stop the civil war. Soviet attacked on Tezbega Durbar in December 28, 1979. Soviet army officer in the Afghan radio announced for the release from Amin rule. After this, Soviet directly influenced over Afghanistan and started to bring in its army to Afghanistan. Within a week, forty thousand air flying entered in Kabul by carrying Soviet army.

At this point, most of the countries from all over the world voted for the return of the Soviet armies from Afghanistan and only fourteen countries were absent in this program. Soviet, after reaching there, had to fight different Muzzadins. Soviet army easily captured most of the places, opened their camps but in case of solving the problem, it raised higher because of which civil war took a new way. In Kabul, population was decreased by twenty lakhs. Most of the civilians marched to various places within the country as well as away from the country to other nations as refugee. At this condition, America, as a democratic nation, would fight with the communist nation by any means. America tried interfering Russian affair with Afghanistan for

revenge with Russia. America didn't even help Afghanistan after war because there were neither oil sources nor gold like in Africa. Hence, America any how made Russia leave Afghanistan by proving unsuccessful to create peace and harmony in Afghanistan.

Khaled Hosseini in his novel deals with the consequences of war where innocents are affected because of it. The war occurs between the Afghan tribes; Pastun and Hazara. To eradicate the war, the Russian soldiers are called to Afghanistan but instead of solving the war, it turns out more devastating. To control the terror anyhow, Russian soldiers opened their camps in different places for solving the problem. But their invasion in Afghanistan turns out to be a failure which is proved by these lines.

By then, most of my friends and relatives had either been killed or had escaped the country to Pakistan or Iran. I barely knew anyone in Kabul anymore, the city where I had lived my entire life. Everybody had fled. I would take a walk in the Kerteh – Parwan section – where the melon vendors used to hang out in the old days, you remember that spot? - And I wouldn't recognize anyone there. Not one to greet, no one to sit down with for chai, no one to share stories with, just Russi soldiers patrolling the streets. So, eventually I stopped going out to the city.

(178)

In fact, the film version by Marc Forster does not show the tussle between Pashtun and Hazara in a clear sense. Rather he focuses upon the scene; Russian invasion, their direct and negative impact upon the Afghan people and so forth. Furthermore, he presents Russian soldiers as inhuman and insane by portraying their characters asking for half an hour with an Afghan lady.

Hosseini as the first Afghan novelist, by the means of the character Hassan, shows the bad impact of war over Afghan innocent people. They are compelled to leave their land either by their escape to other's land as refugee or by death. In the same way, Sohrab, son of Hassan, after the death of his father, is placed in orphanage. But later, he is taken away by the Talib soldiers. He is physically and sexually exploited by them, especially by Assef. Assef, being Talib leader, exploits the children sexually which is demonstrated by the conversation between Zaman, the director of orphanage and Amir, the main character of the story. "There is a Talib official," he muttered. "He visits once every month or two. He brings cash with him, not a lot, but better than nothing at all." His shifty eyes fell on me, rolled away. "Usually he'll take a girl. But not always. (224)

The innocent people are killed because of the war in Afghanistan. The character, Kamal's father, kills himself because of the traumatic effect of war on him. He can't escape from the problem caused by the war so he kills himself for the easy way out from the consequences of war.

What happened next was too fast and too short to be called a scuffle.

Karim uttered a surprised cry and back-pedaled. I saw an arm swing, a leg kick. A moment later, Kamal's father was standing with Karim's gun in his hand.

"Don't shoot me!" Karim cried.

But before any of us could say or do a thing, Kamal's father shoved the barrel in his own mouth. I'll never forget the echo of that blast. Or the flash of light and the spray of red. (108)

The above scene in the novel shows the consequences of war and the Russian invasion in Afghanistan. After the invasion, Afghan people are compelled to leave

their homeland and escape towards new places like Pakistan, Iran, American and so forth as a refugee. Leaving homeland and escaping to others land as refugee is more pathetic. One has to live a life of exile with limited rights and freedom. Hence, at this condition, Kamal's father is also one of them who are escaping to other's land to save his and his son's life as well. But, remembering the hard life being a refugee, he puts the barrel in his own mouth and shoots. This is an easy way out from the consequences of war. On the contrary, film version does not include this scene. The film does not expose the hard life of Afghan people because of war. Kamal's father is a symbolic character representing the whole Afghan civilian. His killing of own self to escape from the hard life as a refugee due to war is symbolic of whole Afghan life. Hence, Kamal's father represents the Afghani's frustration that is an outcome of war.

