

**The Eternal Loop of Guilt and Redemption in
Khalid Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* and Ian
McEwan's *Atonement*: A Psychoanalytical and
Comparative Study**

عقدة الذنب الأبدية والسعي الى الخلاص في روايتي (عداء الطائرة الورقية) لخالد
حسيني و(الكفارة) لإيان ماك ايوين: دراسة مقارنة وتحليل نفسي

Prepared by:

Hadeel Mazen Khamis Al Sabbagh

Supervised by:

Dr. Nadia Hamendi

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirement for the Degree
of Master of Arts in English Language and Literature**

Department of English Language and Literature

Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Middle East University

Jun. 2020

Authorization

I, **Hadeel Al Sabbagh**, authorize Middle East University (MEU) to supply copies of my thesis to libraries, organizations establishments and even individuals upon request.

Name: Hadeel Mazen Al Sabbagh

Date: 23 / 06 / 2020.

Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Hadeel Al Sabbagh', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

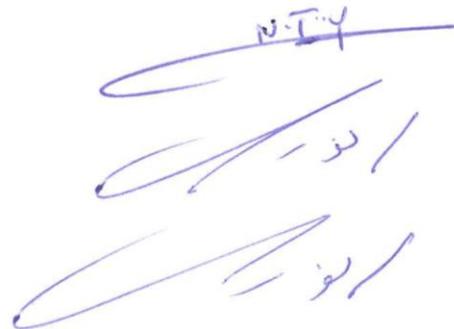
Thesis Committee Decision

This thesis entitled “The Eternal Loop of Guilt and Redemption in Khalid Hosseini’s *The Kite Runner* and Ian McEwan’s *Atonement: A Psychoanalytical and Comparative Study*,” was successfully defended and approved on 20/ 6/2020

Thesis committee

1. Dr. Nisreen Yousef
2. Dr. Hussein Alhawamdeh
3. Dr. Nadia Hamendi

Signature



The image shows three handwritten signatures in blue ink, arranged vertically. The top signature is the most legible, appearing to be 'N. Yousef'. The middle and bottom signatures are more stylized and less legible, but they correspond to the names of the other two committee members listed on the left.

Acknowledgement

First and foremost, praise is due to Almighty Allah, the Most Compassionate and the Most Merciful, for enlightening my way and guiding me to bear this journey through providing me with strength, patience and knowledge.

I am sincerely grateful and thankful to my supervisor, Dr. Nadia Hamendi, for generously sharing her knowledge, expertise and making herself freely available for consultation. I truly appreciate her guidance, patience, advices and support in the process of making this thesis.

My deepest gratitude goes to my beloved husband, Dr. Diaa Uliyan for his never ending love, patience, support, understanding and encouragement throughout this project particularly in making me feel that the journey was a shared one.

My appreciation is also extended to my family for being the perfect role models through thick and thin, and pushing me to strive to be the best person in the world.

Finally, I specially thank my dear friends for providing me the unfailing support and continuous encouragement throughout my journey and my years of study. This accomplishment would not have been possible without them. Thank you all.

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my angel who stood by my side, gave me hope, and raise me up whenever I fall down. For loving me unconditionally and encouraging me to aspire high. For always believing in me, even at times when I did not believe in myself. To my one and only daughter, to my princess Leen.

Table of Contents

Title.....	i
Authorization	ii
Thesis Committee Decision	iii
Acknowledgement	iv
Dedication	v
Table of Contents.....	vi
Abstract	viii
Arabic Abstract	ix
Chapter One: Background of the Study	1
1. Introduction	1
1.2 Statement of the problem.....	3
1.3 Objective of the study.....	4
1.4 Questions of the study	4
1.5 Significance of the study	4
1.6 Limitation of the study	5
1.7 Limits of the study.....	5
1.8 Definition of terms	5
Chapter Two: Review of Literature.....	7
2.1 Introduction	7
2.2 Theoretical studies	7
2.3 Empirical Studies:	11
Chapter Three: Methodology and Procedures	17
3.1 Introduction	17
3.2 Methodology	17
3.3 Sample of the study	17
3.4 Procedures of the Study	17
Chapter Four: Discussion and Analysis.....	18
4.1 Introduction	18
4.2 The Kite Runner	22
4.2.1 Khaled Hosseini – Biography.....	22

4.2.2 Amir’s psychological conflicts against his father	23
4.2.3 Amir’s psychological conflicts against Hassan.....	29
4.2.4 Amir’s betrayals of Hassan	33
4.2.5 Moving to America.....	39
4.3 Atonement	40
4.3.1 Ian McEwan’s-Biography	40
4.3.3 The child Briony, the talented writer.....	43
4.3.4 Briony’s fiction as an entrance to adulthood.....	46
4.3.5 Briony in her way to sin	52
4.3.6 The Impact of Tallis Family on Briony.....	56
4.4 Comparison	59
4.4.1 From sin-awareness into Redemption	59
4.4.2 Amir’s and Briony’s sacrifices for salvation.....	62
4.4.3 Achieving Atonement.....	68
Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations	71
5.1 Conclusion.....	71
References.....	75

The Eternal Loop of Guilt and Redemption in Khalid Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* and Ian McEwan's *Atonement*:

A Psychoanalytical and Comparative Study

By: Hadeel Mazen Al Sabbagh

Supervised by: Dr. Nadia Hamendi

Abstract

Guilt occurs when a person sins against himself or against another which provokes the need for atonement to purify one's soul and achieve salvation.

This study follows the journey of Amir in *The Kite Runner* (2003) and Briony in *Atonement* (2001) from feeling tortured by guilt for a sin which was committed in their childhood to the years it took them to understand the serious consequences of their mistakes. Both characters were burdened with their sins but when they decided to repair the damage and to seek atonement, they found the victims who were offended no longer alive, causing them to spend the rest of their life in an eternal loop of guilt, seeking redemption which they might not achieve. Amir's desire for penance, lead him to face his fears and overcome the obstacles to reach salvation. While Briony's unforgivable crime forbade her from achieving redemption and her potential of literary writing is her only way for atonement.

Keywords: Sin, guilt, Atonement, The Kite Runner

عقدة الذنب الأبدية والسعي الى الخلاص في روايتي (عداء الطائرة الورقية) لخالد حسيني

و(الكفارة) لإيان ماك ايوين: دراسة مقارنة وتحليل نفسي

إعداد: هديل مازن الصباغ

إشراف: د. نادية حميندي

الملخص

يتصاعد الشعور بالذنب عندما يرتكب الشخص خطيئة بحق نفسه أو بحق شخص آخر مما

يثير الحاجة إلى التكفير عن النفس ليخلصها من الذنب وينقيها.

تقوم هذه الدراسة بتتبع أمير في رواية عداء الطائرة الورقية وبريوني في رواية الكفارة المتقلين

بالذنوب بسبب خطيئة ارتكباها في طفولتهما حيث استمر شعورهما بالذنب سنوات طويلة قبل أن يدركا

عواقب م ارتكبه يداهما. كلاهما كانا مثقلان بالآثام الى أن قررا التكفير عن ذنوبهما وإصلاح ما

أفسداه من سنوات طويلة حيث انهما وجدا من اساءوا لهم قد فارقوا الحياة مما جعلهما يقضيان بقية

حياتهما في حلقة ابدية من الذنب باحثين عن الخلاص الذي ربما لن يجدها يوما من الأيام. إن رغبة

أمير في التكفير عن ذنبه، دفعت به إلى مواجهة مخاوفه والتغلب على العقبات التي تحول دون توصله

الى الخلاص وفي حين أن جريمة بريوني التي لا تغتفر منعته من تحقيق الخلاص، فإن قدرتها على

الكتابة الأدبية تشكل الوسيلة الوحيدة للتكفير عنها.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الخطيئة، الذنب، التكفير عن الذنب، عداء الطائرة الورقية.

Chapter One

Background of the Study

1. Introduction

Literature is a reflection of society and its issues and is considered to be a source of great morals. Thus, to separate between literature and ethics is to try to separate the spirit from the body. It has been noticed that literature has an immediate positive ethical impact on readers which has the power to affect people and change their life. Literature deals with important ethical issues such as betrayal and how the feeling of guilt can change one's life and make it unbearable, and this can be seen in *The Kite Runner* (2003) by Khaled Hosseini and *Atonement* (2001) by Ian McEwan, which deal with the sense of guilt felt by the protagonists Amir and Briony, both of whom spend their entire life engaged in lifelong attempts to redeem a sin that was committed in their childhood.

Khalid Hosseini (1965-), is an Afghan-American writer and physician. He studied medicine and practiced it for ten years. He wrote his first novel, *The kite Runner* as a short story of 25 pages only, trying several times to publish it, but failed. After three years he decided to re-write it in more details. It took him a while to finish the novel, and though he was excited, yet he was afraid to publish a novel that contains certain political issues about the Soviet war and Taliban at that time. He always doubted if readers would love the novel and was afraid of their reaction. Eventually, the novel was published and accomplished huge success. *The Kite Runner* was one of the best sellers and one of the best ten literary works of 2003 (wen, 2019).

The Kite Runner tells the story of the friendship between two boys Amir and Hassan whose lives reflect the tragedies of Afghanistan as the country changes from monarchal to Taliban rule. The story is about sin, guilt and redemption. Each character in this novel commits a sin in one way or another and the journey of seeking forgiveness is very long, where some attain redemption and others lose their lives before they do. However, the thing that makes Amir commits a crime and for which he has to bear a lifelong sense of guilt is his inherent cowardice. He is unable to defend his friend and half-brother, Hassan, when he was raped by Assef in the alleyway. He knows that this final act of cowardice would determine his later life. Hassan's loyalty after the incident carried Amir in guilty and created a problem that ultimately separated them forever (Bloom,2009).

Ian McEwan (1948-) was born in Aldershot, Hampshire but spent most of his childhood moving between Germany, North Africa and East Asia. The relationship between his parents was unstable and he was an introvert as a child. McEwan wrote several important novels which dealt with different personal, social and national issues. *Atonement* is one of his novels which discusses his philosophical view on trauma and how human nature goes through a chain of events before reaching inner peace. The process begins with committing a crime, then suffering from a trauma which leads to an awakening of a moral consciousness which is followed by the feeling of guilt (Pitt, 2009).

McEwan in his novel *Atonement* also talks about love and war, childhood and class, guilt and forgiveness and it can be described as a many-layered, complex story which illustrates how a person would spend his entire life seeking forgiveness, which he might not eventually achieve. This novel tells the story of a little girl, Briony, who committed a

horrible mistake when she was a child. Her strong imagination, lack of understanding of the grown up world and because she wants to fulfil her deep desire of achieving acts of triumph, heroism, and kindness towards everybody around her, induced her to accuse Robbie, the housekeeper's son, of rapping her cousin Lola. Her false accusation has changed the course of everyone's life for the worse. Later, she had to accept the truth and live with the curse of her sin for the rest of her life (Sernham, 2009).

In both novels, main characters are indirectly responsible for crimes they committed in their childhood. Such crimes destroyed and ended others' lives. The feeling of guilt keeps haunting them and irritates their life, and the only way to correct their mistake is through redemption. Committing sins and seeking atonement is the line that ties the two characters together, for though they cannot go back in time to fix what happened in the past, but they can only try to make amends to ease a guilty conscience.

1.2 Statement of the problem

When a crime is committed, atonement is the only way to salvation. To reach salvation there should be an offender who atones for his/her crime and a victim who forgives the sin and gives atonement. Both protagonists of the chosen novels *The Kite Runner* and *Atonement* have struggled with their sins for a long time and have been tortured by their conscience and when they decide to redeem their guilt, they find that both victims have been killed. This study focuses on how redemption can be attained for a sin that was committed in childhood and to trace the journey of atonement to see if it is possible to gain forgiveness in adulthood from persons who are no longer alive.

1.3 Objective of the study

The study aims to attain the following objectives:

1. To explore how guilt and salvation are represented in *The Kite Runner*.
2. To explore how guilt and salvation are represented in *Atonement*.
3. To compare between the two novels in term of how the personalities of the two main characters developed after committing the sin and their attempts to reach salvation.

1.4 Questions of the study

This study intends to answer the following questions:

1. How are guilt and salvation represented in *The Kite Runner*?
2. How are guilt and salvation represented in *Atonement*?
3. How do the personalities of the two main characters in the two novels develop after committing the sin and how this helped them to reach salvation?

1.5 Significance of the study

This study aims to clarify how a person can be released from guilt because of a sin that was committed during childhood, and to trace how redemption could be attained. The researcher has chosen this topic to discuss a problem that many people suffer from and to show the possibility of attaining redemption for a sin that was committed a long time ago.

Furthermore, the importance of the current study lies in its intention to introduce a comparison between the two novels to find similarities in the works. Though both of them

have different religious, social and cultural backgrounds, it does seem that a comparative study will reveal a common meeting ground, and most importantly confirm the idea of the research, that responsibility for an action can help overcome the anguish crises and lead to freedom.

1.6 Limitation of the study

The current study is limited to Khalid Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* and Ian McEwan's *Atonement*, including the analysis and the comparison between the selected novels therefore it cannot be generalized to other works.

1.7 Limits of the study

This study was conducted in Amman during the first semester of the year 2019/2020.

1.8 Definition of terms

Comparative study: comparative literature can be viewed as the investigation of any literary phenomenon from more than one national literature or related to another intellectual discipline or even a few. It is currently commonly concurred that comparative literature does not compare national kinds of literature in the sense of setting one against the other. Rather, it gives a strategy of expanding one's points of view in the way to deal with single works of literature a method for looking past the restricted limits of national frontiers to discern trends and movements in different national cultures and to see the relations between literature and other fields of human activity. Works of literature should be concentrated together, whatever their national origins, as soon as they are ideationally or related factually, as soon as they revert to the similar current or time frame, the similar aesthetic category or genre, or as soon as they show the same themes (Aldridge, A,1969).

Guilt: is a psychological feeling that includes the sense of regret, distress and sadness, accompanied by self-reprimanding, which appears as a result of a wrongdoing that causes harm to others. Guilt causes a painful feeling that reflects regret for what was committed, making one overly sensitive and causes him the sense of being lost and tired for the rest of his life. (Tangney, Miller, Flicker, & Barlow, 1996).

Atonement: according to the Christian religious belief the term “atonement” shows the action of making remedy for a mistake or wrongdoing and refers to the reconciliation between God and human being through Jesus Christ. (Campbell, 2015)

According to Garvey (1999), atonement is needed when one commits a sin that causes harm to himself or to others. And to amend his wrongdoing, one needs to go through certain processes to achieve redemption and reach reconciliation between the victim and the guilty person. And what is important here is the reform of the damaged between people which is destroyed by guilt.

Redemption in literature is a strong morally or spiritually elevating matter that acknowledges the human possibility to achieve success after having failed. Religious understandings of redemption concentrates on how human being can retrieve his/her connection with God regardless of committing a mistake or sin. Literature deals with the same theme of committing a mistake and correcting it and places it in the context of life on earth. Literature is able to clarify how life on earth may be redeemed and how humans can achieve their salvation (Boscaljon, 2007).

