

# Are Children Colouring Books? The Psychology of Trauma and Colours in Khalid Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*

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**Abstract**—This paper seeks to demystify the purpose of Amir's journey of self-discovery after betraying his illegitimate half-brother, Hassan, in Khalid Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*. It attempts to reveal how the representation of colours, as a narrative element, shapes Amir's psychological development and his liberation from guilt. Through employing a textual analysis of Hosseini's novel, this paper explores Hosseini's strategic use of colours associated with certain memories Amir cannot escape. The paper utilises intrusive trauma memories and colour psychology as a theoretical framework to examine and understand Amir's internal conflict and healing process. The paper contends that Amir's trauma has been triggered by intrusive memories linked to colours prevalent during certain incidents, which compel him to confront his past. The paper concludes that these colours act as a mechanism, aiding Amir to reconcile with his haunting past. His deliberate confrontation and reconciliation with his past lead to his liberation from the psychological burden, trauma, and guilt with which he is plagued.

**Index Terms**—Khaled Hosseini, *The Kite Runner*, trauma and memory, colour psychology

## I. INTRODUCTION

For a debut novel, Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* (2003) has been the aim of a staggering amount of research over the years. Many scholars have attempted to encapsulate its purpose from different angles and have confined themselves – most probably – to the narrative's basic values and themes, such as the novel's universality (Aubry, 2009; Qureshi, 2006), being good (Jefferess, 2009) and/or a journey of self-actualisation (Du, 2017). All of these angles share a common theme: they all refer to intrinsic values that have become universalised through the human experience, regardless of ethnicity or race. They are quite significant regardless of the reader's background.

Although the novel's diverse themes and styles have prompted a wide range of scholarly interpretations, other researchers, regardless of their theoretical frameworks, have explored or touched upon the depiction of physical and emotional trauma and the characters' ensuing struggles for survival. Mahardhika et al. (2023), for example, study the hardships through which Amir goes as a manifestation of disappointment. They argue that life is laden with unpleasantness, interwoven into the experiences that any person can encounter, and thus, when expectations are left unmet, a coping mechanism needs to be in place. In Amir's case, it is developed through dealing with "bereavement" (Mahardhika et al., 2023, p. 4). To Mahardhika et al. (2023), then, Amir is a psychological being in the way he decides to deal with the hurdles that life throws in his way. This suggestion, the paper at hand finds, is increasingly vital in understanding the instances where *The Kite Runner* focuses on the psychology of trauma to be able to convey its messages.

The traumatic representation of Amir's journey has also won the interest of scholars. Chun (2014) state that "individual trauma generally arises from personal experience" (p. 964), indicating that it is haphazard and does not rely on certain factors when (or if) triggered. Amir's trauma is "complicated through depicting him as both a victim and a sinner" (Chun, 2014, p. 964). Amir, then, appears to have a venomous duality of character: on one hand, he is a victim of hopelessness against Assef, the one who rapes Hassan. On the other hand, he is a sinner<sup>1</sup> since he has stood there in the alley without interference. O'Brien (2018) sees that Amir's journey through political and personal turmoil and him being "a witness to trauma" is Hosseini's way of "[translating] the trauma of ongoing conflict for a Western audience" (p. 1). She notes that Hosseini intentionally compartmentalises the Afghani turmoil at the time in a single incident because it is easier to convey

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<sup>1</sup> While the term "coward" could have probably seemed to be more appropriate in describing Amir, the term "sinner" remains more vital in the grand scheme of this paper, especially when it delves into the aspects of Colour Psychology.

a theme of such magnitude to the West instead of focusing on internal conflict. Hence, the narrative conveys the desolated nature of Afghanistan from the perspective of children to increase the intensity of the trauma as well as the relatability factor, and thus, one event, according to O'Brien, is adequate to achieve that. O'Brien (2018), moreover, indicates that to get rid of torment, Amir needs to learn confrontation; that is why his journey back to Afghanistan, when it is Taliban-ruled, is of the utmost essentiality towards atonement for Amir's past sins; in other words, Amir's traumas must be tackled so that they subside.

However, Amir not only physically strips himself of the effects of trauma, but also does so through verbal atonement, as pointed out by Aruta et al. (2022). To them, this is heavily emphasised as Amir's last act of saying goodbye to the gruelling past through which he has been, as he confesses everything to Soraya. Amir's confession, then, seems to be closing a chapter of misery that has, at one point, endangered his marriage; in fact, it has chased Amir throughout his entire life, and by that, he is finally able to overcome the ever-haunting past. Amir's journey of redemption ends right then and there (Aruta et al., 2022). Field (2023) perceives Amir's ethical responsibility as a bystander witnessing the rape of Hassan. He contends that Amir, as a bystander, acts as an agent for social transformation in the context of the traumatic violence of the War in Afghanistan. Therefore, it is rather conspicuous that the investigated concept of trauma, which originates from Hassan's rape and Amir's witness to such a heinous act, could affirm *The Kite Runner's* status as a formative text in literary trauma studies.