By the same token, characters like Hassan and his mother in the story are presented by their missing front teeth. They are hardly beaten up during war, which also depicts the problematic situation of innocents and their difficult life during the war period. "War had made fathers rare commodity in Afghanistan" (215). Here, this scene in the movie is hidden. Hassan's mother is presented only in the novel but absent in the film version. In the whole movie her name is not included for a single time. But the novel presents her twice; firstly, at the beginning of the novel while giving birth to Hassan and secondly, after the escape of Amir and his father to America. In the same way, Hassan after going away from Amir's house is not remembered for a long period. Later on, when Amir from America comes to visit Rahem Khan in Pakistan, Rahem Khan reveals the story of Hassan and his mother that is flashback. While narrating the story, he explains about the brutality of Talib because of which they have to lose their front teeth. Rubble and beggars were not the elders as before but the children no more than five years dressed in shredded burlap

rags, mud-caked hands held out for a coin with thin and grim-face, sitting in the lap of their mothers at busy streets corner produced a sound “*Bakhshesh, bakhshesh!*” (214-215). This is how, war in fact; terrorism had made the Afghan people a rare commodity, children an orphan and a woman a widow. They get squatted at every street corner for begging to fulfill their hunger. Even the war has changed the people’s life by changing their profession. The old beggar begging in the street turns out to be the university lecturer who used to teach in different universities before 1971. The old beggar coughed “from 1958 to 1996, I taught Hafez, Khayyam, Rumi, Beydel, Jami, Saadi. Once, I was even a guest lecturer in Tehran, 1971 that was (218).

Amir during his visit to Kabul meets various people. There he is guided by Farid who is a driver to him. In his own homeland he becomes like a tourist. Beggars and rubbles were not the elders as before but the children below five years. The novel with its technique flashback, explains the past. Amir explains the past just like narrating the story ‘once upon a time’. The story of old beggar, children, orphans, women etc. are presented in the novel via this technique. But, the film version explaining about the present omits these scenes. These scenes hidden by the film version tries to put out of sight the war on terrorism in Afghanistan that has made the Afghan children orphans and women a rare commodity after the death of males.

Hafsa kanjawal in his “American Muslims and the Use of Cultural Diplomacy” writes, “Nonetheless, these are an estimated three to seven million Muslims living in America and a greater number of them are second or third generation Americans” (133). For this reason, Afghan people as refugees escaping to America too do not have the same profession as they did in their homeland. They are compelled to do small and minor jobs to earn and live their lives. We know this by Amir’s dialogue where he says, “I shook hands with Kabir, a small, silver-haired man.

He introduced me to a dozen men, one of them a retired teacher, another an engineer, a former architect, a surgeon, who was running a hot dog stand in Hayward.”(319). Even Amir’s father, despite being a great businessman in Afghanistan, now works as a minor employee in gas station after escaping to America as a refugee.

Furthermore, Hafsa Kanjwal writes, “with increasing level of Islamophobia pervading the United States , American Muslim organizations are constantly working to counter the negative image of Islam and Muslims in the media as well as on the international and domestic political scenes” (136). Here, not only the Afghan but also the Muslims living in America are looked with the vulture eyes. They are disapprovingly presented in the media with the negative stereotypes.

Terrorism has caused a severe problem in Afghanistan. People’s lives are being engulfed with hunger, terror, misery and starvation. People, for the sake of food, even sell their body parts by amputating them to feed themselves and their children’s life. They are even ready to sell their legs for food which becomes clear through Farid’s dialogue.

Farid pointed to two men talking animatedly at a busy street corner.

One of them was hobbling on a leg, his other leg amputated below the knee. He cradled an artificial leg in his arms. “You know what they’re doing? Hagging over the leg”, Farid asks to Amir.

“He’s selling his leg.? Farid nodded. “You can get good money for it on the black market. Feed your kids for a couple of weeks”. (226)

Both the verbal and audio/visual form includes afore mentioned scene. Farid points towards the two men who are busy in selling and buying an artificial leg. Selling of leg shows the poverty in Afghanistan. This is how Hosseini in his novel tries to show the bad impact of war and its consequences. It shows the hard life of Afghan people,

their struggle for food to eradicate hunger of own selves and their children as well. But on the contrary, film though showing the same scene in the audio/visual form, it presents negatively. Two men are talking at the busy corner street; they are making a deal for an artificial leg. Though this deal is positive and it is for the food for their children, film shows the Afghan people as barbaric, inhuman and insane through this particular scene.

In *The Kite Runner*, both as a novel and movie, the attacks are mentioned near the end of the story, as a post-script to the main narrative. As a movie, it offers a kind of reaction to the 9/11 attacks while the novel shows a different kind of reaction to it. The attack takes place after he rescues Sohrab, Hassan's son from Afghanistan where he was made a captive by Assef, the same person who, in his childhood, had raped him and has now become a member of the Taliban. Sohrab, because of his exploitation in Afghanistan by Assef, refuses to speak due to the traumatic effect on him. After he is adopted by Amir and begin to form a family in America, the attacks occur:

While sohrab was silent, the world was not. One Tuesday morning last September, the Twin Towers came crumbling down and overnight, the world changed. The American flag suddenly appeared everywhere. On the antennae of yellow cabs weaving around traffic, on the lapels of pedestrians walking the sidewalks in a steady stream, even on the grimy caps of San Francisco's panhandlers sitting beneath the awnings of small art galleries and open-fronted shops. One day I passed Edith, the homeless woman who plays the accordion every day on the corner of sutter and Stockton, and spotted an American flag stickers on the accordion case at her feet. (316)