Chapter Two

Review of Literature

2.1 Introduction

This chapter includes two sections: the first is a brief review of the theoretical framework proposed by the major scholars in the same field, and the second is a brief review of some related empirical studies that have been conducted on this topic.

2.2 Theoretical studies

Sigmund Freud (1930) in his book *Civilization and its Discontents*, notes: that a person begins to have a sense of guilt when he does something wrong. Freud believes in the idea that there is an internal conflict inside each human being every time he faces a situation and the conscience is the part which is responsible for balancing these conflicts. Freud states that any process of committing a mistake should follow the three stages of awareness, known as the: (id, ego and superego). Freud described id as (pleasure principle), which works on pleasure principles inside the human psyche and responsible for instinctual desires. It is irrational, childish and very impulsive. Superego is the opposite of the id which is named the (morality principle). It is the part of the personality which checks human's behavior and sees if he behaves in a socially appropriate manner. Thus if a person has a very strong superego, he will not commit mistakes or sins easily because he will be watched and guarded carefully by the superego. Usually, our conscience which is commanded by a group of ethical values, forces the person to feel guilty particularly when sin is committed. Freud clarifies that this conscience (superego) in children is immature, for it is still in the developing phase. This is why children's feeling of guilt is different from

adults. Balancing between the id and superego is the ego's responsibility. Ego (reality principle), is the decision-making component of the personality and it is responsible for making a compromise between the instinctual needs of id and the strict rules of the superego. It is known that extreme behavior is always harmful, and both the id and superego are extremes because id tells us to do what gives us pleasure, whereas superego tries to force us to be more morally upright. If a person cannot balance between them, he will never be able to control himself. Only ego is the part which is able to fulfill the id in a socially appropriate manner.

Hurlock (1974) describes the feeling of guilt in his book *Personality Development* as an emotional struggle that one can feel when doing or saying something he/she shouldn't have done or said or regretting not saying or doing a certain action he /she should have said or done. Feelings of guilt can evoke people to enhance their actions if they deal with the sense of guilt in a genuine way. On the other hand, this feeling can be dangerous to our self-concept because it can be the reason behind the feeling of worry or discomfort. Sometimes, people fail to protect themselves from being guilty and instead of apologizing or seeking forgiveness, they try to hide the feeling of guilt and pretend that nothing has happened which eventually leads them to a very dangerous feeling of loss and depression.

Narramore (1981) indicates that sin is the reason behind authentic feelings of guilt which is caused by breaking the laws of ethics and denying the committed sins. Usually there are certain symptoms and feelings that appear on the wrong doer. He\she experiences stress, worry and depression and most importantly the continual need for forgiveness. The nature of humans forces them always to have a sense of guilt inside of them which evokes

them to seek forgiveness whenever they commit a crime. Looking for redemption should go through specific steps in order to reach the desired salvation. To be redeemed, the wrong doer should apologize and express regret by words or action. The victim now has two choices, either he forgives the wrong doer or refuses atonement. In both cases, the feeling of guilt will be removed but it's better to forgive the offender and give him a chance to deal with his guilt and instill the moral values inside of him.

Tangney, Miller, Flicker, Barlow, (1996) state that when persons commit guilt, they feel the urgent need to redeem themselves and to purify their souls from sin. They feel they have violated some ethical values and wish if they can undo their actions. Usually, guilt is accompanied with the feeling of need to change one's action, and naturally when the guilt is great, the need of reconciliation is greater.

Garvey (2003) discusses the way reconciliation can be reached between the victim and the guilty person. Reconciliation is considered to be the final purpose, but what is important here is the reform of the damaged relationship between people which is destroyed by guilt. When both victim and offender reach reconciliation, then it can said they reached the main aim which is atonement. The wrongdoer should follow three main steps in order to achieve atonement. The first step is to believe that he committed a mistake and caused harm to others. He should admit the sin and recognize the serious consequences of this guilt which is the normal reaction of committing a mistake. The second step is to take a real action towards the guilt. The guilty person should make an apology and make moral and material compensation to reach redemption. The last step comes when the task of the wrongdoer is completed, and it's the victim's turn now to finish the journey of

redemption which cannot be accomplished without the victim's forgiveness. He should get rid of all his anger, grudge and hatred and accept the offender's apology which is the only way to atonement.

Saraswat (2014) points out that redemption happens when someone who feels guilty is seeking forgiveness. Through redemption the lost soul will find its way towards salvation. Basically, the need of seeking forgiveness comes from the constant haunt of the guilt after committing a mistake, and it doesn't matter whether the sin is newly done or has been committed in certain time in the past.

Dewi (2016) describes guilt as a passionate feeling that appears when a person feels that he has failed into some duties or when he has done something faulty or incorrect. This wrong deed might cause harm to others. It is not necessarily a physical harm; it could be a psychological pain. One might feel guilty because of the feeling of desecrating his own moral values, and another might feel guilty because he did something he swore he will never do again. In fact, it is not necessary to mean that people actually did something incorrect; sometimes they just have to suppose that they did something incorrect. The spiritual feeling of guilt comes when something wrong is committed and as a result people feel themselves apart from God. According to religion humans are punished if they do something bad or commit a sin. So when a person commits a sin, he feels himself apart from God, and as a result he suffers spiritually. The point is that this feeling of isolation from God causes all pain.

2.3 Empirical Studies:

Pitt (2009) discusses Ian McEwan's philosophical view of trauma and how human nature goes through a chain of events before reaching inner peace. The process begins with committing a crime, then suffering from a trauma which leads to an awakening of a moral consciousness. Trauma is divided into physical and psychological trauma. Physical trauma can happen because of a serious injury, war, rape, illness or disease. While the emotional shock is the reason behind the psychological trauma, which is considered to be more dangerous. Some of the physical trauma may turn to be psychological trauma after a while. The journey through *Atonement* is full of emotionally traumatic events on different levels: personal, social and national. Trauma is observed at each turn in the novel, and suffering is witnessed on a global and personal level. The adult Briony, lives through trauma, in every single day of her life. Whenever she remembers the past, she feels shocked and ashamed. This feeling of trauma forces her to seek forgiveness from others and most importantly from herself.

Sernham (2009) follows the rising of guilt in the novel, *Atonement*, through the protagonist Briony, whose life is divided into three parts, each part of her life has been described in detail to show how the feeling of guilt started, how it reached the climax, and how it was dissolved. The first part described the childhood of Briony and the circumstances she has been through to commit the sin. The second part mentions how she spent her youth trying to find the right way to redemption, and the final part was about Briony the author who uses her talent of writing to find salvation. In *Atonement* it is clearly shown how a person could spend six decades of his life seeking atonement and the only

possible way to repair the past is through writing. Writing was the only possible way of forgiveness, at least self-forgiveness.

Abbasiyannejad, Talif and Heidari (2012) provide a profound study on Ian McEwan's life from childhood to maturity to show the reflection of Ian McEwan's life in his works. It is noticeable that his works dealt with certain themes which can be found in almost all his novels. Ian McEwan is known for his confusing dark issues which force critics, researchers, and reviewers anxiously to study his background to reveal the real reason for his gloomy writing. McEwan begins his novels dealing with different issues including human experiences, religious enthusiasm, euthanasia, and the effect of child losing, while his recent works dealt with different kind of issues such as: social and cultural topics, but basically still contains the same main themes he used to deal with in his previous works. For example, the accident of Ian McEwan's son's kidnapping inspired him to write *The Child in Time*. McEwan's journey to Venice with his wife in 1978 inspired him to write *The Comfort of Strangers*. McEwan was affected by war and wrote about it. He explained the violence of war which was mentioned in most of his novels because of the consequences of the war he witnessed in his childhood. Also, social conflict was discussed and mentioned frequently in his works. Each one of McEwan's works was affected by a real story or event he faced in his life in one way or another.

Tamara (2013) illustrates how the main character, Amir, in *The Kite Runner* is a round character who used to have specific characteristics during his childhood, and how he changed to become a totally different person with new improved personal qualities in his adulthood. Tamara mentions two kinds of conflicts that the main character goes through

during his journey towards atonement. Internal and external conflicts. Internal conflict leads the person to be divided into two parts, one part wants to confess the crime and the other part tries to hide the truth. While the external conflict deals directly with persons and situations. Experiencing such conflicts helps the protagonist to face his guilt and to find the way to redemption.

Ahmad (2015) states in his article “Thematic Study of Khaled Hosseini’ s Novel *The Kite Runner*” that *The Kite Runner* is a moral novel which is full of ethical themes which affects one’s life and put him in a chain of sequences and tests. Ahmad in his essay talks about friendship and betrayal and focuses on how sin can change the human being from a peaceful person into a traitor. *The Kite Runner* is a well-known novel of deception, salvation and return to humanity.

Falzon (2015) gives a description of Briony’s character as it appears in *Atonement* based on personality power aspect. Briony’s understanding of power begins to appear from the moment she was recognized as a skilled writer and artist, especially when she writes, directs, and takes the starring role in the play and forces others (cousin twins) to act in her plays although they hate acting. Briony’s power gets clearer when she knew other’s secrets and starts controlling other’s destiny. Her power gives her authority to judge others and to punish them too. She judges people and the world through the books she reads. But this power failed in helping her to understand the grown up world and misleads her in giving the right judgement.

Klimovičová (2016) focuses on the theme of childhood through a comparison between three of Ian McEwan’ novels: *The Cement Garden*, *The Daydreamer* and

Atonement. The aim is to portray how McEwan wrote about children in his novels and to show how *Atonement* differs from Ian McEwan's previous novels according to childhood perspective, through the way he portrays evil inside the human being and how this evil controls people and forces them to commit crimes and lose their way.

Haugen (2018) clarifies how the child narrative in *The Kite Runner* is described as an important element in fiction. It helps evoking sympathy and gives an opportunity for the reader to understand and learn more through child narrative. Child narrative is a literary technique that writers use to attract more readers and give more attention to their writings. People by instinct feel sympathy towards children, and they tend to listen to them and believe their stories. This is why most of the successful authors used child narrative to transfer their thoughts and cultural views easily through this technique, and to leave a strong impression in the readers about what they read. Child narrative in *The Kite Runner* illustrates how the novel invites an empathetic impression of Amir's relationship to his father. Using this kind of narration can help people to feel with others and to understand issues clearly without any intolerance.

Tsai (2018) discusses the title itself *The Kite Runner* is a novel based on Afghanistan, which illustrated the social changes in Afghanistan in the last 30 years, while there was serious racial discrimination in Afghanistan. By writing the relationship between people in the novel, the author had also revealed the complex ethnic relations in Afghanistan, namely the relationship between the Pashtun ethnic group and the Hazara ethnic group. The Pashtuns were the main ethnic group in Afghanistan and had long dominated political, economic, religious and military affairs, from the upper echelons of society. The minority Hazara, however, were dominated by the people who belong to the lower class. In such an

unequal ethnic ethical order, the Hazaras, as ethnic minorities, were destined to be discriminated against and persecuted by Pashtuns. which revolves around an important character in the novel, Hassan, whose life has begun as a Hazara servant and has ended forcibly at the hands of Taliban. Tsai describes Hassan as a victim of the discrimination seeds which were planted in the land of Afghanistan. These poisoned thoughts against Hazara people makes life harsher for Hassan who spent his life suffering from the consequences of social class differences. In *The Kite Runner*, social class is linked to ethnicity and religion. The main characters in the novel are separated by class but also by ethnic and religious background. Amir and his father Baba are upper class characters who are Pashtuns. They are the biggest ethnic group in Afghanistan, and they form a minority called the Pathans in Pakistan, while their servants Ali and Hassan are Hazaras who are considered as a despised ethnic minority in Afghanistan. Tsai points out in her research that in Afghanistan, these ethnic and religious categories are treated differently. They are frequently oppressed by the Pashtuns and routinely criticized and persecuted because of their low ethnicity.

Kai (2019) employs Erikson's psychosocial development theory which include trust vs. mistrust, autonomy vs. shame/doubt, initiative vs. guilt, industry vs. inferiority, identity vs. role confusion, intimacy vs. isolation, generativity vs. stagnation, and integrity vs. despair, which illustrates how each stage in childhood affects the next stage positively or negatively, and the stability of each stage is controlled by the previous one. Using Erikson's theory, helps to analyze Amir's psychological changes in different stages and aims to reveal Amir's inner world, so that a better understanding of Amir's fear and cowardice can be illustrated. Kai aims to analyze Amir's specific psychological change in

different psychological development stages. He divides Amir's psychological growth into different stages and analyze them respectively, thus providing more detailed information about the relation between Amir's different behaviors and his psychological condition in the process of self-development. In addition, it can help the readers to have a better understanding about Amir's different actions in different stages.

Chapter Three

Methodology and Procedures

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is composed of three sections: method of the study, sample, and procedures.

3.2 Methodology

This study is based on an analytical descriptive approach to examine and compare the two themes of betrayal and redemption in *The Kite Runner* and *Atonement*. The study also uses the theory of psychoanalysis to analyze and get an in-depth understanding of why the different characters commit sins and how they atone for them.

3.3 Sample of the study

The sample of the study consists of two selected novels, *The Kite Runner* by Khalid Hosseini and *Atonement* by Ian McEwan.

3.4 Procedures of the Study

To achieve the requirements of this study, the researcher will try to follow certain procedures to conduct the study:

1. Reading Khalid Hosseini and Ian McEwan's biographies.
2. Full and careful reading of the two novels, *The Kite Runner* and *Atonement* with concentration on the two required topics in both of them "guilt" and "redemption".
3. Collecting references related to the study.
4. Discussing the findings.
5. Providing a conclusion.
6. Documenting the references according to APA style.

Chapter Four

Discussion and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

Humans by nature tend to make mistakes. Some of the mistakes that one may make are small, easy to get past and forget, while others are difficult for one to neglect even if they are unintended, given their great impact on one's life or the lives of those around him. There are kinds of mistakes that one must make in order to learn and gain experience, usually made when he\she begins to learn a new behavior. Also, there are unintended or spontaneous errors which happen because of one's lack of experience or when he\she misunderstands a certain situation, and the victim here is the one who is harmed by this wrong behavior.

The brain of a human being is programmed in the stages of childhood to ideas and principles that help him\her to distinguish between what is acceptable and unacceptable, and each child is subject to this programming automatically. So, humans have an intellectual map which differs from one to another based on these ideas that may or may not be true. Thus, when a person does something wrong toward himself or toward the other which is not acceptable according to his values and principles, then the feeling of guilt may begin (Dewi, 2016).

Hurlock, (1974) defines the feeling of guilt as a psychological, or emotional state that one experiences when he\she commits a legally, morally, religiously or socially wrongful act, and one may charge himself with being responsible for a mistake or causing pain to someone for something. The feeling of guilt usually appears in a form of an internal struggle between one, discussing committing the sin and how to reach salvation. This

feeling can be exaggerated illusory and turns one's view toward himself negatively, increasing the feeling of contempt and disgust inside the person.

