

# **The Representation of Violence in Khaled Hosseini's Novels**

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## Summary of Thesis

In this research, I aim to examine the visible and invisible representation of violence in Khaled Hosseini's three novels, *The Kite Runner* (2003), *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007), and *And the Mountains Echoed* (2013). Significantly, I will analyze different types of violence in these novels through narratological approaches. I will also inspect the hidden and untold scenes in the novels and the role of trauma in violence representation in the narratives. Furthermore, I will deduce how invisible violence paves the way to a visible one.

I am writing on the works of Hosseini as there is little reception on his novels in his country and Anglophone countries. There are newspaper and magazine reviews, but the critical studies are minimal. Through my researches, no monograph appeared on his works. It is essential to talk about Hosseini's works on violence representation as it is a cultural memory processing that is important for conflict resolution. By reading Hosseini's novels, I try to find the paradigm of violence representation because his works employ a multiphased of violence representation. This paradigm will incorporate the notions of narratology, trauma theory, and Johan Galtung's violence triangle, to test the representation of violence in Hosseini's first three published novels.

In the first and second chapters, I will survey Khaled Hosseini's life and works; discuss background concepts related to trauma, conflicts as side facets of violence, and narratology. I will identify some key concepts and build the theoretical background to later test to analyze the following chapters' selected novels. Further, the first two chapters will include a summary of conflict studies alongside various types of violence, peculiarly the modal of the violence triangle defined by Johan Galtung. At the end of the second chapter, I will also explore the narratological modes of the unnarrated and disnarrated. Following the introduction, I will dedicate three chapters to analyze Hosseini's novels *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, *The Kite Runner*, and *And the Mountains Echoed*. Finally, the last chapter will conclude my research on the representation of violence in Khaled Hosseini's three novels. Then this thesis's novelty comes to existence naming it literary violence triangle. Violence has an invisible level, but there is another sub-level underneath the invisible violence. Trauma is the sub-level that causes violence. Violence causes trauma, but the main issue to consider is the reason behind the violence, and trauma comes first. To address violence, first,

the unearthed traumas should be explored to understand the reasons behind the violence, and this is important to portray the whole picture to see how violence functions. Following the exploration of trauma studies, narratology has the leading role in elaborating this thesis to study unaddressed trauma and violence issues. To build on that, it is also about the novels' hidden knowledge that the narrator does not transfer to the reader purposely or unconsciously. Testing the narratological method of disnarration and unnarration on Hosseini's novels will allow me to look at the representation of violence in-depth, including the undressed hidden traumas, which are the main reasons for the creation of represented violence in the fictional works.

I connect trauma, violence, and narratology altogether and gather them under the violence triangle's umbrella to form a theoretical background and test it in Hosseini's selected novels to see how violence is represented. The goal is to bring a new approach to the study field of literature, and I name this new method the literary violence triangle. I see a lack in studies of the representation of violence in Hosseini's works, and I aim to fill it. The literary violence triangle is a collective theoretical background that included trauma, violence, and narratology to test them in the novels looking at violence representation. This thesis attempts to address the gap I see in the studies of Hosseini and representations of violence in fictional contexts, novels specifically. Thus, I formed this new theoretical background naming the literary violence triangle to connect some selected theories from the fields of trauma, violence, and narratology. The newly formed theoretical background will help look at the identified types of violence on visible and invisible levels. As argued in the previous sections, there is a circular process of violence creation, and different reasons lead to each other. Violence causes trauma, but it is true vice versa, and trauma causes violence too. The literary violence triangle helps to form a theory to comprehend all the mentioned comprehensive theories under one umbrella to test them in the selected novels chosen as primary resources.

The novelty of Khaled Hosseini's works was to fill the gap in the literary canon on the reception of his works, mainly studying the representation of violence in selected novels of the author. I found the paradigm of the literary violence triangle that I used to map to understand the representation of diverse forms of violence. The aim was to categorize the forms of violence based on their visibility and invisibility, arguing that visible direct violence manifests the other forms of violence which are invisible. In this thesis, the term of the literary violence triangle has come to existence. The term is an umbrella connecting theories and approaches in narratology, trauma, and

violence to study the representation of violence in the selected novels of Hosseini from a different perspective. The literary violence triangle looked at the representation of violence in Hosseini's novel on a typological method. I looked at the represented violence, categorizing them based on their visibility and invisibility levels: structural, cultural, and direct. This typology was connected with narratological theories to explore narrators' role in the committed violence against the characters by hiding the information of narratives from the reader as the incidents would affect the reader's reception towards the personality, attitude, and behaviour of the characters. Trauma also influences the narrators to decide what to narrate and what to hide due to various reasons. Also, violence leads to a traumatic experience, and the trauma can be a reason to push individuals to commit violence. Societies and cultures can be affected by trauma on a general level, and the trauma may cause long-term violent actions on visible and invisible levels. Those have been some of the main reasons that lead the birth of the literary violence triangle to be adopted in a critical analysis of Hosseini's novels.