After the 9/11 attack on Twin Towers, the world became changed. Suddenly American flags were seen everywhere. Even Americans were sticking the flags on different parts to show their anger and power. After the attacks, Amir gets troubled in the American embassy. He comes to Kabul to take Hassan with him but after coming there, he knows about the horrific death of Hassan who was killed by Talib. From Rahem Khan he knows about Hassan and his wife. In the same way, his son, Sohrab is taken away by Talib leader Assef for physical exploitation. After rescuing Sohrab from the trap of Assef, he wants to adopt Sohrab and take him to America. For this purpose, he takes Sohrab to American embassy in Islamabad. This scene, though highly focused in the novel, is totally erased during film adaptation. In the embassy, Amir and Sohrab pass through several road blocks and three different security officials. They conduct a body search on them by metal detectors. There he meets an officer named Raymond Andrews. He narrates the whole story that he faced in Afghanistan. Andrew asks him whether he is Muslim or not. At this point, he suggests Amir, "We strongly discourage US citizen to adopt Afghan children." Finally, he asks Amir to take help from immigration lawyer, Omer Faisal in Islamabad. But, in fact the lawyer advises him either to put the boy in asylum or in orphanage or to spend two years in Pakistan living with Sohrab day and night. Then only it will be possible to some extent to take the boy to America with him. Because of this reason, Sohrab attempts suicide. Amir, after the boy is admitted in ICU, reads a story of Rustom and Sohrab to him which he used to read to Hassan during his childhood. The event occurred in the American Embassy which had troubled him a lot for being Muslim during his return to America is totally erased by the visual art. This too exposes the westerners' negative attitude towards the Afghan in particular and the whole Muslim race in general following 9/11 attack.

Furthermore, the film version of *The Kite Runner* demonstrates the Americanized nature of the characters. To assert this point, Ruth R. Caillout writes,

The story set in 1975, Kabul, is the story of a privileged young boy whose father does not believe in God. Amir, the twelve-years-old protagonist of Hosseini's book, goes to the movies, drink coca-cola, rides in his father's ford mustang, enjoys reading and writing, and even has servants. Amir and his best friend dream of the television's arrival to Afghanistan and play the games of American children, building snowmen and pretending to be cowboy. (31)

Here, Marc Forster in the film shows the Afghan novel from the American point of view showing the characters guided by America and its hegemony.

The Kite Runner talks about the 9/11 attack that shows the disastrous events as well. After the attack on Twin Tower, USA negative reaction towards the Muslim country in general and Afghanistan in particular is seen. Soon after the attack, in response to it, America boomed in Afghanistan:

On Tuesday morning last September, the Twin Towers came crumbling down and, overnight, the world changed. American flag suddenly appeared everywhere [...] soon after the attacks, America boomed Afghanistan, the Northern Alliance moved in, and the Taliban scurried like rats into the caves. Suddenly, people were standing in grocery store lines and talking about the cities of my childhood, Kandhar, Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif. (316)

Eleven September shows the world full of terror and violent. As the security standard is concerned, even America is proved as unsafe and unable in maintaining peace in its own country and incapable of controlling unstable and violent world. In defense to it,

US raise the anti-terrorism campaign to control violent and make stable its power towards the other nation. And this root cause of violent is largely ignored and the War for the sake of war in the name of security is continued.

Zaman, the director of an orphanage, looks it after and the orphan children. There are about two hundred and fifty children who are homeless and many of them are parentless. He says that they all are not yateem. Many of them have lost their fathers in the war, and their mother can't feed them because of the Taliban who don't allow them to work. So, they bring their children to orphanage. "There are not enough beds, and not enough mattresses for the beds we do have," Zaman says. "Worse, we don't have enough blankets. The last time I checked, we have less than a month's supply of rice left in the ware house, and, when that runs out, the children will have to eat bread and tea for breakfast and dinner" (222). Here, he does make no mention of lunch. This is how the war has created the problem in Afghan life by creating crisis in the basic needs such as; food, shelter and clothes that are clearly presented by the conversation between Zaman and Amir. Despite being the director, Zaman too is poor. He doesn't have enough money to feed the orphan children. His physical appearance, his dirty and tattered clothes show his poverty. The lenses of his eye glasses that he wears are cracked. "Coughing and wheezing, he puts on his skull-cap, his glasses, saw both lenses had cracked, and took them off" (225). Having no money to buy food for children, he asks helps from the Talib but they refuse to help him. Even if they provide him some money, they take a child in return and if he denies giving a child, they take ten instead. At this condition, he is compelled to let them take one child so that he will get some money to buy food for other remaining children.

Zaman dropped his hand. "I haven't been paid in over six months. I'm broke because I've spent my life's saving on this orphanage.

Everything I ever owned or inherited I sold to run this godforsaken place. You think I don't have family in Pakistan and Iran. I could have run like everyone else. But I don't. I stayed because of them." He pointed to the door. "If I deny him one child, he takes ten. So I let him take one and leave the judging to Allah. I swallow my pride and take his goddamn filthy... dirty money. Then I go to the bazaar and buy food for the children." (225)

By the same token, the film too shows this scene. The conversation between Amir, Zaman and Farid in the orphanage is presented in the film version as well. In Zaman's dialogue, who talks about the pathetic condition of the orphanage having insufficient food blankets and so on shows the poverty in Afghanistan which is caused by war. In the visual art, we see Zaman with tattered clothes, broken eye glasses and rough appearance. Being a prototype figure, he represents the condition of an Afghan. Furthermore, while having conversation with Amir, he talks about the Talib's bad activities. As he goes to ask for some money with the Talibani to feed the orphans, they demand for children in return. And if he denies for one, then they take ten. This is how he feeds the children in orphanage. This shows the Talib's negative character and this is how the film version, highlighting this issue, shows the Talib as barbaric and inhuman and Afghan people as poor who are unable to fulfill their basic needs.

