



EXPLORING STYLISTIC DEVICES IN “THE KITE RUNNER”: UNVEILING SYMBOLISM AND METAPHORS

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ABSTRACT

This research article explores the use of stylistic devices in the book “The Kite Runner” to convey deep emotions and themes. Through metaphors and symbolism, the author effectively communicates the enduring impact of the past, the power of relationships, and the complexities of characters. The study analyzes specific passages from the book to highlight the significance of these stylistic devices in shaping the narrative. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the book’s themes and the author’s storytelling techniques.

KEY WORDS: *metaphor, symbolism, emotions, guilt, redemption, protagonist, relationships, novel*

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research article is to examine the stylistic devices employed in the book “The Kite Runner” and their impact on the story. The author uses metaphors and symbolism to convey emotions, represent characters, and explore important themes. By analyzing specific passages, this study aims to reflect on the author’s effective use of these stylistic devices. Understanding the significance of these devices will enhance our appreciation and interpretation of the book.

METHODS

This research article employs a qualitative approach based on functional-interpretation and psychoanalytical methods to analyze the stylistic devices in “The Kite Runner”. A close reading of selected passages from the book is conducted to identify and interpret the metaphors and symbolism employed by the author. These passages are examined in the context of the overall narrative to determine their thematic significance. The analysis is based on the researcher’s interpretation and understanding of the text.

RESULT

The analysis of stylistic devices in “The Kite Runner” reveals their profound impact on the narrative. Metaphors such as “crumbling mud wall,” “frozen creek,” and “burying the past” effectively convey themes of decay, stagnation, and the persistence of memories. Symbolism, such as the kites representing friendship and the haunting presence of the past, adds emotional depth to the story. These stylistic devices contribute to the book’s exploration of guilt, redemption, and the enduring influence of the past on the characters’ lives.

DISCUSSION

From the first lines of the book writer uses a lot of stylistic devices with the purpose of informing readers of what to expect from the book.

“I became what I am today at the age of twelve, on a frigid overcast day in the winter of 1975. I remember the precise moment, crouching 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. Looking back now, I realize I have been peeking into that deserted alley for the last twenty-six years” [1,3]

For example, in the expression “*Crumbling mud wall*” a barrier or obstacle in Amir’s life is represented. It suggests that something has deteriorated or fallen apart, representing a sense of decay or vulnerability.

“*Peeking into the alley*” is a representation of his act of observing or reflecting on a specific memory or aspect of the past. It implies a sense of caution or secrecy, as if he is hesitant to fully confront or engage with his past memories.

“*Frozen creek*” represents a stagnant or unchanging state. It shows that the flow of his time or his life has halted, which suggests a lack of progress or development.



“*Burying the past*” is used by the author to imply the act of trying to forget or suppress his past experiences or memories. By this it can be understood that the past cannot be completely erased or hidden, as it has a way of resurfacing or demanding attention.

“*The past claws its way out*” describes the persistent and intrusive nature of the past. By reading this expression it can be concluded that memories and experiences from the past can emerge forcefully and unexpectedly, as if driven by a powerful force.

These metaphors were used by the author for conveying the idea that the past holds a significant influence over Amir’s life, regardless of his attempts to forget or move on from it. By using them author emphasizes the enduring impact of memories and the difficulty of escaping their grasp.

“*One day last summer, my friend Rahim Khan called from Pakistan. He asked me to come see him. Standing in the kitchen with the receiver to my ear, I knew it wasn’t just Rahim Khan on the line. It was my past of unatoned sins. After I hung up, I went for a walk along Spreckels Lake on the northern edge of Golden Gate Park. The early-afternoon sun sparkled on the water where dozens of miniature boats sailed, propelled by a crisp breeze. Then I glanced up and saw a pair of kites, red with long blue tails, soaring in the sky. They danced high above the trees on the west end of the park, over the windmills, floating side by side like a pair of eyes looking down on San Francisco, the city I now call home. And suddenly Hassan’s voice whispered in my head: For you, a thousand times over. Hassan the harellipped kite runner.*” [1,3]

In the following passage the expression “*It wasn’t just Rahim Khan on the line. It was my past of unatoned sins.*” suggests that the phone call from Rahim Khan represents more than just a conversation with a friend. It symbolizes the narrator's unresolved guilt and regrets from the past. The past sins are illustrated as a presence that lingers and haunts Amir.