Moreover, through this thesis analysis, I found out literature is an effective way to represent the usual nonfictional scenes. The ban of kite running, stoning a woman, and child adoption due to hunger are actual incidents in some third world countries, Afghanistan as an example. This thesis has used factual data in some parts of the analysis to show how a representation could reflect the real world using the author's imagination and storytelling skills with the narrator's mediation. The novel is an effective form to use for representation, and this way, the reader sees the world, but they can also engage by witnessing the events by reading the linguistic forms of representations. Although scholars explore violence differently, the violence triangle is a practical theory to analyze literary contexts. The reason is the inclusivity of the theory that it contains all the stages during violence progress. Using this theory answered this thesis's question that the answer would not be possible by consulting other violence theories. Besides representing violence, violence's invisibility has been a significant part of exploring and seeing its role in creating visible violence. This helps to comprehend better the represented committed violence in the form of literature. It is not direct violence represented in the novels, but there is also structural and cultural violence on the invisible levels. There are also other factors involved in the progress of violence, such as trauma. Narratology has the power to form and shape all those together to investigate how they can altogether create violence and how the issue can be represented in-depth to let the reader witness the issue from its root to the visible stage.

## Publications

### Publications pertaining to the dissertation's topic

1. Wshyar, Mustafa. 2021. "Structural Violence Representation in And the Mountains Echoed by Khaled Hosseini." *British and American Studies* 27 (page numbers to be announced on 15 April 2021). Web: <https://litere.uvt.ro/publicatii/BAS/index.htm>
2. ———. 2020a. "Absence of Law to Protect Civilians during War in The Kite Runner." *Studia Orientalne* 2 (18): 115–23.
3. ———. 2020b. "Cultural Violence Representation in And the Mountains Echoed by Khaled Hosseini." In *10th International Research Conference on Education, Language and Literature*, 130–36.
4. ———. 2019a. "Review of Picart's American Self-Radicalizing Terrorists and the Allure of 'Jihadi Cool/Chic.'" *Americana E-Journal of American Studies in Hungary* 15 (1). Web: <http://americanajournal.hu/vol15no1/wshyar-rev>
5. ———. 2019b. "Violence Triangle in The Kite Runner Adaptation." In *9th International Research Conference on Education, Language and Literature*, 437–49. Tbilisi.
6. ———. 2019c. "Women's Lives under the Rule of ISIS." *Nowa Polityka Wschodnia* 3 (22): 159–62.
7. ———. 2018. "The Violence Triangle in Khaled Hosseini's A Thousand Splendid Suns." *Americana E-Journal of American Studies in Hungary* 14 (1). Web: <http://americanajournal.hu/vol14no1/wshyar>

### Other academic publications

1. Wshyar, Mustafa, Bence Fiser, Goran Glamuzina, Erlis Lacej, A. Jamie Pierre, Julie Prochinig, Lorraine Rumson, et al. 2020. "'These Are the Things I Think Alone:' An Interview with Marjorie Agosin." In *Meditating and Meditating Change: State - Society - Religion*, edited by Maureen Daly Goggin and Ursa Marinsek, 249–56. Graz: Leykam.
2. Al-Ahmedi, Mustafa Wshyar Abdulla, Zana Majed Sadq, and Said Mohammad Karim. 2016. "Equity Capital Sovereignty and Country's Economical Change." *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences and Humanities* 6 (2): 1–9.
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6. ———. 2016b. "The Theme of Slavery in Beloved: An Annotated Bibliography." *Everant-Account and Financial Management Journal* 1 (68–72).
7. ———. 2015a. "Cultural Differences." *International Journal of Science and Research* 4 (4): 127–30.
8. ———. 2015b. "Describing Slave Black Women as a 'Fragmented Commodity.'"

- International Journal of Social Sciences and Arts* 2 (1): 18–25.
9. ———. 2015c. "The Power, Necessity and Cohesion of Humor at Workplace." *International Journal of Research PARIPEX* 4 (2): 43–45.
  10. ———. 2014a. "Poetic Language: Presenting Factual Information." *International Journal of Literature and Arts* 2 (5): 150–54.
  11. ———. 2014b. "The Use of Metaphor in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*." *Global Journal of HUMAN-SOCIAL SCIENCE: A - Arts & Humanities - Psychology* 14 (8): 26–32.
  12. ———. 2012. *Slave Mother-Child Relationship in Toni Morrison's Beloved and Harriet Jacobs Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. Saarbrücken: LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing.

## Conferences

1. 10th International Research Conference on Education, Language and Literature: 2 May 2020 (online) – Tbilisi, Georgia.  
Paper Title: Cultural Violence Representation in *And the Mountains Echoed* by Khaled Hosseini
2. 9th International Research Conference on Education, Language and Literature: 3-4 May 2019 – Tbilisi, Georgia.  
Paper Title: Violence Triangle In *The Kite Runner* Adaptation
3. Transnational Americas: Home(s), Borders and Transgressions: 16-18 Nov. 2017 – Szeged, Hungary. Paper Title: The Violence Triangle in Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*
4. Interpreting Migration: 27-30 Apr. 2017 - Liberec, Czech Republic  
Paper Title: Literary Violence-Triangle in Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*
5. 13th Biennial Conference of HUSSE: 26-28 Jan. 2017 - Eger, Hungary  
Paper Title: Violence in the Movie Adaptation of *The Kite Runner*
6. Face to Face – "Civic Actors in Conflict": 26-27 Apr. 2018 - Bratislava, Slovakia, panel.
7. Rome Conference on Forgiveness: 18 Jan. 2018 - Rome, Italy, panel.
8. Value Based Conflicts and Violence: 5-6 Apr. 2017 - Bratislava, Slovakia, panel.