Christian Metz, discussing film narrativity, writes: 'film tells us continuous stories; it "says" things that could be conveyed also in the language of words; yet it says them differently. There is the possibility as well as for the necessity of adaptation' (44). At this point, for him, film also tells us the stories contentiously as

the word does, but it says them in different way. Novel and film being two different medium, film tells the same thing by the use of audio-visual language. It differs from the novel because novel focuses on verbal. Hence, he focuses on possibility and necessity for the adaptation. But on the other, Marc Forster negates the possible adaptation. His hatred toward Muslims is clearly visible. Being an American director, his internal psyche is filled with hatred towards the Muslim. The event of 9/11 makes America more ruthless towards them. After the attack, American started hating Muslims all around the world and even American Muslims from America. In every sector and by any means, they are criticized and dehumanized and media is also one of them for dehumanizing. Forster, in this sense takes Hosseini's novel and adopts it into film. But the adaptation is highly indebted to American perspective rather than the Afghan that Hosseini projects in his novel.

The kite runner as a film highlights certain details about terrorism thereby excluding the novel's minute details. The issue of Amir escapes to America along with his father at the age of twelve because of Taliban invasion in Afghanistan is highly focused in the film. Khaled Hosseini in the novelistic genre focuses on each and every details that makes the story an autobiographical dealing with the historicity of Afghan life, war and its consequences. On the other, Marc Forster demonstrates the same story in visual art form where he focuses on few of the scenes. These scenes of the film devalue the novel. It proves the Afghan as the land of terrorism and the Afghan Muslim as the crazy terrorist.

The September 11th 2001 attacks in the United States, commonly referred to as, a single documented terrorist attack that resulted the most casualties in the history of terrorist attack. Four commercial jet airlines were hijacked by members of the fundamentalist Islamic group known as al-Qaeda, three of these were purposefully

crashed into the pentagon, Virginia and the Twin Tower of the World Trade Centre in New York city with the forth plane crashing in a field in rural Pennsylvania. Hence, for this reason the transnational threat of terrorism has also caused changes in visa procedures, airport security, creating heightened boundaries between those so called namely developed and industrial countries mostly from Europe and North America and those associated with the image of terrorism in the post-9/11 world, namely “Muslims, Arabs and people resembling Middle Easterners.”

After Russian invasion in Afghanistan, Amir escapes to America along with his father at the age of twelve. “He was taking us to Jalalabad., about 170 kilometers southeast of Kabul, where his brother, Toor, who had a bigger truck with a second convoy of refugees, was waiting to drive us across the Khyber Pass and into Peshawar” (97).

The life in Afghanistan has turned harder because of which most of Afghan people escaped to different places as a refugee to save their life. Amir and his Baba were one of them to elope for saving their life. They marched to Jalalabad and to Pakistan and finally to America. Everything was missing for Amir. He had only memory of his past life in Afghanistan that he took with him.

Khaled Hosseini describes the painful situation of the ethnic group the Hazara and how the Taliban create discourse of destroying Hazara ethnicity that Hazara are not the true Afghan. The tussle between Pashtuns and Hazara in Afghanistan cause the massacre of Hazara in Marzar-i-Sarif. But the America after 9/11 does not discriminate between Psthuns and Hazara. Rather for it, both fall under the category of terrorist Muslim. “Are you Muslim? “Give it up.” “Your petition to adopt this young fellow, Give it up. That’s my advice to you”(287). This is the talk in American embassy where an officer advices Amir not to adopt the Muslim child. Here, the

officer, as an American representative, does not differentiate the ethnic group Hazara or Pashtun rather hates whole Muslim race and defines them as one and only enemy of America.

On the contrary, the film adaptation does not focus on this scene. This issue is totally omitted by the film version. Hosseini, in the novel, highlights this issue to demonstrate the condition of the Muslim nation. They define Muslims and their identity from American perspective following 9/11 attack. Novel, on the other hand, clearly shows how America views the Muslims and the Muslim nations. They define Muslims with the term crazy terrorist. The officer, in American embassy, asks Amir, Are you Muslim? “Give it up.” “Your petition to adopt this young fellow, Give it up. That’s my advice to you.” This line shows the attitude of West towards the Middle East. To put this idea in shadow, Marc Forster does not include this scene in the adapted version.

The war between Taliban and Russians is another cause for creating poverty, economic crisis, fear and uncertainty of life in Afghanistan. This kind of war destroyed the public’s villages, streets and other physical structures of Afghanistan. These things are very clearly presented in the novel and in the film as well. Hosseini presents the real history of the country and through these lines he tries to demonstrate the situation of the after war period of Afghanistan and the hardship of people:

We had crossed the border and the signs of poverty were everywhere. On either side of the road, I saw chains of little villages sprouting here and there, like discarded toys among the rocks, broken mud houses and huts consisting of little more than four wooden poles and a tattered cloth as a roof. I saw children dressed in rags chasing a soccer ball outside the huts. A few miles later, I spotted a cluster of men sitting on

their haunches, like a row of crows, on the carcasses of an old burned out Soviet tank the wind fluttering the edges of the blankets thrown around them. Behind them, woman in a brown *burqa* carried a large clay pot on her shoulder, drawn a rutted path toward a string of mud houses. (203)

In fact, the film version of the novel shows the war, terror and hunger in extremity. The Russian invasion with tanks, weapons and soldiers are massively shown. By the same token, Talib invasion in Afghanistan, massacred of Hazara in Marzar-i-Sarif, band of kite flying etc are also equally shown which negativizes Talib and Russian from the American perspective because of cold war between America and Russia.