Wen, (2019) based on Sigmund Freud's theory to explain the complexity of human personality which has more than a single component. According to Freud's famous psychoanalytic theory of personality, human personality is composed of three elements known as the id, the ego, and the superego which work together to create complex human behaviors. Each component doesn't only add its own unique contribution to personality, but all three elements interact in ways that have a powerful influence on each individual and emerge at different points in life. The first component, known as the id, is the source of the biological and psychological energy which an individual is born with, including the sexual and aggressive instincts. It is the primitive image of a person that is far from social norms and values and knows nothing about logic. Id is controlled by the principles of pleasure and pain and aims to be quickly satisfied in any form and at any price. Superego is the second component and the opposite of the id. It takes the role of the internal authority, or a psychological censor, which is largely unfelt, and grows with the growth of the individual and represents ethics, values and principles that human beings receive from their society. It is influenced by educators, and high social ideals. It is increased by increasing the experience of the individual in society. The main role of superego is to control the id's impulses, especially those which society forbids. Thus, if a person has a very strong superego, he will not commit mistakes or sins easily because he will be watched and guarded carefully by the superego. The final component in human personality is the ego which is the center of feeling and understanding. It includes both an internal sense, and mental processes, ensures solving the conflict between the demands of id, the demands of

superego, and reality. If ego succeeds in establishing a balance between id and superego, then the person will hardly commit a mistake or he will admit his mistakes and try to redeem himself and as a result he will have a balanced personality, but if it fails, the person would suffer from a permanent internal struggle.

Sometimes only repentance as a result of guilt is not enough, even though it will make sure that one will never commit that sin again, but it will not purify him or erase his mistake. So, a person should show regret which could be a step toward redemption. The sinner should deeply consider the horrible mistake he committed and understand the serious consequences of his deeds. On the other hand, he should not be too harsh on himself and take into consideration that it's normal to feel sadness, tension, anxiety or embarrassment after committing a certain mistake but also, he should remember that it is not necessary to live the rest of his life under the control of these negative emotions. To regret is the beginning of the journey of redemption, and in order to continue this journey, one should seek forgiveness by making an effort that equals the serious sequences of the sin he committed, in order to put things on the right track again and fix what he has spoiled. The sinner should make a moral compensation by apologizing to the victim, which can help to shorten the distance between them and to achieve reconciliation. The last step comes when the task of the wrongdoer is completed, and it's the victim's turn now to finish the journey of redemption which cannot be accomplished without the victim's forgiveness. He should get rid of all his anger, grudge, hatred and accept the sinner's apology which is the only way toward atonement (Garvey, 2003).

The process of forgiving could help man to have different psychological advantages. It can reduce unhealthy anger, tension, depression and anxiety. But one doesn't

just forgive to help himself, but rather it is something which expands toward the other person, because he knows over time, that it is the best reaction to the situation. The mission is not easy for both offender and victim. They both carry deep pain inside of them. They cannot overcome what happened easily and it is almost impossible to live a normal life again (Schoninger, 2019).

The feeling of guilt is represented clearly in *The Kite Runner* and *Atonement*. In both novels the protagonists, Amir and Briony, find themselves being tortured by a sin which was committed in their childhood and took them years to understand the serious consequences of their old mistakes and to take the first step toward salvation. Both were overburdened with worries during their adulthood, trying to find a way to redeem themselves and purify their souls. On the other hand, the victims suffered from the betrayals they went through in their lives and when the sinners decided to repair the damage and to seek atonement, they found the victims who were offended are no longer alive. So, victims lost their lives because of pain and suffering, and sinners will spend the rest of their life in an eternal loop of guilt seeking redemption which they might not achieve. Amir in *The Kite Runner* and Briony in *Atonement* committed unforgivable betrayals in their life which caused harm and misery to others. To fully understand the reasons behind committing such betrayals, an analysis of the childhood, circumstances and state of mind of both Amir and Briony, and the factors which consciously or unconsciously aided to the commitment of their sins for which they feel guilty for the rest of their life and their way to remedy their past sins is needed.

4.2 The Kite Runner

4.2.1 Khaled Hosseini – Biography

Khaled Hosseini was born in the Afghan capital of Kabul on March 4, 1965. His family consisted of his parents and five siblings. His father, Nasser, works as a diplomat at the Afghan Foreign Ministry in Kabul, and his mother teaches Persian language at a high school for girls. His parents were of Tajik and Pashtun origin, and their birthplace was the Afghan city of Herat. Hosseini's family was rich, and they spent about eight years of his childhood in the district of Wazir Akbar Khan, one of the most ancient areas of the capital, Kabul. In 1976, his father was appointed to a diplomatic post in the French capital, Paris, and the family moved to stay there, but was unable to return to Afghanistan again because of the eruption of the 1978 revolution, under which the Afghan People's Democratic Party took power in the country. Shortly after the Soviet Union's war on Afghanistan, Hosseini's family sought asylum in America, and moved to San Jose, California. He studied at a high school in San Jose and graduated from it in 1984. He then joined Santa Clara University, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Biology in 1988; the following year he entered the University of California School of Medicine, to receive a master's degree in 1993 and practiced medicine almost for ten years (Wen, 2019).

Hosseini published several successful novels such as: *The Kite Runner* (2003), *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007), *And the Mountains Echoed* (2013), and *Sea Prayer* (2018). The novels share similar themes and discuss common problems of love and relationship, which could be parental, friendship or romantic love. Love gives Hosseini's characters the energy to achieve their purposes in life. Loss is another essential theme which could be the loss of a friend, life, innocence, property or loss of dignity. War plays a

significance role in most of Hosseini's novels, which reflects the fear and the danger that one can experience during war. Hosseini left an important impact on readers through dealing with several important themes, introducing valuable lessons and reflecting reality in his novels (Khadawardi, 2017).

Hosseini's fondness of writing lead him to write his first novel *The Kite Runner* (2003), which achieved huge success and fame all around the world and has been translated into more than 25 languages. Some parts of the novel are based on Hosseini's real life. Bloom (2009) states that "Hosseini has also related certain incidents from his life that inspired him to write his book. More specifically, he remembers a family cook he befriended when he was a young boy. Hosseini found out that the cook could not read or write, as prejudice against the Hazara left most uneducated, with no access to schooling" (13).

The novel talks about a friendship between two young boys, Amir and his Hazara servant, Hassan. Amir spends his childhood doing his best to establish a stronger relationship with his father that forces him to commit several betrayals toward his friend Hassan which irritate him and control his thoughts and imagination. The novel deals with different subjects, such as: betrayals and redemption, parental relationship, ethnic tension between Pashtun and Hazara, and experiences of Afghan emigrants in the United States of America (Tamara, 2013).

4.2.2 Amir's psychological conflicts against his father

Amir didn't realize that his life would change forever until he received a phone call from Rahim Khan, his father's best friend, telling him to come urgently to Pakistan. Amir never expected to face the buried memories that he tried to hide for long years. Rahim's

phone call didn't only bring all Amir's childhood memories back, but also reminded him of his unatoned sins, first is his decision to sacrifice Hassan to win his father's attention, second is his betrayal by accusing Hassan for stealing his birthday gift, third is his disloyalty by disowning Hassan as his friend, and the last is his ignorance to Hassan's suffering. Amir who is 39 years old now is still haunted by guilt, but Rahim Khan's phone call ended his misery and encouraged him to be a man who stands up for himself. With Rahim Khan's words, "There is a way to be good again" (Hosseini, 2), Amir decided that there must be a way to redeem himself by making sacrifices to reach salvation. Amir sacrificed by leaving his comfortable life in America, leaving his wife and abandoning his career to go to Kabul which is not a safe place anymore. He needed to meet Rahim Khan who told him that Hassan and his wife were murdered by the Taliban and their only son, Sohrab, was sent to an orphanage in Kabul where Amir needed to go to bring him from that place. Amir's mission is not easy, and he needs to atone for his crimes and to make a step toward salvation.

Rahim Khan's phone call brought Amir to his old memories of Kabul, Afghanistan where he was born and grew up. Amir spent his childhood in a fancy house in the Wazir Akbar Khan district, known as the most beautiful house in the district. He used to live a luxurious life with his father, Baba, who was a respected and wealthy man. Wen, (2019) clarifies that although Amir is provided with all kinds of financial security from his father, yet there is an emptiness in his life. He feels himself emotionally insecure and neglected by his father.

The constant absence of Baba and the lack of talk between them creates the feeling of guilt inside Amir. He thinks that Baba is avoiding and hating him because his mother

died when she gave birth to him. He believes it was his fault and he was responsible for his mother's death, which makes Amir a sad, lonely child seeking for his father's love and attention at any cost, "I always felt like Baba hated me a little. And why not? After all, I had killed his beloved wife, his beautiful princess, hadn't I? (Hosseini, 18). Schoninger, (2019) explores how Baba and Amir have a wide gap in their relationship. Amir always feels lonely, craving his father's attention and deprived of his love. As a result, Amir develops a sense of hatred for all those who have an opportunity to accompany his father. As it is shown in his words:

I remembered all the times he didn't come home until after dark, all the times I ate dinner alone. I'd ask Ali where Baba was, when he was coming home, though I knew full well he was at the construction site, overlooking this, supervising that. Didn't that take patience? I already hated all the kids he was building the orphanage for; sometimes I wished they'd all die along with their parents (Hosseini, 17).

Because Amir was not able to spend enough time with his father, a feeling of jealousy starts to grow inside of him toward any person who would share his father's attention. The constant absence of his father makes him a lonely child eager for his father's attention and love.

Amir's sensitive nature and his love for poems creates a gap between him and Baba who used to be an athlete and is fond of soccer." I suppose. Real men didn't read poetry... Real men – real boys – played soccer just as Baba had when he had been young" (Hosseini, 19). As Gunarto (2012) asserts, soccer or any kind of sport was not one of Amir's interests, who tries very hard to win his father's attention, but all his failed attempts show his inability to be that athlete that his father wishes. Their different interests annoys Baba and

frustrates him, especially when he sees that his only son can't defend himself whenever he is bullied by the neighborhood boys and it is Hassan who always fights the boys back. Baba can't understand that Amir is still a child and he as a father needs to let his son find his own way. "And where is he headed? Baba said. "A boy who won't stand up for himself becomes a man who can't stand up to anything" (Hosseini, 22). According to Kai-fu, (2019), Amir is irritated and disturbed because of Baba's attitude toward him. Amir has an artistic and sensitive nature, and this is what Baba can't understand which creates a sense of insecurity inside of Amir resulting in the feeling that he is not the son of his father desired. As he once heard his father talking to Rahim Khan:" If I hadn't seen the doctor pull him out of my wife with my own eyes, I'd never believe he is my son" (Hosseini, 20).

Another feature in Amir's personality which Baba used to dislike is his passion of books, which is described by Merdekawati, Alhadar & Nurfani (2017) as" the only way that he escapes his father's aloofness" (70). Amir was very proud of his achievement when he wrote his first short story and was eager to read it to Baba who didn't show any interest in Amir's story and didn't even offer to read it. Rahim Khan rescued the situation and asked Amir to hand him the sheets to read them.

I sat on my bed and wished Rahim Khan had been my father. Then I thought of Baba and his great big chest and how good it felt when he held me against it, how he smelled of Burnt in the morning, and how his beard tickled my face. I was overcome with such sudden guilt that I bolted to the bathroom and vomited in the sink (Hosseini, 30).

Here again Amir feels guilty, not only because he can't satisfy his father but also because he feels that he betrays him when he wishes Rahim Khan to take his father's place.

Every time Amir fails to attract his father's attention, the feeling of guilt grows bigger inside him. According to Lewis, Haviland & Barrett, (2008) "guilt begins to appear when individuals evaluate their behavior as failure but focus on the specific features or actions of the self that led to the failure" (12). This guilt is the first indication that Amir, as a child, has an unsettled personality as a result of the parental emotional deprivation. This deprivation is clearly shown every time Baba displays a lack of interest in Amir's achievements, or when he forces him to do things to make him into the son he wishes. Fathi, (2017) assures that Baba loves his son, but his high demands and their different interests and personalities, makes him unsatisfied and unable to show his love to his son. He desires to shape Amir as he wishes, forgetting that his son might have his own personality with different interests than what he has. Denying Amir's needs for love and attention creates a distorted, unbalanced personality in Amir who will try to please his father at any cost.

Kai-fu, (2019) describes Amir's negative feeling based on Erikson's theory. This theory says, a child should go successfully through certain stages of psychosocial development from infancy to adulthood in order to have a balanced personality. This theory states that in each stage, the child might face some psychosocial crisis and if they were not resolved, they might leave a negative impact on a child's personality. In his early stages, a child needs to gain enough affection, care and support to develop the sense of self-trust. Amir is deprived of his father's love and attention which increases the gap between them and decreases the feeling of security in Amir. Amir's father always suspects his son's abilities. He wants him to be an athlete and to play soccer. Amir's inability to satisfy his father ambition leads to a crisis of self-doubt and a permanent feeling of guilt which made

Amir fail to finish his growth successfully and forced him to carry these negative effects with him to the next development stage.

Fathi, (2017) uses Maslow's theory to explain how Amir's constant needs for attention, affecting his personality negatively. Based on Maslow's theory, there are different priorities of human beings, confirming that there are many needs that he/she seeks to satisfy. Maslow divided these needs into biological needs, Safety needs, Love and belonging needs, esteem needs and self-actualization needs. He also states that the unsatisfied needs in a certain stage cause severe frustrating, tension and psychological symptoms, and one can't move to the next stage successfully until he/she fulfils all the required needs in the previous stage. He also explores that one may be trapped in a certain stage for his/her entire life and others may move successfully into the next stage or backward to the previous stage according to one's conditions and his/her ability to accomplish the needs for each stage. According to this theory Amir is trapped in love and belonging stage. He needs to satisfy his psychological requirements to be able to move to the next stage effectively.

Amir's envy is shown clearly when Baba pays attention to Hassan and decides to surprise him with a birthday gift which lasts him forever. Baba decides it is time to fix Hassan's harelip which makes Amir jealous of Hassan. He says: "I wished I too had some kind of scar that would beget Baba's sympathy. It wasn't fair. Hassan hadn't done anything to earn Baba's affections; he'd just been born with that stupid harelip" (Hosseini, 43). Tsai, (2018) clarifies the way Amir wishes to have a scar shows how miserable he is and how desperate to win his father's sympathy and attention. Amir always feels jealous and threatened by Hassan because of his father's fondness for him. From Amir's perspective, his

friendship with Hassan is filled with tension. He is jealous that Hassan is the type of boy that his father values. Baba's indifference led to his jealousy of Hassan. Seldom does Baba praise Amir or tell him that he is proud of him. He also doesn't trust Amir's choices, which results in an unhealthy relationship between Baba and Amir which leads to an internal conflict inside Amir searching for constant attention from his father.