“*A pair of kites, red with long blue tails, soaring in the sky. They danced high above the trees on the west end of the park, over the windmills...*”: The kites in this sentence symbolize the relationship between Amir and Hassan, his childhood friend. The red kites with long blue tails represent the connection and bond between them. The kites soaring high in the sky and dancing symbolize the freedom, joy, and innocence of their friendship.

“*They floated side by side like a pair of eyes looking down on San Francisco, the city I now call home.*” In this piece floating kites are compared to a pair of eyes observing San Francisco from above. It suggests that the presence and memory of Hassan are still watching over Amir, even in his new home.

These metaphors enhance the emotional depth of the story, conveying the weight of the narrator's past, the potential for redemption, and the enduring impact of significant relationships.

“*People say that eyes are windows to the soul. Never was that more true than with Ali, who could only reveal himself through his eyes.*” [1,7] This metaphor suggests that a person’s eyes can provide insight into their inner emotions and thoughts. Ali’s slanted brown eyes, which glint with a smile or well with sorrow, symbolize his only means of expressing himself and revealing his true emotions to others.

“*It was Rahim Khan who first referred to him as what eventually became Baba’s famous nickname, Toophan agha, or “Mr. Hurricane.” It was an apt enough nickname. My father was a force of nature, a towering Pashtun specimen with a thick beard, a wayward crop of curly brown hair as unruly as the man himself, hands that looked capable of uprooting a willow tree, and a black glare that would “drop the devil to his knees begging for mercy,” as Rahim Khan used to say.*” [1,10]

“*A force of nature*” here Baba is compared to the power and unpredictability of natural forces, highlighting his strength and influence.

“*A towering Pashtun specimen*”, “*Hands that looked capable of uprooting a willow tree*” These metaphors present Baba as a physically imposing figure, emphasizing his Pashtun heritage and suggesting his strength and dominance.

“*A black glare that would drop the devil to his knees begging for mercy*”: This metaphor describes Baba’s intense and intimidating gaze, symbolizing his ability to command authority and instill fear.

These metaphors collectively create a vivid and evocative description of Baba’s physicality, personality, and commanding presence. They enhance the reader’s understanding of his larger-than-life character and the impact he has on others.

“*Never mind that to me, the face of Afghanistan is that of a boy with a thin-boned frame, a shaved head, and low-set ears, a boy with a Chinese doll face perpetually lit by a harellipped smile.*” [1,18]



In this sentence, Hassan's face is compared to that of a Chinese doll. The comparison emphasizes his delicate and finely crafted features, creating a vivid image in the reader's mind. The mention of the "hare-lipped smile" adds a touch of uniqueness and charm to the metaphor, portraying the Hassan's distinctive smile as something endearing and memorable.

"To him, the words on the page were a scramble of codes, indecipherable, mysterious. Words were secret doorways and I held all the keys. After, I started to ask him if he'd liked the story, a giggle rising in my throat, when Hassan began to clap." [1,21]

"To him, the words on the page were a scramble of codes, indecipherable, mysterious." In this piece, the words on the page are compared to a scramble of codes. The comparison shows that the words hold a hidden meaning or message and that is difficult for Hassan to understand. This metaphor emphasizes the sense of mystery and complexity associated with reading for Hassan, as he perceives the words as difficult puzzles waiting to be deciphered.

"Words were secret doorways and I held all the keys." Here words are compared to secret doorways, and in Hassan's imagination Amir is portrayed as holding the keys to these doorways. It highlights Amir's role as a guide or mentor to Hassan, offering him access to a world of knowledge and understanding through the power of language.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this research article demonstrate the powerful role of stylistic devices in "The Kite Runner". The author's use of metaphors and symbolism enriches the narrative, allowing for a deeper understanding of the book's themes and characters. The metaphors effectively convey emotions, while the symbolism adds layers of meaning to the story. By analyzing these stylistic devices, this study enhances our appreciation of the book's literary techniques and their impact on the reader's interpretation. Overall, this research contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the stylistic qualities of "The Kite Runner" and its enduring appeal.

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