De Witt Bodden, co- author of the screen play for Peter Ustinov's *Billy Budd* (1962), claims that:

Adapting literary works to film is, without a doubt, a creative undertaking but the task requires a kind of selective interpretation, along with the ability to recreate and sustain an established mood (7).

Further more, to strengthen this point Mc Farlane asserts, "The adaptor should see himself as owing allegiance to the source work" (7).

By this he means that for an adaptation it requires for the proper selection of the text and the interpretation of that is to be done should be selective as well. Only at this condition the adapted one can have the ability of recreation and can even establish the mood of the viewer. Hence, the adaptor should be debt with loyalty to the source work so that while doing creative task of interpretation he becomes able in recreating the mood of the audience.

In opposition to the above argument, Marc Forster in his film version does not show his full responsibility and loyalty towards the source work. The proper selection

of the task seems to be missing in the hand of Forster because of which he becomes unable in establishing the mood. The film director is highly debt with the American consciousness being an American. So, immediate after the 9/11 attack whole world was trembling with shock and horror. At this condition, American vowed to take revenge with the attackers and the blame was over the whole Muslim countries. Because of this reason, the mistake done by particular al- Qaida group is burden to entire Muslim race. With the issue of terrorism, America charge and make a several attacks on Middle East nation by flourishing slogan ‘War on Terrorism’ and defines Muslims as crazy terrorist. Hence, media is also one way to demoralize the Muslims. By presenting Muslims with negative stereotypes in the film, Forster tries to fulfill the American’s aim in dehumanizing the Muslims living not only in Afghanistan but also in every corner of the world and America as well.



In the given picture, the Soviet Invasion in Afghanistan is shown. Amir betrays his friend Hassan by accusing him for stealing his wrist watch. Because of this fault blame, Ali with his son, Hassan leaves Baba’s house. Suddenly after leaving Baba’s house, the above scene takes place. Hosseini in the novel does not discuss

much in the Russian invasion. But, Marc Forster presents this scene with high focus. The subtitle in the picture makes us clear about the scene by showing date and event. The way of projecting scene makes us clear about the intention of film director. It is night and every there is dark. Symbolically it defines Afghanistan with darkness. We see the focus of light coming ahead and it is not an ordinary light rather light of the tank. In front of the tank, mass of Russian soldiers with highly sophisticated machine guns are marching forward towards the city are of Kabul. We hear the sounds of gunfire; bombs etc. and see the burning houses. People are rushing towards the safe place for their life. At this condition, in the dark night because of the Soviet Invasion, Baba is compelled to escape away from his homeland to save his life. For this reason, he orders Amir to pack his bag and be ready to run away to save their life.

Baba speaks to Amir while Amir is sleeping.

Baba: pack a bag. Only what you need. Hurry up! Then he speaks to Rahem Khan, They will come for me. We don't know that. Read your history, my friend. By the time we know it, it will be too late. Then the tanks with armed Russian soldiers in dark night are shown. You know what I am. You know now how I talk. Everyone in Kabul has heard me cursing the communists. Will you watch over the house for me? We'll be back when the Russians leave.

Rahem Khan: what if they don't leave?

Baba: Everyone leaves. This country is not kind to invaders.

Again the Russian soldiers are shown.

Rahem Khan: And you my friend? Where will you go?

Baba: Pakistan, first. After that, wherever is safest for the boy.

Rahem Khan: The smugglers want five thousand a head... for safe

passage to Pakistan. I'm fairly sure they won't take checks.

Russian soldiers and tanks are marching forward for the invasion in Afghanistan. (46 min)

After the Soviet invasion, Amir along with his Baba and many other refugee escapes to the safer place. And Jalalabad was safer than the city Kabul. On the way to Jalalabad there was a check point of Russian soldiers. They used to check each and every vehicles running via that way. While escape to that place, Russian soldiers as usual stops the truck carrying dozen of refugee including Amir and his Baba. One of the Russian soldier in combat dress with machine gun comes near the truck. Seeing Afghan people he asks bribe for the safe passage from driver, Karim. After seeing the lady inside the truck, the soldier's mind gets changed. He further demands for the lady. He asks half an hour with a lady in the back of truck. The picture shown in the film and the talk between Russian soldier and driver, Karim makes us clear about the condition of Afghanistan during war period. We find this picture both in the novel and its film adaptation. While reading the novel, the movements of scene occur in the form of imagination. But, film projects the scene itself so we need to imagine the scene. The Russian soldier while coming to check the truck puts the cigarette on his mouth, the way of smoking, the way he talks to Karim, and the way he looks at the lady and his misbehavior to Amir's father as well shows the Russian soldiers with negative character. This is how film in its art form highlights the issue more than the novel does. Furthermore, cold war between America and Russia is also another cause for portraying Russia with negative stereotypes.