4.2.3 Amir's psychological conflicts against Hassan

Hassan was born a year after Amir and both faced the same fate of growing up without mothers. Amir's mother died giving birth to him and Hassan's mother Sanaubar, abandoned him less than a week after his birth to elope with a group of traveling singers and dancers. In fact, no one was shocked when Sanaubar ran off, but everyone was stunned when Ali, the decent man who was known of his morality, married someone like her, for she was known for her dishonorable reputation. She could easily seduce any man through her irresistible beauty and her charming green eyes which makes Baba one of her victims and as a result of that affair, she got pregnant with his son, Hassan. Amir and Hassan grew up together and were fed by the same nursing maid who connected them with a brotherhood which cannot be broken easily, having no idea that they were half-brothers for the same father.

Tsai (2018) clarifies that Amir and Hassan are separated by ethnic and class background. Amir and his father Baba are from the upper class of Pashtuns which is considered as the biggest ethnic group in Afghanistan, while Ali and Hassan are Hazaras who are considered as a despised ethnic minority in Afghanistan. They are frequently oppressed and killed by the Pashtuns and sometimes, consciously or unconsciously Amir feels superior to Hassan. The difference in their class and ethnicity creates a hidden

sensation which lays its influence on how Amir treats Hassan. This superiority and difference in ethnicity are emphasized when Amir, in his psyche, never thought of Hassan as a brother, even though they crawl together, teach each other how to ride a bike without using hands, and spend long winters flying and running kites together. The fact remains unchanged that they come from different backgrounds.

Never mind any of those things. Because history isn't easy to overcome. Neither is religion. In the end, I was a Pashtun and he was a Hazara, I was Sunni and he was Shi'a, and nothing was ever going to change that. Nothing (Hosseini, 24).

In addition to ethnic relations, it has been shown that religious ties of the Afghan nation. There was a serious ethnic hierarchy in Afghanistan, so did the religious sects. In Afghanistan, the dominant Pashtuns were devout Sunnis, they claimed to be orthodox Islam, and ruled and dominated the political, economic and religious affairs of Afghanistan, while the Hazaras were also ruled. The novel argued that the Pashtuns persecute the Hazaras, partly because the former were Sunni Muslims and the latter were Shia. When Amir's teacher in one of the books referred to the word Shia as if he were referring to a disease and saw the persecution of people by a narrow religious ethic. Hassan was a dominant figure in both ethnic and religious relations. Hassan himself, from the bottom of his heart, accepted the inherent inferior position, while Amir couldn't treat Hassan as a friend. Ethnic and religious ethics were heavy chains that held Amir and Hassan tightly. This subliminal religious hierarchy was also one of the social causes of the tragic fate of Hassan (Yuan-yuan, 2018).

Despite Hassan being illiterate, yet he was fascinated by the different poems, stories and riddles that Amir reads to him. Amir noticed that Hassan is good at solving riddles and

maybe better than him, so he stopped reading him riddles. Gunarto, (2012) describes how Amir feels toward Hassan saying that Amir loves Hassan but sometimes he becomes jealous of him, especially when Hassan shows an ability to do things better than Amir. “I read him poems and stories, sometimes riddles-though I stopped reading those when I saw he was far better at solving them than I was” (Hosseini, 27).

Another reason that makes Amir feels jealous is that Hassan’s behavior attracts his father’s attention. This is clearly shown in the incident of Ghargha Lake when Amir and Hassan throw stones in the lake. Hassan could skip his stone eight times, while Amir could manage only five. Baba was watching and he patted Hassan’s back which makes Amir feel jealous and unhappy with Hassan’s existence.” Baba was there, watching, and he patted Hassan on the back. Even put his arm around his shoulder” (Hosseini, 13).

While Amir shows a tendency to disloyalty and betrayal, Hassan, the servant, considers Amir as his close friend. Hassan loves Amir deeply and is ready to do anything for Amir and this is clearly shown when he says to Amir: “For you a thousand times over” (Hosseini, 1). He repeats it several times in the book, which shows loyalty and devotion. Lambe & Basuki (2013) explain that Amir didn’t really take Hassan as his best friend. He is aware of their different ethnic and class background. He is also aware of the benefits he can gain from Hassan’s companionship. Amir likes to spend time with Hassan, but also, he takes him as a means of protection, especially when the kids of the neighborhood bully him. Amir goes back and forth between acting as a loyal friend and attacking Hassan out of jealousy whenever Hassan receives Amir’s father’s affection. This leads to establishing a kind of uncertainty of feelings toward Hassan.

One day, Amir and Hassan went to climb their favorite pomegranate tree, when they accidentally met Assef and his friends Kamal and Wali coming their way. Assef was known for his aggression and savage nature, and of course was known for his huge hatred toward Hazaras. He tried to attack Amir, but Hassan threatened Assef with his slingshot. Hassan at that moment was very scared, but his fear turned into a moment of courage when it comes to defending his best friend, Amir. He knows that one day Assef will take revenge on him, but all he could think about is to protect Amir. He felt it was his duty to protect his master, and he would do anything to not let any harm touch Amir. Jaelani, (2017) explains that although Hassan always shows his devotion and honesty in their friendship, Amir never admits their friendship in front of people. The confrontation with Assef shows the internal conflict that Amir must live through in his relationship with Hassan. Amir was mocked by Assef because he spends time with Hassan and considers him as his friend. While Hassan defends and protects Amir, Amir denies that Hassan is his friend and considers him only as his servant.

I treated Hassan well, just like a friend, better even, more like a brother. But if so, then why, when Baba's friends came to visit with their kids, didn't I ever include Hassan in our games? Why did I play with Hassan only when no one else was around? (Hosseini, 38).

There is a part inside Amir that can't accept Hassan as a friend in public and feels ashamed of him. He is aware of the differences between them and aware of the gap which he can't overcome. Inability to confess Hassan as his friend allows the feeling of guilt to grow inside of him (Jaelani, 2017).

4.2.4 Amir's betrayals of Hassan

Every winter, a kite fighting tournament is held in Afghanistan. It is a very famous athletic game there, where kids gather with their kites, flying them high and try to cut others kite's strings and who succeeds in cutting the other kite's string will be the winner. The prize is not something material. In Afghanistan to win a kite fighting tournament is a trophy of honor. It is something one's family will be proud of and will talk about for years." Kite running as a sport also was a show of masculinity. And the point of tension between Amir and Baba is about masculinity" (Khadawardi, 2017, 92). Being athletic is the only way to win Baba's attention and Amir was skilled in kite fighting, so he decides to participate in the competition. Though Baba and Amir have completely different interests, kites could be the only common thing that both can be interested in. "Baba and I lived in the same house, but in different spheres of existence Kites were the one paper -then slice of intersection between those spheres" (Hosseini, 46).

Amir is determined to win the tournament as it is his only way to break the ice between him and his father and win his approval. It is his only chance to be worthy and to be the son that his father always wanted. He thought: "All I saw was the blue kite. All I smelt was Victory, Salvation, Redemption" (Hosseini, 61). Amir's faith in winning was powerful. He keeps repeating the three words; victory, salvation, redemption. Victory here means, to win Baba's heart; to win his attention, love and concern. And by salvation, he will get rid of all the guilt that he had to carry with him for twelve years. To be forgiven for being responsible for the killing of his mother and maybe, he could redeem himself from all the moments his father was not proud of him, to be released from all the internal struggles

he used to live through every day. But he doesn't know that by revoking the previous guilt, he will commit a worse guilt which will haunt him for the rest of his life.

There were only two kites in the sky, Amir's kite and another blue one. With some luck Amir succeeds in cutting the string of the other kite. That was the happiest moment for Amir, and to him it was the moment of starting a new life. The triumph is not complete yet for he should bring the defeated kite to Baba. That was Hassan's mission. Suhua, (2015) points out "In the novel, kites symbolize the purity of human nature. The reason why Hassan is able to catch a kite every time is because he possesses the purest quality of human beings. Then, he never loses his way in chasing the kite of life and his daily life" (75). Hassan ran after the kite till he found himself trapped in an alley by the gang of Assef, Kamal and Wali. It was Assef's chance to take revenge of Hassan. He asked Hassan to give him the blue kite, but Hassan refuses and tells him it's his master's kite. Assef mocks Hassan before attempting to assault him sexually.

to him you're nothing but an ugly pet. Sometimes he can play with when he's bored, something he can kick when he's angry. Don't ever fool yourself and think you're something more (Hosseini, 68).

Assef forms a sample of the Pashtun society who hates Hazaras and considers them as an inferior class in their society. He is known for his hatred toward the Hazaras and his bully savage personality allows him to humiliate Hassan and considers him nothing more than a worthless servant, which gives himself the right to assault him. Assef is described as "a sadistic and sociopathic teenager. He is a killer and a pedophile and above all a supremacist racist" (Shamnad 2010).

After the tournament, Hassan is trapped by Assef, and Amir accidentally witnesses Hassan being raped in the alley. Amir has two conflicts inside him, either run and save himself, or help Hassan and defend him against Assef and his gang. According to Gunarto, the conflict happens when a person encounters two situations and he is needed to choose one action of two and accept the consequences and this is what happened to Amir (Gunarto, 2012). Amir has the chance to prevent the assault, but instead, he chooses to run away because he is afraid to have the same fate as Hassan. Amir told himself that Hassan is just a worthless Hazara, and it looks clear from his monologue that he uses Hassan as a scapegoat to gain his father's admiration.

the real reason I was running, was that Assef was right: Nothing was free in this world. Maybe Hassan was the price I had to pay, the lamb I had to slay, to win Baba. Was it a fair price? The answer floated to my conscious mind before I could thwart it: He was just a Hazara, wasn't he? (Hosseini, 73).

The blue kite was all that Amir could think of at that moment, for it was the key to Baba's heart. Amir chooses the kite; he sacrifices Hassan and chooses Baba's affection. The image of the kite is a remarkable symbol which have several important indications. It can be a sign of happy memories for Amir when he used to fly kites with Hassan, but also it can remind Amir of his most sorrowful moments. After Hassan's sexual abuse, kites become a reminder of Amir's betrayal and guilt (Zhang & Wang, 2014).

At that moment, Amir has an internal struggle between the id and the superego. The struggle seems to be an unequal one, for the superego tries to stop Amir from betraying Hassan, while the id urges him to satisfy his psychological needs. Amir chooses his father's love and betrays Hassan, which shows that Amir is a selfish, coward controlled by the id.

Amir chooses his interest and ignores Hassan's needs for help. Amir tries to justify his cowardice by arguing that Hassan deserves that kind of harsh treatment because he is a Hazara. Thus, Amir doesn't differ much from Assef, for while Assef consciously shows his scorn toward the Hazaras, Amir unconsciously finds himself abandoning Hassan arguing that he deserves no sacrifice (Wen, 2019).

Wen also clarifies that the cold treatment of parents toward their children, leads to creating children who commonly suffer from the loss of their identification. These children usually make huge efforts to satisfy their parents and to gain their attention and love. This might cause a negative impact on children's behavior and might distort their understanding to the surrounding world. They think they might have the excuse which would justify their wrong deeds, only to win their parents' admiration. The abandonment of Hassan in the alleyway is an indication that Amir would justify any action he might do, only to get Baba's appreciation. Amir here achieved what he has always wanted to have, but he still feels unsatisfied (Wen, 2019).

It shouldn't have felt this way. Baba and I were finally friends...I finally had what I'd wanted all those years. Except now that I had it, I felt as empty as this unkempt pool I was dangling my legs into (Hosseini, 79-80).

Amir wins the tournament and becomes the hero of Wazir Akbar Khan district, which finally makes Baba proud of his son. Amir wins Baba's love, but he lost Hassan forever. He couldn't feel totally happy because the guilt ruins his happiest moments. He knows things will never be the same as it was before. He wishes if he could tell someone what happened in the alleyway that day. He understands that he should live with his new guilt from now on. His relationship with Hassan begins to take a different form. Amir starts

to avoid being in the same room with Hassan. Amir's betrayal of Hassan changes everything forever. He is not interested anymore in his triumph, a triumph which costs him a loyal friend and a half-brother. Amir wishes to find a way to release himself from the heavy load of guilt. Maybe, then things would return as they were in the past, and maybe, he could be able to sleep again. As Gunarto explains, the feeling of guilt can be dangerous, because it can be the reason behind the feeling of worry or discomfort. Sometimes, people fail to protect themselves from guilt and instead of apologizing or seeking forgiveness, they try to hide the feeling of guilt and pretend that nothing has happened. It is obvious that Amir's guilt arises when he leaves Hassan in the alleyway and runs away, which eventually leads him to a very dangerous feeling of loss and depression (Gunarto, 2012).

The relationship between Baba and Amir loses its warmth and is getting cold again. Amir expected this would happen one day, but not so fast. Also, he knows that Baba wouldn't have prepared a fancy party for his thirteenth birthday, if he hadn't won the tournament. O'Brien (2018), says that Amir knows all these presents and this whole party came from blood money; came of Hassan's sacrifice. Amir couldn't forget the scene of Hassan's head downcast, serving the drinks to Assef and Wali in the party, so Amir decides it is time to lessen his and Hassan's suffering.

Again, Amir commits another horrible betrayal toward Hassan. He attempts to separate himself from Hassan and disassociate himself from the guilt. Every time he sees Hassan, he remembers his guilt and sees himself as a coward. So, he took a couple of envelopes of cash and the golden watch that Baba brought him as his birthday gift and put them under Hassan's mattress. Amir hoped by doing this that he will be free from his guilt and will be able to breathe again, but when Baba asks Hassan if he stole the watch, his

unexpected answer shocks Amir. Hassan confesses to the theft, which breaks Amir's heart, "I flinched, like I'd been slapped. My heart sank and I almost blurted out the truth. Then I understood: This was Hassan's final sacrifice for me" (Hosseini, 97-98).

Amir continues his betrayals toward Hassan and in return, Hassan continues his sacrifices and loyalty toward his best and only friend, Amir. Hassan didn't deny the accusation, for he knows that Amir saw everything in the alleyway and chose to run instead of help. Hassan understands that he and Amir can't be friends or even stay in the same place anymore, so he did a last sacrifice for Amir and admitted the theft. He couldn't deny the accusation because this is what Amir desires. According to Lambe & Basuki (2013) part of Amir suffers and wants to admit the truth, while the other part was glad because things will be over soon. When Ali and Hassan will be dismissed, Amir will return to his normal life again. There will be a little pain later, but it will disappear soon with the disappearance of Hassan's existence, or at least this is what Amir thinks, knowing nothing about the guilt which will haunt him for the rest of his life.

The psychological conflicts experienced by Amir begins with his insistence to gain Baba's affection and respect by joining and winning the kite-fighting tournament. Later, the conflict experienced by Amir becomes stronger after he betrayed Hassan and sacrificed him. The conflict inside Amir becomes worse, when he decides to get Hassan out of his life by accusing him of theft. Therefore, most of Amir's psychological conflicts are due to his feeling of guilt for betraying Hassan, and this feeling will trouble him, until he makes a step toward redemption to purify himself (Fathi, 2017).