Even though such Trauma has been encapsulated on numerous occasions within *The Kite Runner* – evident through the rich literature available on those said matters – what has been largely under-researched within this context is the representation of colours and their association with individuals' experiences of trauma. A few scholars, such as Khan (2011), note the use of colour symbolism in *The Kite Runner*. Khan (2021) delves into the various shades of blue in the film adaptation, explaining how they “provide insight into the characters and the dynamics between them” (p. 111). However, Khan does not explore the connection between this colour choice and the pervasive theme of trauma in the narrative.

As a result, the study posits a distinct method through which Amir – unintentionally – rids himself of his betrayal of Hassan and childhood traumas by employing both intrusive trauma theory and colour psychology simultaneously. At first, the study focuses on intrusive trauma memory due to its deep relatedness with Amir's experience to understand the triggering causality that has haunted him after the traumatising event of rape. Constituting the second threshold of the study, furthermore, is the study of colours by subjecting them to a theme-based analysis to display the mechanism unintentionally plotted by Amir to escape his nightmare.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Applying intrusive trauma memory and colour psychology to *The Kite Runner* is fruitful due to their closeness in theme and roots. However, doing so also bears multiple difficulties since the paper not only tends to bridge the gap between Amir's journey of redemption with a memory-based mechanism, but it also attempts to connect the elusive concept with an actual, scientific framework to understand how such memories have never left his mind from the beginning. Hence, the work of Krans et al. (2009) seems to be the most fitting of the mould into which Amir puts himself in such a case. Before that, however, it is of utmost importance to revise the key concepts in their research to solidify the claim.

### INTRUSIVE TRAUMA MEMORY

Krans et al. (2009) define intrusive trauma memories as “rich multi-modal mental images of highly detailed sensory impressions of the traumatic event including sights, sounds, feelings and bodily sensations” (p. 1077). This means that when a person goes through a traumatising event, he or she connects the experience itself with his or her surroundings. At that moment of horror, images start to materialise in the person's psyche; they could be natural (landscapes), emotional (horror), or even observable (colours). Such materialisation and connection do not occur at the conscious level since the person is not actively aware of what he or she is doing while the natural, emotional, or observable data are being stored; it all happens subconsciously. Krans et al. (2009) illustrate that “in contrast to when a trauma survivor thinks back to the event deliberately, intrusive trauma memories come into consciousness unbidden” (p. 1077). Therefore, hearkening back to those moments happens at a deep psychological level, affecting the individual in innumerable ways. Yet, there is a variation in degree as to how and why people are affected.

Largely, the case in point here is that the impact is reciprocal with the event itself. For instance, all catastrophes are tragic, natural or man-caused. However, some seem to be more impactful than others on the individual. Krans et al. (2009), for instance, suggest that the traumas that induce PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) are rape and physical abuse. Moreover, Akkawi and Al-Alawneh (2022) elucidate that “severe trauma during childhood may compel some people to create and produce a lack of connection in their person's thoughts, memories, feelings, actions, or sense of identity. These psychological ramifications can be characterised by multidimensionality and tend to drive those people to forget their real essence in the process” (p. 653). Thus, the theoretical framework criss-crosses with *The Kite Runner*, specifically when Amir undergoes the traumatising event of Hassan's rape. The entire incident revolves around the blue kite that Hassan has run for Amir, so much so that Assef admits it to him after he refuses to give away the kite as he promises, “I'll let you keep the kite, Hazara. I'll let you keep it, so it will always be a reminder of what I'm about to do,” (Hosseini, 2003, p. 65). Ironically, it is not Hassan whom readers see struggling with the mental image throughout the narrative; it is Amir.

That night in the alley is the intrusive trauma memory of which Amir will keep on fighting until he achieves redemption towards the end; it is also worsened due to its man-caused nature. Krans et al. (2009) cement this, professing that:

Intentional harm seems to be more likely to produce post-traumatic stress symptoms. This finding may provide a clue as to the function of intrusive trauma memories. For example, events involving human violence may be perceived as more under our control (and thus that we have lost control) than, for example an earthquake. (p. 1078)

Accordingly, Amir is psychologically at the receiving end of a vile deed inflicted by another human, which is why he feels helpless and “paralysed” (Hosseini, 2003, pp. 63-64). He thinks that he should be able to do something, but ends up doing absolutely nothing. Consequently, the event is not only traumatising, but also haunting and harrowing for Amir; it is not a natural disaster from which Hassan suffers, but from a rape that could have possibly been prevented by a shriek or a shout as Amir confesses, “I opened my mouth, almost said something. Almost. The rest of my life might have turned out differently if I had” (Hosseini, 2003, p. 64). Hence, Amir feels that he is responsible for Hassan’s suffering, and thus carries the burden on his shoulders for the remainder of his life. Amir, then, takes advantage of colour psychology to reach redemption.