While escape to Jalalabad, Russian soldier stops the truck carrying dozen of refugee including Amir and his baba. After taking money for the safe passage from driver, Karim, he asks half an hour with a lady in the back of the truck.

Russian soldier speaks in Russian language and driver translates it in Afghan.

Driver: He wants a half hour with the lady in the back of truck.

Then the lady's husband says "What?" "No."

Brother please asks mister soldier Sahib to show a little mercy. May be he has a wife, too.

Driver: It's his price for letting us pass. (48:15 min)

The visual genre of the novel, *The Kite Runner* projects Talib with long beard and rough dresses. They patrol in streets and even if anyone is seen without beard is killed.

In the film version of *The Kite Runner*, Amir stares at the Talib soldiers patrolling in the red Toyota pickup truck. Then Farid shouts at Amir.

Farid: What's the matter with you?

Amir: What?

Farid: Don't you ever stare at them! Understand me. Never! (1:30min)

This shows the negative character of Talib in particular and whole Muslim race in general as barbaric, fundamentalist, war mongers and terrorist promoted by America's war on terrorism coming following 9/11 attack. The group of readers and the same readers as an viewers of the same novel and its film version do not get satisfied with its adapted one projecting the characters with negative stereotypes highlighting only few of the scenes. This attitude coincides perfectly with Bruce Morissette's statement that, "When spectators are 'disappointed' to see a certain player take the part of a novel character into whose feelings and actions they have projected themselves on reading the book, it is difficult not to think that visual specificity has, instead of favouring self-projection, erected a barrier against projective identification"(26).

The war between Russia and Talib soldiers came to an end in 1996. Though Afghan civilians were somehow hopeful for the upcoming peace in Afghanistan, Hazara and the minor Muslim tribes were still living fearful lives. This becomes clear through Hassan's conversation with Rahem Khan.

"I celebrated", says Rahem Khan. I remember coming home that night and finding Hassan in the kitchen, listening to the radio. He had a sober look in his eyes. I asked him what was wrong, and he just shook his head. "God help the Hazaras now, Rahem Khan Sahib," said Hassan. "The war is over, Hassan," Rahim Khan said. "There is going to be peace, *Inshallah*, and happiness and calm. No more killing, no more funerals!" (186-87)

The kite flying tournament in Afghanistan is banned by Taliban a few weeks later after the end of war. By the same token, Hassan's doubt becomes fulfilled two years later in 1998, when they massacred the Hazaras in Marzar-i-sharif (187).

Yet, this project report is the sensational response to *The Kite Runner* that begs further critical analysis: what is it about *The Kite Runner* that made it such an approachable and acceptable work of fiction among American readers?

The most obvious answer is that the novel had a historical relevance that resonated with a post 9/11 society. The events of 9/11 have resulted in presenting the violent and demonic scene that dehumanizes the Middle East, Hosseini's novel seemed to be one of the answers for that. Both the discourses as a state and media as well in the United States show the binary opposition between the Western relations with the Middle East. To assert this point, Alsultany in his book, "Selling American Diversity and Muslim American Identity through Nonprofit Advertising post-9/11" writes, "In addition to government and media discourses relied on old orientalist

tropes that positioned American national identity as democratic, modern, and free and the Middle East as primitive, barbaric, and oppressive”(594).

Hassan in the film is half brother to Amir. His real identity of being half brother is revealed only at the later part of the story from Rahem Khan. He is too loyal to his friend Amir. During the very evening of the kite running tournament, Hassan falls in big trouble with the second encounter with Assef. He wants the ‘blue kite’ for Amir who won the game. When Assef asks a small price ‘blue kite’ for his generous forgiveness of the torture, Hassan says, “Amir agha won the tournament and I ran this kite for him. I ran it fairly. This is his kite.”(63). Hence, for the kite he has to pay huge price. He is raped by Assef. Assef unbuttoned his winter coat. He knells behind Hassan, put his hands on Hassan’s hips and lifted his bare buttocks. Assef undoing his own belt buckle with his free hand, Hassan becomes an scapegoat. Amir’s longing to win the affection of his Baba, runs away though he has a chance to prevent the assault when he accidentally sees. Amir rationalizes, “May be Hasssan was the price I had to pay, the lamb I had to slay, to win Baba. Was it the fare price? The answer floated to my conscious mind before I could thwart it: He was just a Hazara, wasn’t he?”(77)

In the film, this scene is a pivotal moment. It shows Hassan as an oriental figure who is being exploited. This makes the West beneficial which projects the westernized subject of Amir. In the same way, Hassan’s son Sohrab, after the death of his parents is placed in orphanage and later he is taken by the Talib leader Assef with him. He exploits Sohrab physically. In the visual art form, we see the physical appearance of Sohrab. His eyes are darkened with mascara, jingle bell on his legs and even his cheeks are glowed reddish unnaturally. “When he stopped in the middle of the room, the bells strapped around his anklets stopped jingling. His eyes firstly fell on Amir. He looked away, Lingered. Then he looked down at his naked feet. One of

the guards pressed a button of stereo-a boom box and Pashtun music filled the room, Tabala, harmonium, the whine of a *dil-roba*. The three men began to clap. “*Wah wah! Mashallah!*” they cheered” (245). Sohrab raises his arms and turns slowly. He stands on tiptoes, spins gracefully, dips to his knees, straightens, and spins again. His little hands swivels at the wrists. His fingers snaps and his head swings side to side like a pendulum. His feet pound the floor, the bells jingling in perfect harmony with the beat of the tabala. He keeps his eyes closed. “*Mashallah!*” They cheered. “*Shabas! Bravo!*” The two guards whistle and laugh.