4.2.5 Moving to America

Five years later, Afghanistan was attacked by the Soviet Union and it was no longer a safe place. Amir and his father had to flee to America, searching for a new and safe life, but even though Amir leaves Kabul behind, he takes all the guilty feelings with him. Moving to America is an opportunity for Amir to bury his old betrayals and sins toward Hassan. As he narrates:

Kabul had become a city of ghosts for me. A city of a hare lipped ghosts. America was different. America was a river.... I could wade into this river, let my sins drown to the bottom, let the waters carry me someplace far. Someplace with no ghosts, no memories, and no sins (Hosseini, 126).

Babu, (2015) points out how Amir described America as a river which is a symbol to wash his sins, also the river always moves in a forward motion which indicates Amir's desire to move forward the future and start a new life by leaving the past behind. Amir tried to escape the ghost of Hassan who haunted him all the previous years in Kabul. He hoped to find peace if he moved to a new place, far from Hassan and from his own betrayals. He sees this move as an opportunity for a new beginning, and he thinks of America as a place where he can literally escape his past. Kurniasih, (2009) describes Amir as "continuing having the negative basic self-concept, even after he stays in America and start a new life. However, Amir can't escape from his past sin. He is still an insomniac and he still can't forget the incident of the alley" (50).

Amir considers his inability of having children as his punishment for betraying Hassan, "that perhaps something, someone, somewhere, had decided to deny my fatherhood for the things I had done. Maybe this was my punishment and perhaps justly so"

(Hosseini, 173). As the feeling of guilt keeps haunting him, Amir realizes that there must be a way in order to redeem himself. Amir is not a coward by nature but by choice of action. He chose to sacrifice Hassan before and now he chooses to bury his memories and live with his guilt. However as Rahim Khan tells not once but twice “There is a way to be good again” (Hosseini, 2), there is always a way to change the choice one has made. “there is always a possibility for the coward to give up cowardice and for the hero to stop being a hero” (Kauffman, 360). Amir needs to pay for his old sin and purify himself. He needs to make a sacrifice as he sacrificed Hassan before, he needs to make sacrifices to save a part of Hassan’s that still exists.

4.3 Atonement

4.3.1 Ian McEwan’s-Biography

Ian McEwan is a British author, who was born on June 21, 1948 in Aldershot, England. He wrote 14 novels and two collections of stories. Though his first published work is a collection of short stories, *First Love, Last Rites* (1975). He is best known for his novels, *The Cement Garden* (1978), *Black Dogs* (1992), *Amsterdam* (1998), and *Atonement* (2001), (Pavlikova, 2009). McEwan is known for his confusing dark issues which force critics, researchers, and reviewers to anxiously study his background. It was found that his gloomy writing was because of his disturbed and unstable childhood. His recent works dealt with different kinds of issues such as: social and cultural topics, but basically still contains the same gloomy view he used to deal with in his previous works. McEwan’s background affected his writings which inspired him to write some of his novels, for example, the incident of kidnapping his son lead him to write *The Child in Time* (1987).

McEwan's journey to Venice with his wife in 1978 inspired him to write *The Comfort of Strangers* (1981). Each one of McEwan's works was based on events he faced in his life in one way or another (Abbasiyannejad, Talif and Heidari, 2012).

It is noticeable that there is a connection between McEwan's own life and the characters in his fiction. Once, when he was interviewed and asked about his childhood, he immediately compared himself with the character Briony in *Atonement*:

I was very secretive. I was a bit like Briony in that I used to borrow my mother's typewriter and I loved threading the paper in and then I'd be stuck, because I wanted to be writing, but I didn't have anything to write. As a child I was very freckly like Briony's cousins, pale and very, very shy; very close to my mother, much to my father's annoyance. He thought I was too much of a mother's boy (Koval, 2004, 18).

McEwan wrote several important novels which dealt with different issues: personal, social and national. *Atonement* is one of his novels which discussed his philosophical view on trauma and how human nature goes through a chain of events before reaching inner peace. The process begins with committing a crime, then suffering from a trauma which leads to an awakening of a moral consciousness which is followed by the feeling of guilt (Pitt, 2009).

Atonement is a novel which is actually fiction within fiction. The author of the novel is a fictive character giving account of events taking place throughout her life. In this research, the main character, Briony, will be split into three for the purpose of being able to analyze her separately. Young Briony at the age of 13 in which her surrounding events, imagination and immaturity seduced her to accuse Robbie of a crime he never did. Briony

when she is 18 her conscious becomes aware of her old sin and she spends her youth to amend her wrongdoing. Finally, Briony at the age of 77 sitting down to make the final revision of the story she has written over and over for years. Her novel is meant to be as an atonement, since she couldn't find her own atonement (Sernham, 2009).

4.3.2 Briony the adult author

Briony who is 77 years old now has finished writing her book entitled *Atonement*. The book is an attempt to redeem herself from a wrongdoing she committed when she was only 13 years old. Her misinterpretation of the grown-up world leads her to accuse Robbie, the housekeeper's son, of raping her cousin Lola. Robbie was sent to jail because of something he never did. Her hasty accusation not only destroyed Robbie's future, but also ended his life. Briony's feeling of guilt forces her to seek forgiveness in many ways. Eventually she failed in attaining atonement, and writing was the only way to redeem herself. But when she herself is the author it is not an easy task:

The problem these fifty-nine years has been this: how can a novelist achieve atonement when, with her absolute power of deciding outcomes, she is also God? There is no one, no entity or higher form that she can appeal to, or be reconciled with, or that can forgive her (McEwan, 371).

Writing this novel is her only way of narrating the truth and to let the reader know what happened. She believes that she can't reach forgiveness, but through her novel she hopes to reveal and clear what was hidden and unacknowledged in the past. *Atonement* is a novel in which Briony, the main character and author, narrates a story, the story of her life, and the lives whom she influenced by her stories. The reader will follow her through more than

sixty years to witness her progression as a person and as an author. It is important to trace Briony through her childhood to find out the psychological and social reasons which lead her to perpetrate her crime toward Robbie.

Her development starts from a naive child without any experience in life into an adult person who is aware of her wrongful deed and desires to atone her unforgivable sin. She couldn't gain forgiveness from the people she harmed because they are no longer alive, so her only way for redemption is through narrating how she committed such a horrible mistake in her childhood. *Atonement* is Briony's only way of confession and apology for the pain and harm she caused to others in the past. As Sernham (2009) asserted that in the end" she writes the novel as atonement, not as a way for her to be forgiven. She does not walk the easy path and make herself the likable character that the reader will be fond of, identify with and easily forgive, nor does she excuse herself or her actions" (22).

4.3.3 The child Briony, the talented writer

It is a hot summer day in 1935 in London where briony Tallis, the teenager of 13 years old, lives with her family in the wealthy estate of the Tallis family in Surrey. Briony is known for her curiosity and imagination which makes her a talented writer. She writes a play entitled *The Trials of Arabella* and plans to perform it for her older brother, Leon, when he comes back to town. Briony will act the play with the help of her twin boy cousins Jackson and Pierrot of nine years and their sister Lola of 15 years, who came for a long visit to avoid their parents' divorce problems.

Briony, as most children, is eager to be estimated and appreciated by family and people around her. Her need for compliment had her imagine the praise that she will get

after performing the play. She imagined her brother introducing her proudly to his friend “Yes my younger sister, Briony Tallis the writer, you must surely have heard of her”, (McEwan, 4). She always desires to have admiration and complements for her literary talent which her family finds entertaining. She has a great tendency to be the center of attention and to have the first place in everything she does. As Erikson stated: “The superego of the child is primitive, cruel and uncompromising as may be observed in instances where children over-control and over-constrict themselves”, (Erikson,1987, 231). Briony is an example of such a child who imposes herself into a strict well-ordered and organized way of life. She cares about her stuff and is aware of tiny details. “In fact, Briony’s was the only tidy upstairs room in the house. Her straight-backed dolls in their many-roomed mansion appeared to be under strict instructions not to touch the walls” (McEwan, 5). Briony’s perfection in her practical life is obvious in the perfect arrangement of her toys that are arranged in a way that they look like “a citizen’s army awaiting orders” (McEwan, 5). In contrast to that, all the family members have untidy rooms. The messy rooms are an indication of the lack of order in her family, which can be translated by Briony as a sign of separation and negligence; therefore she tries to establish a strong base of security and protection by the means of order in her life. Also, Briony is known as “the greatest order seeker, the one who longs to live in an orderly, seamless world” (Chalupský, 2008, 62).

According to Briony, fairy tales are idealistic, and she tries to make her life as perfect as the fairy tales. It is normal that this kind of vision about life affects her way of thinking. She wants everything under control which is clearly observed in what she wants to achieve through performing her play, “...it was for her brother, to celebrate his return,

provoke his admiration and guide him away from his careless succession of girlfriends, towards the right form of wife”, (McEwan, 4). Briony is planning to encourage her brother to come back to the countryside and marry. Briony is the youngest of the Tallis family and sometimes she feels herself not appreciated enough, so she is keen to earn the attention and respect of people around her. Her only way to do this is by her literary talent. She takes the play seriously and she expects everyone to take it seriously too. “The piece was intended to inspire not laughter, but terror, relief and instruction, in that order” (McEwan, 8).

Briony’s need for dominance is freely practiced in her writing. She can easily control characters and events inside any of her stories. Briony thinks this control can be applied to people around her in practical life in a way that meets her demands, as shown when her sister, Cecilia, points out: “whatever she did the project would end in calamity, with Briony expecting too much, and no one, especially the cousins, able to measure up to her frenetic vision” (McEwan, 21). Mathews (2006) indicates that Briony felt disappointed and couldn’t understand how everything wouldn’t go as she planned. In her imagination, the twin cousins would help her in performing certain roles in the play *The Trials of Arabella*. One would take the role of the handsome prince and the other boy shall play the role of Arabella’s father. She was frustrated when the twins couldn’t memorize their lines or read properly or when the father looked much younger than his daughter Arabella. She also felt upset when her cousin Lola took the role of Arabella which is supposed to be played by Briony. What happened in the rehearsals couldn’t reflect the image inside Briony’s mind and everything collapsed.

4.3.4 Briony's fiction as an entrance to adulthood

From the beginning of the novel, Briony is presented as a talented writer, who has written a romantic play. She portrays love through her own way of understanding. Briony's concept of love is not in line with the real. She appears to have certain thoughts about relationships and marriage." Marriage was the thin, or rather, a wedding was, with its formal neatness of virtue rewarded, the thrill of its pageantry and banqueting, and dizzy promise of lifelong union." (McEwan, 9). Briony has a special idea about love which is a kind of pure relationship that should be ended with the proposal of marriage from the prince to his princess. According to her, any relationship should end with marriage, and the idea of divorce is rejected.

She vaguely knew that divorce was an affliction, but she did not regard it as a proper subject and gave it no thought. It was mundane unravelling that could not be reversed, and therefore offered no opportunities to the storyteller: it belonged to the realm of disorder (McEwan, 8).

Chalupsky (2008) describes her as: "being used to living in her childish structured, dreamy world and reading predictable fairytale like stories, Briony believes the whole world resembles what she has been experiencing so far" (61-62). She sees and understands the world around her depending only on what she reads in her books. Her limited view and lack of understanding leads her to fail in understanding the relationship between her sister and Robbie with tragic results.

Cecilia, Briony's older sister, has recently graduated from Cambridge. She studied with Robbie Turner in the same University, but they rarely speak to each other. Robbie is the housekeeper's son and Cecilia's father is the one who pays all his tuition fees which

encourages Robbie to join medical college after graduation. Cecilia is asked by her mother to put some flowers in their expensive antique porcelain vase, a relic of the family that inherited from an elderly uncle. The vase will decorate the dining room in the evening to welcome her brother Leon and his friend Paul Marshall. But an unexpected event happens when Cecilia decides to fill the vase from the fountain's water. She meets Robbie there who offers her some help, he grips the vase and suddenly they hear a voice.

With a sound like a dry twig snapping, a section of the lip of the vase came away in his hand and split into two triangular pieces which dropped into the water and tumbled to the bottom in a synchronous, see sawing motion, and lay there, several inches apart, writhing in the broken light (McEwan, 29).

Cecilia gets upset and immediately takes her clothes off and dives in the fountain to bring the broken pieces. When she finds them, she quickly puts her clothes on, carries the broken vase and in a hurry, savage walk she entered the house. Everything happened so quickly that Robbie is still standing beside the fountain, shocked and full of regret. Briony was watching behind her window, but what she saw was different. The scene of her sister standing with Robbie, gives her the impression that there shall be a special thing between them.

A proposal of marriage. Briony would not have been surprised. She herself had written a tale in which a humble woodcutter saves a princess from drowning and ended by marrying her. What was presented there fitted well (McEwan, 39).

Pavlikova (2009) describes Briony as unable to see beyond her stories and characters. She only understands life through them, and this is what makes her interpret the scene of Cecilia and Robbie as a proposal of marriage. She can't see anything except a

prince seeking a princess's hand. She translates any event based on what is printed in her childish imagination. But Briony seems to be confused when the sequence of events didn't come about as she imagines, particularly when she sees Cecilia strip Infront of Robbie.

What was less comprehensible, however, was how Robbie imperiously raised his hand now, as though issuing a command which Cecilia dared not disobey. It was extraordinary that she was unable to resist him. At his insistence she was removing her clothes.... What strange power did he have over her? Blackmail? Threats? (McEwan, 38).

Rosenfield (2006) explains the situation, saying "There is a free and harmonious game between Briony's understanding and imagination, through which, as she analyses or defines something, her imagination and sensibility is essentially interfering in the constitution of her judgment" (26). Briony's mind starts making moral confrontation: what she believes against what she sees. She is confused because the logical sequences of any of her stories should start with the scene of drowning, followed with a scene of rescuing and end with a marriage proposal. What Briony saw was different. It didn't get along with her own sequences and this exposes her to a world she never went through before, the adult world. Briony is not aware yet of the grown-up world. But this incident forces her to be on the way to adolescence. Stefan-Cole (2002) comments on this scene: "It is an epiphany for Briony who suddenly sees her past efforts as child's play: her silly morality tales, her little play. She senses something new, a psychological world opening and more, the development of real characters" (42). At this sensitive period, Briony is exploring a new world which has harsher and more complicated rules which are different from the world of fairy tales.

Robbie was invited to the family dinner by Leon that night, and he knows that Cecilia will be angry at him and will refuse to look at him. He decides to write an apology letter to her, describing how sorry he is for breaking the porcelain vase. Robbie starts to feel attracted to Cecilia especially after the fountain incident. He wrote an apology letter and added few vulgar words that express his desire toward her. For sure he was not going to give her this letter. He puts it aside and writes another appropriate one. Abbasiyannejad, Talif, & Heidari (2012) gives a description of Robbie's personality: "Robbie, is shy in another way, and unable to reveal his true feelings to his lover. His behavior expresses his bashful attitude toward encountering the opposite sex" (56). He takes the letter to deliver to Cecilia, accidentally meets Briony and thinks that it would be better to get Briony to deliver it to her sister. Briony takes the envelope, doesn't utter a word and runs back to the house. Robbie keeps watching Briony on her way home. At that moment, Robbie realizes that he mistakenly switched the two letters and sent the wrong letter to Cecilia, and it was too late to fix the situation.

that he stood suddenly, seized by horror and absolute certainty. An involuntary, wordless shout left him as he took a few hurried steps along the drive, flattered, ran on, then stopped again, knowing that pursuit was pointless. He could no longer see her as cupped his hands around his mouth and bellowed Briony's name (McEwan, 94).