Brian Mc Farlane says, “There is a distinction to be made between what may be transferred from one narrative medium to another and what necessarily requires adaptation proper” (13). At this point, Farlane idea makes us clear that, for the proper adaptation we have to make a distinction between what can be transferred from one narrative medium to other and what can’t be transferred. As per him, improper selection makes the adaptation improper. If the transfer is proper, than the narrative elements of novel becomes easily managed in displaying, in the film.

Marc. Forster as an American film director in the film version of *The Kite Runner* presents the characters as disable. During Amir’s visit to orphanage along with Farid in search of Sohrab, the film version of *The Kite Runner* shows the horrific and pathetic scene. The picture of destroyed orphanage shows the poverty in Afghanistan. All the orphans are living in a single hall where the roof does not even saves them from rain and Sun. The sound of vehicles even reminds them of Talib and their deeds. In Kabul, Talibs are only the people to have vehicle. So, children get frightened seeing the car. After seeing the car and hearing its sound, children rush towards the hall because of fear. While running, we can see the physical appearance of them. Most of them are disabling. Some are shown with broken hand, broken legs

and with amputated legs as well. This foretells the dark future of the Afghanistan via children.



The given picture shows the image in front of orphanage. Seeing the vehicle, the orphan children are rushing inside because they fear for the Talib soldiers who frequently use to come to take them away. After the war period, the life of Afghan has been degraded. War between the Russian soldiers and the Taliban create poverty, economic crisis, fear and uncertainty of life in Afghanistan. This kind of war destroyed the public villages, streets and other physical structures of Afghanistan.

The stoning of adulteress in Ghazi stadium is presented by Hosseini in his story. By bringing this event in the story, he brings to life something about which non- Afghans have only heard. But, the film version highly magnifies this issues of Ghazi- stadium. It shows the Talib as barbaric, fundamentalist, and brutal in the film by showing the brutal killing of adulteress by stoning on their back head. The event becomes more significant in the visual genre because of experiencing it through Amir's eyes, that is American eyes following 9/11 attack. Not just the two victims in Ghazi stadium, but the Afghan people as a whole are being degraded into a pit of

hopelessness from which there is no escape, degraded and killed cruelly and unjustly. These things are shown with magnifying in the film that is proved through these lines.

Man and woman are taken to Ghazi stadium in truck. Truck enters to stadium then the football game stops. Talib leader takes a stone in his hand. Next Talib starts announcing in microphone. “Brother and sisters! We are here today to carry out Sharia’s. We are here today to carry out justice. We listen to what God says, and we obey. Every sinner must be punished in a manner befitting his sin. Those are not my words, nor the words of my brothers. Those are the words of God! And what manner of punishment benefits the adulterer? How shall we punish those who dishonor the sanctity of marriage? How shall we deal with those who disobey God? How shall we answer those who throw stones back! Then Assef, a Talib leader hits on the back of woman.
(1:45 min.)

By asserting theological matter, the West depicts the negative stereotypes of the Muslims. As per Hafsa Kanjawal, “There is a large number of Americans who are Muslims, but have been left out of the “core” because oftentimes, it appears that the “core” is too focused on issues relating to theological matters”(138). For this reason, Marc Forster in the film version of *The Kite Runner* focuses on the incident of brutal killing in Ghazi stadium relating to theological matter. So, America presents Talibs creating a discourse of God to dominate people. When someone commits adultery, he is publicly punished to death penalty like the events of Ghazi stadium. They impose their activities in the name of God as explained above.

After the attack on Twin Tower in New York, United States boomed Afghanistan and captured the government of Taliban and ruled over the country.

America attacks Afghanistan and captured the government of Taliban and ruled over the country. America attacks Afghanistan to take revenge of the fallen Twin Towers and the death of the American civilian. For taking revenge of the destruction of the Twin Towers, America in response to it attacked suddenly. America blames Taliban in particular and Muslims in general saying, it gave shelter to Osama Bin Laden who is the chief planner of Twin Tower attack. Due to American invasion in Afghanistan Taliban as well Afghan civilians are compelled to hide themselves because of fear of America. From this point it is clear that America creates the discourse of hegemony by using power following 9/11 attack. It becomes clear why West connect so readily to this novel and the distorted version of its film adaptation by Marc. Forster. Both the political and psychological needs of the west are fulfilled by Marc Forster's use of Muslim stereotypes and binary opposition.

Hosseini's novel *The Kite Runner* and its adapted version by Forster are distinct not only in their medium of presentation rather the adaptation gets deviated from its source novel in regard to its theme. The subject matter focused by the novel is distorted during the treatment of subject matter by its audio-visual art. The novel from the very beginning to the end hovers around the periphery of cultural disaster, war in Afghanistan and its consequences causing poverty, refugee problem, hunger, terror and loss. The movie to some extent provides the glimpse of the novel regarding these issues. It becomes an inadequate adaptation because it highlights the issues and evidences that prove the Afghan as barbarians, fundamentalists, terrorists and warmongers. The film by Marc Forster focuses on the few issues like; Hassan's sexual exploitation and physical exploitation of Sohrab by Assef. In the same way, brutal killing in Ghazi stadium shows the negative character of the Muslims. Talib with long beard in the film shows them as barbaric, in nature and the rough dress they

wore too devaluates them. Forster, in the film focuses on the issue of Russian invasion in Afghanistan. Here, he tries to prove Russia with negative character in flourishing communism being communist. On the other side, event occurred in the American embassy in Islamabad is totally erased by the film which is focused by Hosseini in his novel. Hence, these distortions created by Forster via deletion, addition, and modification during adaptation makes the film an unfaithful adaptation. This is how; film representation rather being faithful turns out to be misappropriate to its source novel.

III: Filmic Misappropriation

The film version of *The Kite Runner* by Marc Forster in comparison to novel foregrounds terrorism following 9/11 attack. Khaled Hosseini in the novel describes the suffering of his country under the tyranny of Russian and Taliban simultaneously. He also describes the war in Afghanistan and its consequences causing poverty, cultural disaster, refugee problems and domination upon the minority ethnicity, ethnic cleansing, hunger, terror, landmine and other problems in Afghanistan. As a comparative study of novel, its film adaptation highlights the issues of terrorism interpreted from the Western perspective and how its view to the rest of the world following 9/11 attack. The researcher comes to the conclusion that the film somehow projects the issues present in the field of depicting the underlying reality of the Afghan society and history.

The visual genre of *The Kite Runner* in comparison to the novelistic one highlights few of the issues that oversimplify terrorism. Furthermore, it negates the Muslims by presenting them as terrorist, warmongers, fundamentalist and so forth. The novel and film have a lot of elements such as; narrative, point of view, images and characters in common. The difference between these two forms of art is largely in the ways of manipulating these elements in a concrete form.

Hosseini by describing the suffering of the Afghan people under the rule of Russian and Taliban shows the darkness in Afghanistan via novel. He not only writes back to his nation but also tries to let the rest of the world known about Afghanistan. Hosseini's father being a diplomat receives a political asylum after the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan. So, he flees to United States and settled in California in 1980 when Hosseini was 15. Though studying medicine, later he began to devote his time

fully to writing. In his writing, he portrays his city Kabul in its color, tone, mood, texture as if it is painting or musical composition.

The book is neatly divided into three sections; the first narrates childhood of the socially privileged Amir growing up in Kabul. His best friend is Hassan, the son of their servant Ali. The two boys grow together, Hassan is totally dedicated to Amir's kite runner, retrieving downed rival kites, and defended him from bullies. He betrays Hassan because of whom he is troubled by the guilt so he plans to drive Ali and Hassan out of their household to rid himself of the source of torments. Later after Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, Amir flees to America with his father. The second section of the novel explores Amir as an adult, his new life in a distant land, his marriage with Soraya and being a writer before his father's death from cancer. The third part of the novel depicts Amir, Amir's journey back to the now Taliban controlled Afghanistan to fulfill a mission that would ultimately lead to his personal redemption. The book is not only about the Soviet or the Taliban; it's about father-son relationship, family, friendship, love and loss of the Afghan civilian.

In the immediate aftermath of the attacks on the Twin Towers, there was shock and horror. The world, or at least America's relationship with the world, changed after 9/11. The U.S. status as a hegemonic power was, to some extent weakened by this act of terrorism. The novel essentially arises from the response of Muslim Americans to 9/11, and the way in which they are treated following the attacks. Non-Muslim Americans did not change the way they treated Muslim aftermath of the attacks. In fact, Americans treated Muslims with increased compassion and concern or, conversely with suspicion and hatred.

Transferring the book to screen, director Marc Forster in the film attempts to present the cultural rights and sounds of Afghan life on a very small scale. For this

reason, while adaptation he makes some distortion thereby highlighting some of the issues of terrorism to demonstrate Muslims with negative stereotypes. The movie to some extent provides the glimpse of the book but is an inadequate adaptation because it only highlights the issues and evidences that prove the Afghan as barbarians, fundamentalists and terrorists through their dress ups, gestures and so forth.

Massacres of Hazaras in Marzar-i- Sharif, physical and sexual exploitation of woman in Ghazi stadium and most of the characters being disable in the story devalue the Afghan people for being Muslim basically after the 9/11 attack on the Twin Tower. Muslims like Talib are projected with long beard and rough dresses. This shows the negative character of Talib in particular and whole Muslim race in general as barbaric, fundamentalist, war mongers and terrorist promoted by America's war on terrorism campaign following 9/11 attack.

Thus, this research observes the common artistic features of the novel *The Kite Runner* and its film adaptation. The research examines the differences resulted by the difference between the two forms of art in terms of the process of creation: verbal and its audio-visual one. The researcher comes up with the conclusion that the adapted version of the novel one because of the deletion and distortion of the issues that the novel highlights focusing terrorism to prove the Muslims with negative stereotypes. Hence, this distortion of the novel by the film rather being faithful turns out to be misappropriation.

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