Robbie is not able to do anything now because Briony is already at home. She tears the envelope, reads the letter, then she passes it quickly to her sister without saying a word. Cecilia reads it and notices that the letter is unfolded. She is astonished that such a bold letter is without an envelope and suspects that Briony read it. Briony is shocked of what she

reads in the message. What Briony encountered that day made realize that her fairytale world has come to an end. “The very complexity of her feelings confirmed Briony in her view that she was entering an arena of adult emotion and dissembling from which her writing was bound to benefit” (McEwan, 113).

Briony used to look at the world around her according to her stories and the people in it as her characters, but her entire world has changed now. As Jacobi points out, “Briony looks at the world as if it is a literary text, and of a particular type, she expects to see certain conventions of plot and character development”, (Jacobi, 2011, 66). Briony lives in a world of her creation and surrounds herself with illusory characters of her invention with no one real there but herself. As a result she can’t correct the faults she faces or solve the problems she struggles with. It is only Briony with her imagination and creativity which induces her to see the world around her as a story and people are the characters of this story. As Childs (2006) says “she creates a story around Robbie and Cecilia but fail to distinguish her make believe from reality” (135). Briony fails to separate between fiction and reality in her story, in which she portrays Robbie as an evil character and gives him the role of villain. Anything Robbie will do later shall be evil and comes from evil. She considers him as a threat to her family, especially to her sister Cecilia. As Briony takes the role of the heroine of the story, she also takes on her shoulder the responsibility of protecting her sister. She opens and reads Robbie’s letter to Cecilia because “it was right, it was essential, for her to know everything”, (McEwan, 113), but as Childs (2006) says; “in a world of her own creation, the novelist can know everything, but this can never be true of life” (134). According to Briony, she is the author of her story and she is supposed to know all the facts about characters and events, but she never thinks that she might be mistaken.

Beside writing, Briony has a great propensity for secrets which makes her eager to have one that she can share with a friend. Briony found her first secret when she saw her sister Cecilia almost naked beside the fountain with Robbie. This tendency for sharing secrets increases when she reads Robbie's letter. She shares her secrets with her cousin Lola who calls him maniac and considers him as a dangerous criminal. Lola suggests Briony to take the letter to the police to prevent him from attacking anyone in the family. Her cousin succeeded in confirming the fears inside Briony towards Robbie which makes her sure that he is a dangerous person who can assault anyone. Briony's fear is assured when she passes beside the library which is unusually closed, and as she gets closer to the door where she hears a noise.

A scraping noise followed by a thump and a murmur that could have been a man's or a woman's....as she placed her hand on the brass handle and turned it. But she had seen Robbie's letter, she had cast herself as her sister's protector, and she had instructed by her cousin: what she saw must have been shaped in part by what she already knew, or believed she knew (McEwan, 123).

Briony saw her sister being attacked aggressively. What she witnessed fills her with fear. Briony's presence in the library is noticed by Robbie and Cecilia and immediately Robbie set Cecilia free, who then runs out of the place without looking at her sister. Briony was alone with the villain and she thought that he will attack her. Robbie turned around and ran quickly searching for Cecilia.

Briony knows almost nothing about the adult world. It is her imagination which pictures Cecilia as being attacked by Robbie. She thinks that the love seen between her sister and Robbie is a violence scene. She always connects what happens in real world with

fiction. She can't separate between the two worlds, and as a result everything in reality is mixed with her stories, readings, predictions, imagination, and creation. The intimate scene that Briony witnesses in the library confuses her. "Robbie's impetuosity strikes Briony as violent or maniacal" (Brookner, 2001, 44). She couldn't understand what she saw which forces her to misinterpret the situation and leads her to go back and forth between childhood and adolescence, "she stands on the threshold of adolescence, with all its itchy self-dramatizing instincts and glamorous mood swings" (Shone, 2002, 8).

The scene of Cecilia and Robbie caused Briony trauma. Caruth (1996) describes trauma as: "an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which the response to the event is often delayed" (11). Also, Watkiss explains "what causes trauma is a shock that appears to work very much like a bodily threat but is in fact a break in the mind's experience of time". (Watkiss, 2016, 47). The shock is caused because Briony is only 13 years old and she is unaware of the adult relationships. She misinterprets the sexual act which leads her to give a false judgment. As Watkiss suggests, that trauma disrupts the development of her mind into an adult.

4.3.5 Briony in her way to sin

Briony's sin comes when she sees her cousin Lola being raped. There is no need for Briony to see the rapist's face, because due to what she has been through during that day, her imagination forced her to think only about one criminal, who is Robbie. After the rape incident, Briony tells the police "I saw him" (McEwan, 181). Lola preferred to be silent, for she doesn't want to be involved in any moral scandals, especially after her parents' divorce. According to the narrator:

Lola did not need to lie, to look her supposed attacker in the eye and summon the courage to accuse him, because all that work was done for her, innocently, and without guile by the younger girl. Lola was required only to remain silent about the truth, banish it and forget it entirely, and persuade herself not of some contrary tale, but simply of her own uncertainty (McEwan, 168).\

It is clear that Robbie is not the rapist, due to what the narrator says, “supposed attacker”. Lola only needs to be silent and quiet and go along with Briony’s knowledge or her imagination about the rapist. It is hard for Lola to be certain of what happened because she couldn’t see, “his hand was over my eyes” (McEwan, 167). She was shocked and terrified, and couldn’t say for sure, so Briony decides to help her poor cousin and tell the truth instead of her. She kept repeating the words “I can. And I will” (McEwan, 167). Briony feels that it is her duty to help her cousin and to protect the whole family too. Unconsciously, she wants to fulfil her desire for admiration and recognition from family and people around her. She wants to be the heroin of the family who rescues her cousin and protects her sister from a lustful criminal. Her urgent need of praise makes her imagination work toward that wish. Briony didn’t really see the rapist’s face which makes the truth uncertain, but her imagination assured her and made her confident of her testimony:

The truth instructed her eyes. So, when she said, over and again, I saw him, she meant it, and was perfectly honest, as well as passionate. What she meant was rather more complex than what everyone else so eagerly understood, and her moments of unease come when she felt that she could not express these nuances (McEwan, 169).

The truth in Briony's mind is a result of a scenario based on her imagination of what she has witnessed that day. Lola claims she cannot recall her attacker, but Briony was sure of the assailant's identity. As Jacobi states "though she lacks visual certainty regarding Lola's attacker, in a good story the attack would be the work of a maniac, like the Robbie Turner she has now constructed in her mind" (Jacobi, 2011, 60). She is completely convinced of the truth that Robbie is the rapist and she tries to persuade Lola of that truth too. Even Lola tries to believe in what her cousin states so surely: "Lola sighed and shook her head slowly, as though trying to reconcile herself to the unacceptable truth" (McEwan, 171). Lola knew that it was not Robbie who attacked her, but she chose to be silent and went along with what Briony said.

Briony's accusation of Robbie is not only to save her cousin Lola or to protect her sister, but due to a deep unconscious reason dating back several years to the twin's elopement. One day in June 1932 Robbie was teaching her how to swim by the river and when she asked him "If I fell in the river, would you save me?" (McEwan, 296). Robbie's answer was yes, then She immediately jumped in the water and he jumped after her. Robbie was angry at her because she could kill them both. She answered: "I want to thank you for saving my life. I'll be eternally grateful to you. Lines, surely, from one of her books, one she had read lately, or one she had written." (McEwan, 297). Ludwig & Ferreira (2019) clarify how Briony can't detach herself from her fairy tales, and how she simply lives in them and she is eager to be the heroine of one of these fairy tales. She wants to play the role of a princess who is saved by her prince whom she is unconsciously in love with. She convinces herself that Robbie is the prince and if he rescued her, the fairy tale will end happily.

But there must have been signs which he had not noticed. For three years she must have nurtured a feeling for him, kept it hidden, nourished it with fantasy or embellished it in her stories. She was the sort of girl who lived in her thoughts. The drama by the river might have been enough to sustain her all that time, (McEwan, 298).

Analyzing the incident between Briony and Robbie by the river, it is assumed that Briony had some sort of feeling towards Robbie and when she read his letter which was sent to Cecilia, she felt disappointed and wanted to get revenge. In fact, in addition to what was mentioned previously, Briony had several reasons for accusing Robbie. She wanted to protect her beloved sister Cecilia and her need for attention forced her to take the role of the heroine which helped her to believe that he is a criminal (Pavlikova, 2009).

She was shocked, and not only by a word. In her mind he had betrayed her love by favoring her sister. Then, in the library, confirmation of the worst, at which point, the whole fantasy crashed. First, disappointment and despair, then a rising bitterness. Finally, an extraordinary opportunity in the dark, during the search for the twins, to avenge herself, (McEwan, 299).

Robbie came back from the dark, carrying the sleepy twins with him. Everyone was waiting for him and when he showed up, he was immediately handcuffed by the police. Briony succeeded in convincing everyone that he is a source of threat. Everyone believed that he was the attacker, except his mother and Cecilia who fell in love with him. At that moment Briony was proud of herself, for she felt herself as a heroin for rescuing Lola and protecting her family. Her conscious was at peace and she didn't feel any guilt. She was comfortable and sure that she did the right thing. Briony committed an unforgivable crime.

Her imagination and addiction to fairy tales forced her to mix between reality and fiction. This false accusation led to destruction for herself and others around her. It destroyed their future, love, dreams and hope.” From that moment on, Briony could only try an atonement through literary writing, Robbie and Cecilia would live connected forever just through words and letters” (Pavlikova, 2009).

4.3.6 The Impact of Tallis Family on Briony

Briony’s family in one way or another had a strong impact on how her personality was developed which lead her unconsciously to commit her crime. The way she thinks and how her mind works is related to the relationship with her family. “At first sight, the Tallis family is a variant of a seemingly smoothly functioning, traditional, patriarchal middle-class household”, as Chalupsky noted (2008, 60). A normal household would be the first impression about the Tallis, but if the reader takes a closer look, he will see the detached relationships between the members of the family. The father is not available because “his London duties keep him off the scene” (Kermode, 2001, 17). The mother suffers of migraine which forces her to spend most of the day lying down in bed. The relationship between the parents doesn’t seem normal. Jack Tallis, the father, has a mistress and his wife knows about his secret relationship and deals with that secretly, since she is sick and can’t be the wife that her husband needs.

Cecilia was disappointed when she returned home and described the atmosphere of the Tallis family:

She had returned from Cambridge with a vague notion that her family was owed an uninterrupted stretch of her company. But her father remained in town, and her

mother, when she wasn't nurturing her migraines, seemed distant, even unfriendly (McEwan, 20).

Therefore much of the time "Briony was lost to her fantasies", (McEwan, 103). This description shows how detached the relationships between the members of the family were. Everyone is isolating himself\herself from the family and doesn't expect anything from the other. The father is absent most of the time and his unavailability destroys the system of the family. It's almost impossible for anyone else in the family to act his role and everyone believes that his existence is needed and essential, because, as Briony says, when her father used to be at home, "burdens were lifted" (McEwan, 122).

The mother is blamed for not being able to show authority over the family during the absence of her husband and considered to be guilty for her weak and helpless role "guilt-stricken by her absence from the family", (McEwan, 102), resulting in Cecilia taking over all family responsibilities. The mother can't play her role successfully so, it is her elder daughter's turn to carry all the burden. It is clear when Cecilia complained about this to her brother Leon: "I'm going a little mad here...Being everyone's mother again" (McEwan, 107). The mother suffers from migraine and she takes her illness as an excuse to hide her lack of responsibility toward her family. She used to keep out of sight in her room even if she is not in pain, "she was not in pain, not yet, but she was retreating before its threat" (McEwan, 63), which gives a notion of preventing herself from difficulties. Later she complains that "illness had stopped her giving her children all a mother should. Sensing this, they had always called her by her first name" (McEwan, 66). This part explains her knowledge of not being a good mother or that kind of mother who is willingly at the

authority role and takes care of her children. She knows that she wouldn't be able to change anything in the course of her life and she always blames her sickness.

The mother's lack of responsibility makes Briony a lonely child who spends most of the time lost in her books. The circumstances that Briony has grown up in, forced her to have an independent, isolated personality. No one has control over her, and no one ever offers guidance to her. "Something that is significant in McEwan's work is his presentation of the role of parents. McEwan's father's role, as previously mentioned, is almost absent; it is faint and trivial." (Abbasiyannejad, Talif & Heidari, 2012, 32). Briony is left alone with no one to spend time with except herself and her books. This is described through the eyes of her mother:

She had vanished into an intact inner world of which the writing was no more than the visible surface, the protective crust which even, or especially, a loving mother could not penetrate. Her daughter was always off and away in her mind, grappling with some unspoken, self-imposed problem, as though the weary, self-evident world could be re-invented by a child (McEwan, 68).

Chalupsky (2006) claims that "the need for a certain order as the source of feeling of security and comfort is natural, if not necessary for each child. However, Briony's obsession exceeds the borders of naturalness as it is caused predominantly by the neglect of her parents" (62). Briony's insistent need for order is considered a source of protection and relief, since she is always being ignored. The problem begins clearly when Briony shifted from childhood into adolescence. She needed more attention and guidance in this sensitive period. She was still treated as a child as no one noticed that their baby is growing and entering the adult world. No one makes any effort to help her to enter the adolescence

stage. She entered this world shamefully and burdened with guilt, she accused Robbie of a crime he never did. So, she needed to make several sacrifices to redeem herself. And because she couldn't ask forgiveness from the people she harmed, since they are no longer alive, her only way to find salvation is through writing an apology and confession of her crime in her novel *Atonement*.

4.4 Comparison

4.4.1 From sin-awareness into Redemption

In his book *Civilization and its Discontents*, Sigmund Freud (1930) notes, "To begin with, if we ask how a person comes to have a sense of guilt, we arrive at an answer which cannot be disputed: a person feels guilty when he does something he knows to be bad" (71). Amir and Briony, who were at the age of thirteen, committed unforgivable sins and caused eternal pain to people around them. It is noticeable that both of them have almost the same motivations to commit their sins, starting from emotional deprivation and ending at fulfilling desires.

Amir and Briony's desires forced them to follow their id, which is the pleasure part that is responsible for fulfilling their needs. According to Freud's theory, based on id, ego and superego principles, the reasons that provoked Amir and Briony to commit their crimes fall under the id concept. According to Chakraborty (2018), "id is the source of all our aggression and desire. Id has function to gratify our instinct for pleasure without regard for social convention" (56). The unconscious during childhood is more dominant and id is stronger than superego. Amir and Briony couldn't balance between their id and superego when they committed their crimes; the id seemed to be stronger inside of them and tend to

satisfy their desires. They both chose to follow the pleasure principle and ignore the superego which is responsible for morality principle. Their crimes showed the power and the influence of their psychological needs.

Amir, who was deprived of his father's love, was influenced by his id which led him to betray his loyal friend Hassan by leaving him behind in the alleyway. Although, Amir was aware of his wrongful act, he determined to satisfy his desire and sacrifice his friend to win his father's affection. On the other hand, Briony's unconscious mind was not fully aware of her crime, but like Amir, she followed her id when she wanted to fulfill her needs of being recognized and praised by everyone around her. Her illusionary world of fiction and the misinterpretation of certain occurrences helped her to accuse Robbie falsely and to satisfy her desires, which turned out later to be one of her worse nightmares.

Despite the common desires the protagonists share, they reacted differently toward their crimes. The feeling of guilt inside the child Amir appeared immediately when he chose to abandon his friend Hassan to save his skin. The sense of guilt already existed inside of him, but his cowardice and his fear prohibited him from asking for forgiveness. Although he was aware of the harm he caused to others, his immaturity prevented him from understanding how to deal with his sense of guilt. Furthermore, even as an adult, Amir's actions didn't show maturity in the exact sense, for he favored avoiding the situation to finding a solution and dealing with it. Unlike Amir, Briony didn't feel guilty at all. She believed in doing a heroic act, and she desired to protect her sister, to save her cousin Lola and to prevent a villain like Robbie from assaulting or causing harm to other people. The sense of guilt inside Briony is absent. She believed that she did the correct behavior which

was supposed to make her the center of everyone's admiration. Briony's feeling of guilt started to show later in adulthood, which induced her to start the journey to redemption.

Saraswat (2014) states that redemption "is the act of saving or being saved from sin, error or evil. It is the salvation of a soul that is lost, usually from human error, such as greed or lust, but also from the devil's interference in the salvation process" (171). Because of the evolution of guilt, a person would be burdened by a wrongdoing in the past that continues to the present, making redemption necessary. When there is a sense of guilt, the superego tortures the ego producing the feeling of anxiety. Consciousness appears in this stage, waiting for the moment to redeem guilt by being punished by the external world. It is considered that, while an individual has committed nothing wrong, his conscience is calm and in peace, but when he/she does a wrong, his/her consciousness raises its demands, recognizing the sin committed and a sense of anxiety appears. When time passes, the feeling of guilt gets deeper and greater inside Amir and Briony and they have no choice but to compensate for their wrongdoings and seek forgiveness. Later in their adulthood, their view toward themselves and toward their previous crimes has changed. Their superego becomes stronger which makes them more aware of their wrongdoings and arouses the feeling of guilt inside of them. This guilt provokes their constant attempt to redeem their crimes as a need for freedom and salvation. As adults, they have come to analyze the persons they were in the past who weren't able to recognize their unforgivable faults or understand their ugly deeds. Their wrongdoing had terrible consequences, provoked by them while supported by fate and the time they lived in. Their guilt was also a form of punishment. Briony reinforced this form of self-punishment through her writing, reminding herself again and again of her sin. While Amir needed to take a brave step toward

redemption by adopting Sohrab. Eventually, both of them needed to punish themselves and make several sacrifices for the sake of atonement.

4.4.2 Amir's and Briony's sacrifices for salvation

Swinburne (1989) describes atonement as “doing what is necessary to repair the harm already done” (82). It is to correct things after a damage caused before it is too late or as Swinburne describes it in more informal term, “damage control” (82). In most cases the crime will cause a permanent damage, unless the offender has an opportunity to repair for the crime, he/she committed. However, Briony and Amir are presented with a chance to repair their crimes and they must make sacrifices to reach atonement.

For Amir, he needed to do a “corrective action” in order to “repair the failure” (Lewis, 2008). Amir's superego was awakened by a phone call from Rahim Khan, telling him “there is a chance to be good again” (Hosseini, 2). There is a chance to atone his sins and live in peace again. Amir lived with his guilt for twenty-six years, but Rahim Khan's phone call ended his misery and encouraged him to be a man who stands up for himself. Amir, who is haunted by guilt for long years, decided that there must be a step toward redemption to purify himself. Lewis (2008) explores the term purification: “The process of removing a guilty feeling, may lead a person to go through suffering” (22). Amir can't live peacefully or forget about his unatoned sin, so he needed to make sacrifices to reach salvation. Amir sacrificed, first by leaving his comfortable life in America, leaving his wife and abandoning his career to go to Kabul which is not a safe place anymore. He needed to go to Peshawar, Pakistan first where he met Rahim Khan who told him that Hassan and his wife were murdered by the Taliban and their only son, Sohrab, was sent to an orphanage in

Kabul. It was more shocking when Amir knew that Hassan is his half-brother and Sohrab is his nephew.

“Ali was sterile” Rahim Khan said.

“No, he wasn’t. He and Sanaubar had Hassan, didn’t they? They had Hassan

“No, they didn’t,” Rahim Khan said” (Hosseini, 205).

Lambe & Basuki (2013) state that the previous conversation between Amir and Rahim Khan revealed the truth that both Baba and Amir betrayed their childhood mates. Baba betrayed his friend, Ali, when he had an affair with his wife that ended up with him having another son who is Hassan. This news left Amir in a need for atonement, not only to atone his betrayals toward Hassan but also to atone his father’s betrayal too.

Like Amir, Briony needed to make several sacrifices, hoping to find forgiveness and salvation. She committed a sin in her childhood when she gave a wrong testimony and accused Robbie of something he never did. She relied on her sharp imagination and on the connection between certain incidents, the fountain event, the letter with the vulgar word and the library scene which led her to believe that Robbie was the rapist. Five years later when she was eighteen, she was finally aware of her false accusation of Robbie, which was done without real evidence. The realization of her sin began the feeling of guilt inside of her. As Ludwig & Ferreira (2019) clarify, “guilty feeling arises when individuals [are] involved in illegal acts” (70). Briony’s mistake caused eternal damage to both Cecilia and Robbie’s life. Cecilia disconnected herself from her family and went to practice as a nurse during the war, while Robbie was sent to jail for couple of years then was sent to join the army to fight in France as a condition of early prison release. Both lovers are separated from each other. They could only meet through letters. She felt guilty after ruining two

young people's lives. Briony seems to know even when she is older that her regret will last forever and that her sister will never forgive her, as shown when Cecilia said: "Don't worry. I won't ever forgive you" (McEwan, 318).

In order to remedy her sin, she must sacrifice her dreams. She decided to quit her luxurious life and to abandon her seat in Cambridge and be a nurse. Cecilia supposed that Briony desires to get a penance. Like she said in her letter, "she's saying that she wants to be useful in a practical way. But I get the impression she's taken on nursing as a sort of penance" (McEwan,199). As Schoninger, (2019) explains, by becoming a nurse: "Briony hopes that her duties as a nurse during the war will serve as some sort of penance towards Robbie. Yet the cost of doing so, is a complete stripping of her identity" (37). Briony's decision to be a nurse is her way to atone for her sin by punishing herself through becoming a nurse who devotes herself to helping others during the war; she abandoned herself to a life of strictures, rules, obedience, housework and a constant fear of disapproval. This helps Briony to overcome her sense of guilt temporarily. Helping and taking care of the wounded soldiers is her way for reparation, though she knew that "she would never undo the damage. She was unforgivable" (McEwan ,285).

Both Amir and Briony were tired of the sense of guilt and eager to seek forgiveness, so they decided to make sacrifices to reach atonement. Amir left his wife, career and abandoned his safe life in America to make a dangerous journey to Kabul which he might never return from. Briony needed to take the same step toward redemption. She sacrificed her luxurious life and her seat in Cambridge to turn into a trainee nurse. They both did the same first step of self-punishment to reach salvation. Amir punished himself by risking his

life by going to a place full of death and for Briony, being a nurse and devoting her life to helping others during war is a kind of self-punishment too.

Sacrificing their comfortable life is not enough to atone sins, so they needed more sacrifices. For Amir, leaving America is only the beginning. He needed to ask Hassan's forgiveness and since Hassan is dead, helping Hassan's son, Sohrab, was the only way for Amir to redeem himself. After a long journey, full of obstacles Amir reached the orphanage where his nephew, Sohrab, was said to be but was told that one of the Taliban leaders took Sohrab with him to his house. When Amir met the Taliban leader, he was shocked to find him Assef. Assef, who raped Hassan in the alleyway and was responsible for Amir and Hassan's nightmares. It was clear that Assef recognized Amir when he saw him:" we have some unfinished business, you and I", Assef said. "You remember, don't you?" (Hosseini, 263). Amir still has the sensitive personality who hates fighting but for the sake of rescuing Sohrab he needed to make a sacrifice. "I DON'T KNOW if I gave Assef a good fight. I don't think I did. How could I have? That was the first time I'd fought anyone. I had never so much as thrown a punch in my entire life." (Hosseini, 264)

Amir had never been in a fight before and he didn't expect to fight anyone which proves that Amir finally dared to fight Assef with his own limited potential. His action showed the development of his personality, for he becomes a mindful person who deals with his own problems and has the courage to solve them. He clearly becomes a person who stands up for himself. (Merdekawati, Alhadar & Nurfani, 2017). Although this fight harmed Amir physically, yet it helped him to heal his guilt. As he narrates in the middle of the fight:

What was so funny was that, for the first time since the winter of 1975, I felt at peace. ... My body was broken-just how badly I wouldn't find out until later- but I felt healed. Healed at last. I laughed (Hosseini, 2003).

By sacrificing himself and fighting Assef, Amir could heal his guilt. He finally freed himself and attained true purification. By rescuing Sohrab from the Taliban, Amir is finally faithful to Hassan.

For Briony seeking forgiveness wasn't easy at all. It was something impossible. Things didn't work out for her as they worked for Amir. She knows that Cecilia and Robbie would never forgive her, and she might live with her guilt for the rest of her life, so she wrote an apology to her sister admitting her crime, regretting it and expressing her desire to change her statement to free Robbie from the false accusation. She tells them that it was Paul Marshall who raped Lola that night but unfortunately, she can't accuse him as the rapist because he and Lola have been married. Although Briony promises them to put things right and to start the legal processes to absolve Robbie from the accusation, she knows that Paul Marshall will never be charged for his crime because of his marriage to the victim, and apology is Briony's only way to express her regret; "She spoke slowly. "I'm very sorry. I've caused you such terrible distress." They continued to stare at her, and she repeated herself. "I'm very sorry." (McEwan, 348). As mentioned by Narramore (1981) "in doing a wrong action, wrongdoer must deal with his guilt by making atonement, by repentance and apology to the victim, and by making reparation and penance"(106). Briony was burdened with guilt and felt helpless when she couldn't help Robbie and Cecilia to live happily together. She wanted to help Robbie by changing her statement, to save him from

both prison and accusation, but apology was all what she could do to express her deep regret.

Although Amir and Briony started their journey of atonement making the same sacrifices of abandoning their luxurious life, but later it ended differently. For Amir, there was still a chance to redeem himself; he could fight Assef and save Sohrab. While for Briony, the matter is more complicated, for she failed to prove Robbie's innocence and failed to attain his forgiveness. The journey is not over yet and more sacrifices and attempts should be made by both.

Amir decides to adopt Sohrab and give him a better life, but Adoption is not legal in Afghanistan which complicated the situation for Amir. when he almost lost hope in adopting Sohrab, he decided to put him in an orphanage temporarily till he finds a way to get him out of Afghanistan. Sohrab couldn't live the experience of living in an orphanage again, so he attempted suicide. Jaelani (2017) states that "Sohrab's attempts to commit suicide also makes Amir almost loses his chance in salvation. If Sohrab dies, he cannot atone his crimes and thus he cannot live peacefully" (62). Amir prays God to let Sohrab live because he doesn't want to be involved with the death of Sohrab too. By saying "my hands are stained with Hassan's blood; I pray God doesn't let them get stained with the blood of this boy too" (Hosseini, 317). Finally, Sohrab is rescued and Amir is released from his fear and guilt. With a great effort, Amir finally attained the legal permission to adopt Sohrab and is able to take him home to America.

And so it was that, about a week later, we crossed a trip of warm, black tarmac and I brought Hassan's son from Afghanistan to America, lifting him from the certainty of turmoil and dropping him in a turmoil of uncertainty (Hosseini, 326).

Sohrab is Amir's only chance to redeem himself and to start a new life without regret or guilt. Here Amir still has hope to attain full atonement and to be forgiven by Hassan. While Briony lost any hope in redeeming herself and lost hope of being forgiven by her sister and Robbie. Her only way to have salvation -according to her- is to give them a happy ending in the novel she writes, which gives both Robbie and Cecilia a chance to be reunited and live happily, since they were deprived from the chance of being together. Briony wrote her regretful apology in the story of Robbie and Cecilia's reunion at the end of her novel (Fitriya, 2014).

4.4.3 Achieving Atonement

Swinburne (1989) explains that "atonement can be achieved only if the person repents and the victim forgives" (85). In both novels it is clear that there is only an effort to atone without any forgiveness. The victims who need to forgive are no longer alive. Robbie and Cecilia lost their lives before Briony has the ability to amend her crime." Robbie Turner died of septicemia in 1940 and Cecilia was killed in September of the same year by the bomb that destroyed Balham underground station" (McEwan, 370). Hassan was also murdered by the Taliban before Amir has the courage to return to Kabul to atone for his crimes. "they took him to the street... ordered him to kneel...and shot him in the back of the head ...self-defense they claim later" (Hossieni, 202-203). As both Amir and Briony cannot recall time or correct their previous mistakes, they can only try to make amends to ease a tortured soul, for to ask forgiveness from dead people is an impossible task.

Chakraborty, (2018) describes Amir as" a perfect example of an anguished man until his conscious mind finally breaks from its shadow of self-deception and reflects back

the brutal truth of his conduct” (60). Amir decides to accept all the consequences of his sin and do all that was needed for salvation, yet Amir knows that he will not reach total forgiveness unless he can bring Sohrab out of his “bubble of quietness” as described by Chakraborty (2018). Amir would find a sense of hope when he asks Sohrab one day to help him fly a kite and together they manage to cut another kite which makes Sohrab finally smile. Sohrab’s smile is Amir’s last hope in redeeming himself of his old crimes. He determines to be the person he should have been. He runs the kite for Sohrab, telling him, “for you a thousand times over” (Hosseini, 340). Jaelani (2017) explains that these were the words that Hassan used to say to Amir before he was raped, and in spite of the circumstances the last time these words appeared in the book, the hopeful tone indicates that Amir has made his amends and found his redemption.

For Briony, atonement took another way. It is noticeable by the end of the novel that Briony, who was seventy-seven years old, has devoted her life to atone for her wrongdoing and to show that she is different from Briony of thirteen. During her life, she wrote several versions of the novel *Atonement*, till she eventually reached to a final copy as an atonement for her unforgivable sin. Briony knew that her sin has deprived Robbie and Cecilia of living happily together, so she wanted to compensate them through her fiction by bringing them alive and giving them a happy ending.” As long as there is a single copy, a solitary typescript of my final draft, then my spontaneous, fortuitous sister and her medical prince survive to love” (McEwan, 350). Since Robbie and Cecilia are dead and incapable of forgiving, her fiction is the only option to find salvation. Her novel is meant to be as atonement, but not as a way for her to be forgiven.

Both Amir and Briony made great efforts to amend their crimes, but only Amir could start a new beginning. By running a kite for Sohrab means that he can run away from his previous life. He runs for the sake of making a connection with Hassan that he can be proud of, an opportunity to help his nephew move into a new life, and an opportunity to act upon his newfound maturity. Again now, Amir is running with freedom in his heart instead of fear. He finally can atone for his sin and enter a new life free from the sense of guilt. Unfortunately, Briony didn't have such options as Amir, for she couldn't be easily forgiven, or justify her mistake. So, writing the novel is Briony's way to make up for her crime. To make the reader admire and forgive her is not part of that atonement. The novel is her way of telling the reader what happened and let him/her makes the judgement. However, such forgiveness did not happen, because it was only a creation when she says: "I gave them happiness, but I was not so self-serving as to let them forgive me" (McEwan, 351). The author imagined this moment, a moment that she wishes had happened. So, in reality she did not achieve forgiveness. Briony explains that the entire work had been written as an attempt for reparation. She used the potential of literary writing to make the facts more acceptable and relationships happier but to herself, she is unforgivable.

Chapter Five

Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

Guilt is a psychological feeling that includes the sense of regret, distress and sadness, accompanied by self-reprimanding, which appears as a result of a wrongdoing that causes harm to others or as a result of unconscious desires. Some continue to torture themselves, suffer from a painful feeling that reflects regret for what was committed, making them overly sensitive and cause them the sense of being lost and tired for the rest of their life. One can't overcome the feeling of guilt easily, and it is almost impossible to release himself/herself from blame or to be free from the consequences of sin. But guilt can play a positive role when one realizes that he/she has committed a sin and tries to atone for his/her crime, this means that an individual has a chance to save himself from the eternal loop of guilt.

The constant unconscious need for penance arising from the feeling of guilt forces the individual to seek atonement which is the only way to purify one from his/her crimes. This cannot be accomplished in a single day. Penance is a process that can take days, weeks, and months, sometimes even years to achieve. It is clear that redeeming sins is more difficult to attain than the act itself was to commit. Despite the difficulty, many still wish to be forgiven and to have the ability to make up for their wrongful actions.

The novels of *The Kite Runner* and *Atonement* portray the sense of guilt in the protagonists, Amir and Briony, who are responsible for crimes they committed in their childhood. Such crimes destroyed and ended others' lives. The feeling of guilt keeps haunting them and irritates their life, and the only way to correct their mistakes is through

redemption, for though they cannot go back in time to fix what happened in the past, but they can only try to make amends to ease a guilty conscience.

One of the essential aspects in these novels is that their family had a strong impact on their personality which put them in the way of sin. For Amir, the need for his father's affection and his feelings of neglect led him to betray Hassan, his close friend and half-brother. Amir's participation in the kite tournament was his only chance to win his father's love. In that day, Amir witnessed how Hassan was raped by Assef and because of Amir's selfish and cowardice, he decided to leave Hassan behind to save his skin. That incident has changed the course of Amir's life forever and was the beginning of an endless chain of betrayals. For Briony, the disconnected relationship between her family's member was the main reason to commit her unforgivable crime towards Robbie. Her busy father, her sick mother and the constant absence of her sister and brother made her a lonely child without any guidance, so her fiction and fairytales were her only means of understanding people and events around her. Her world misled her into believing that Robbie is a source of danger and accused him of raping her cousin Lola. This accusation destroyed Robbie's and Cecilia's life and of course destroyed her.

It is important to note that both of Amir and Briony in their early stages of life, were driven unconsciously by their id in order to satisfy their desires which drove them to commit their horrible sins. But later during their maturity, the superego becomes stronger and urging them to seek forgiveness. Both protagonists chose the hard way by sacrificing their comfortable life and exchanging it with an inconvenient one. Amir had to leave his successful life to face the unknown in Kabul. His betrayals toward Hassan obligated him to look for Sohrab, Hassan's son. Since Hassan is murdered by the Taliban, Amir had to look

for Sohrab and Save him. It is Amir's only chance to start a new life without worries. Sohrab was taken by one of the Taliban leaders who turned out later to be the bully Assef. Amir faced his fear of Assef and fought him. By sacrificing himself and fighting Assef, Amir is finally faithful to Hassan. Adopting Sohrab and giving him a new life in America, helps Amir to attain the true purification. In comparison with Amir, Briony selected the same way to start her journey of atonement. She abandoned her luxurious life to live a nurse's life which is full of anxiety and hardships. She sacrificed her dream of being a brilliant student in Cambridge for cleaning floors, tidying beds and helping wounded soldiers. It was like self-punishment by depriving herself of what she desires. "Briony hopes that her duties as a nurse during the war will serve as some sort of penance towards her" (Schoninger, 2019, 38). She needed to atone for her unforgivable sin of accusing Robbie by doing more sacrifices. Briony sent her sister a letter of apology clarifying her wish of changing her testimony to exonerate Robbie and accuse Paul Marshall as the real criminal. Briony felt disappointed because she couldn't attain Robbie's forgiveness. She felt more disappointed when she found out that both Robbie and Cecilia were killed in the war. Briony would never be able to reach redemption because the people she would ask for forgiveness are no longer alive.

The novels clarified that both Amir and Briony took great pains to amend their crimes, but only Amir who could reach partial atonement. Unfortunately, Briony didn't have such options as Amir, for she couldn't be easily forgiven. Since Robbie and Cecilia are dead and incapable to forgive, her fiction is the only way to find salvation. Her novel *Atonement* is meant to be as atonement, but not as a way for her to be forgiven. The novel is her way of telling the reader what happened and let him/her makes the judgement.

Briony explained that the entire work had been written as an attempt for reparation. She used the potential of literary writing to make the facts more acceptable and relationships happier but to herself, she is unforgivable.

The novels give an opportunity to understand the protagonists' inner world, and to know the reasons behind their behavior and choices and to consider the hidden psychological reasons behind their crimes. Thereby, it will be helpful to understand the protagonists' conduct and personalities and to be inspired and enlightened from their personal experience to give importance for cognitive expansion from the psychological perspective.

5.2 Recommendations

After studying *The Kite Runner* and *Atonement*, the researcher suggests the following recommendations:

1. Conduct more comparative studies that combine the two novels and study them in depth, given the similarity of the content and ideas that both writers sought to promote.
2. The need for further studies that focus on the psychoanalytic perspective in both novels to help readers to understand more about the psychology of the nature of human beings, where most previous studies focused on economic, social and political factors that influenced the events of the two narratives.

References

- Abbasiyannejad, M, Talif, R, & Heidari, M. (2012). A Reflection of Ian McEwan's Life in His Fiction. *English Language and Literature Studies*, 2(2), 56.
- Ahmad, W. (2015). Thematic Study of Khaled Hosseini's Novel The Kite Runner. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary*, 3(5), 131-137.
- Aldridge, A. (1969). *Comparative Literature: Matter and Method*. Urbana: University of Linois press.
- Babu, Y. S. (2015). A Study of Child Behavioral Transition in Khalid Hosseini's The Kite Runner. *An International Refereed e-Journal of Literary Explorations*, 3(4).
- Bloom, H. (ed.) (2009). *Khaled Hosseini's The Kite Runner*, New York: Infobase Publishing.
- Boscaljon, D. (2007). *The Nature of the Atonement*, United States of America: Praeger Publishers.
- Brookner, A. (2013). The Kite Runner Character Relationship Implied in Afghanistan National Relations. *Social sciences*, 3(1), 259-269.
- Caruth, C. (1996). *Unclaimed experience: trauma, narrative and history*, London: John Hopkins UP.
- Chakraborty, J. (2018). The Role of Guilt in Ian McEwan's Atonement. *Contemporary Literary Review India*, 5(3), 54-64.
- Chalupsky, P. (2006). Freedom, Spontaneity, Imagination and the Loss of Innocence – the Theme of Childhood in Ian McEwan's Fiction. *An International Journal of Undergraduate Research and Criticism in the Discipline of English*, 13(1), 6.

- Childs, P. (ed). (2006). *The Fiction of Ian McEwan: A reader's guide to essential criticism*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Erikson, H. E. (1987). *Childhood and society*. London: Paladin Grafton Book. Print.
- Falzon, C. (2015). 'She would rewrite the past'—Briony as narrator-manipulator in Ian McEwan's *Atonement*. *Canadian Center of Science and Education*, 11(2).
- Fathi, T. (2017). The Analysis of Psychological Conflicts in Khalid Hussein's Novel *The Kite Runner*. *International Journal of English Language, Literature and Humanities*, 3(6),12-23.
- Fitriya, L. (2014). Briony's Guilty Feeling and her Atonement in Ian McEwan's *Atonement*. *Litera- Kultura*, 2(1).
- Freud, Sigmund (1930). *Civilization and Its Discontents*. New York: W. Norton, Print.
- Garvey, S.P. (1999). Punishment as Atonement, (Master's thesis). Cornell Law Faculty Publications. University of California at Los Angeles.
- Gunarto, R. (2012). The influence of Amir Khan's personality development in facing his conflict as seen in Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* (Doctoral dissertation). Faculty of letters, Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta.
- Haugen, M. (2018). The Child's Perspective in *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *The Kite Runner* (Master's Thesis in English Literature and Education), Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education, the University of Norway.
- Hosseini, K. (2003) *The Kite Runner*. New York: River-head Books Print.
- Hurlock, E. (1974). *Personality Development*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Jacobi, M. (2011). Who killed Robbie and Cecilia? Reading and Misreading Ian McEwan's *Atonement*. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, (52), 55–73.

- Jaelani, A. (2017). Amir's ambitions to redeem his guilts as portrayed in Khaled Hosseini's the kite runner (Doctoral dissertation), UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya).
- Kai-fu, C. (2019). A Study of Amir's Psychological Change in *The Kite Runner*. *English Language Teaching*, 12(5), 190-193.
- Kermode, F. (2004). Amir's Personality Development in Khalid Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*, A Psychological Approach (Doctoral dissertation), Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta.
- Khadawardi, H. (2017). Discrimination in the Novel *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini. *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education*, 4(2), 88-99.
- Klimovicova, M. (2016). Childhood in Selected Novels by Ian McEwan (Doctoral dissertation), Faculty of Philosophy, Masarykova university.
- Koval, R. (2004). An Interview with Ian McEwan. *Intercultural Communication Studies*, 6(3), 1-8
- Kurniasih, E. N. (2009). The Influence of Amir's guilty feeling upon his self-concept in Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* (Doctoral dissertation). Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta.
- Kuypers, J.A. (2005). *The Art of Rhetorical Criticism*. United States: Pearson.
- Lambe, L.G & Basuki. (2013) Amir's Guilt in Khalid Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*. (Master's thesis), Petra Christian University, Siwalankerto. Indonesia.
- Lewis, M, Haviland, J. M., & Barrett, L. F. (Eds.) (2010). *Handbook of emotions*. New York: John Willey & Sons Press.

- Ludwig, C. R., & Ferreira, R. (2019). Life and Fiction: Imagination and Literary Creation in *Atonement*. *International Journal of Academic Research and Development*, 5(2), 58-77.
- Mathews, P. (2006). The Impression of a Deeper Darkness: Ian McEwan's *Atonement*.” *English Studies in Canada*, (3)1, 147.
- McEwan, I. (2001). *Atonement*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Merdekawati, S. A, Alhadar, F & Nurfani, N. (2017). Redemption of the Main Character in the Novel “The Kite Runner” By Khalid Hossieni (A genetic Structuralism Approach). *English and Literature Journal*, 4(2), 61-74.
- O’Brien, S. (2018). Translating Trauma in Khaled Hosseini’s *The Kite Runner*. *Transnational Literature*, 10(2).
- Pavlikova, M. (2009). The Notion of Childhood in Ian McEwan's Fiction (Doctoral dissertation), Faculty of Philosophy, Masarykova University.
- Pitt, D. (2009). The representation of trauma in Ian McEwan's novels *Atonement* and "Saturday" (Doctoral dissertation). School of Humanities, University of Witwatersrand.
- Rosenfield, K. (2006). “To be good (again): *The Kite Runner* as allegory of global ethics”. *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, 45(4),26-27.
- Saraswat, N. (2014). Theme of Identity and Redemption in Khaled Hosseini’s *The Kite Runner*. *International Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Studies*. India. (IJIMS).1(5), 166-175.
- Schoninger, C. L. (2019) *Atonement: between guilt and desire for reparation*. *International Journal of English Research*. 5(2), 36-39

- Sernham, C. (2009). *Briony Through Her Own Eyes; a Discussion of the Three Brionys in Ian McEwan's Atonement*. (Master thesis), Centre for Languages and Literature, Lund University.
- Shamnad, N. (2010). *The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini: Historical, Political and Cultural Contexts*, (Doctoral dissertation), University of Kerala.
- Shone, T. (2009). The Moral Development of Children. *Scientific American*, 281 (2), 72-78.
- Stefan-Cole, J. (2009). A Study of a Changing Country As Depicted in Khaled Hosseini's Novel *The Kite Runner*. *International Journal of English Language, Literature and Humanities*. 3(6),112-23.
- Suhua, Z. (2015). Amir's Personality Growth in *The Kite Runner*-- Amir's Tripartite Personality Interpreted from Freudian Psychoanalysis. *Journal of Nanjing University of Science and Technology (Social Science Edition)*, 28(1), 73-77.
- Swinburne, R. (1989). *Responsibility and Atonement*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. Print.
- Tamara, A. P. (2013). Amir's Anxiety and Motive in Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* (Doctoral dissertation), Dian Nuswantoro University.
- Tangney, J. P, Miller, R. S, Flicker, L & Barlow. H. (2006). Are shame, guilt, and embarrassment distinct emotions? *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 70(6), 12-56.
- Tsai, E. S. (2018). When the Childhood Event Unfolds Itself: On the Survivor's Guilt in *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini. *Journal of Literature and Art Studies*, 8(10), 1431-1444.

- Watkiss, J. A. (2016). The Trials of Briony: Gothic Desire in Ian McEwan's *Atonement*, *The Journal of Contemporary Gothic Studies*, 3(2), 47-57.
- Wen, T. (2019). On the Way to be a Good Man Again—An Analysis of Amir in *The Kite Runner* from Perspective of Freud's Personality Structure Theory. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 9(5), 589-593.
- Wiegand, D. (2009). The Influence of Amir's Guilty Feeling Upon His Self-Concept in Khalid Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*, (Undergraduate Thesis), University of Sanata Dharma, Jogjakarta.
- Yuan-yuan, P. (2018). Analysis of Hassan's Tragedy in "The Kite Runner" from the Three-Dimensional Ethical Perspective. *English Language Teaching*, 11(7), 57-60.
- Zhang, G. Y, & Wang, Z. L. (2014). The Kite Runner Character Relationship Implied in Afghanistan National Relations. *Social sciences*,12(3), 259-269.