Within this theme, Krans et al. (2009) assert that intrusive trauma memories develop warning signs over time once they have been engraved into the survivor’s psyche, meaning that they can become progressive, i.e. adaptive. Afterwards, they may accompany certain sights or images, such as blood at any sign of threat faced by the survivor. It is not only that, but it also attaches itself to anything remotely similar to the said menace (Krans et al., 2009). Here, Krans et al. (2009) point out that intrusive trauma memories shapeshift in the sense that they do not take one form to materialise before the survivor’s eyes. They could morph into flashes of on-loop images. In *The Kite Runner*, for example, this happens with the pomegranate as a replacement for blood over the hill on which Amir and Hassan climb the tree, meaning that colour psychology assigns the pomegranate’s colour to the rape, implicitly.

Moreover, Krans et al. (2009) comment on the implicitness, proposing that intrusive trauma memories might develop into an emotional processing mechanism, whereby they provide a substantial amount of information regarding the trauma itself, especially when the roots are the main concern for research. In *The Kite Runner*, this is true when certain images of the rape incident deepen the fractured nature of Amir in the sense that he starts connecting the colours he has evoked that night with his surroundings. At this point, then, intrusive trauma memory subsides to focus the spotlight on colour psychology and its role in demystifying the recurring colours, which Amir keeps witnessing throughout the narrative. Due to the scope and depth of colour psychology, however, there is no particular study as the basis for the next part of the analysis, meaning that a thematic perusal is provided.

#### COLOUR PSYCHOLOGY

Colour psychology is a modern concept which has seen a rise in popularity recently due to its deep-rootedness in both the world of art and within the medium of psychology. It is, therefore, a hybrid field of study. In this vein, Fu et al. (2021) attest that colour psychology “began in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century” (p. 61). They affirm that it is relatively recent in terms of ever-evolving, resulting in its utilisation across various industries, namely the media. However, it began as an experimental project when physicians, like Kurt Goldstein, investigated the effect of colour on neurological and psychiatric conditions. Goldstein (1942) notes that “life is a condition alternating between excitation, destruction, and unbalance, and reorganisation, equilibrium, and rest. In the course of life, colours play their role. Each colour has a special importance and all colours together help to guarantee normal life” (p. 149). Colour psychology, then, paves the way for a wider audience and chances, crystallising the methods through which narrative is conveyed, thereby making it more expressive, impressive, and appealing (Fu et al., 2021). Since Birren (2016) opines that “the study of colour is essentially a psychological one” (p. 180), colour psychology is oftentimes the gateway to understanding how it personally affects people, at which level, and how often it lingers for a prolonged time until the associations attributed to it become inseparable from one’s existence and psyche.

O’Connor (2011) suggests that colours play a key role in defining colour psychology, stating that it “tends to refer to a range of affective, cognitive, and behavioural responses and associations linked to specific colours” (p. 230). She points out a crucial viewpoint when she elaborates on which kind of responses humans give when colours have become associated with certain experiences that vary in intensity and affectation. As a result, it becomes safe to assume that humans do not create those connections, but are subjugated to do so. In other words, if someone has an experience of love while the colour red is present, the mind would most certainly link warmth to the meaning of the colour in someone’s mind. On the other hand, if someone is to experience rape, the sight of blood–red, the same colour, would become a symbol of fear and vulnerability. Within this, O’Connor (2011) affirms:

Symbolic colour associations and colour meanings are often mentioned in conjunction with a range of psychological responses to colour including affect, preference, and cognitive judgements; and these in turn are often comingled with biological and behavioural responses to colour. (p. 231)

O’Connor (2011) represents the issue as one being referential. It focuses on how people’s psychology reacts and refers to the experiences associated with such colours, whether willingly or otherwise. It could, therefore, be by choice where people assert meaning to colour, or most probably, it could be an instinctual reaction towards the process itself. Either way, meaning is created within this association, regardless of choice or preference. It is similar to what artists experience while painting, depending on their mood.

Subsequently, then, it is discernible that artists employ colours to either evoke emotion or convey it, irrespective of its nature. To further explore this notion, Hussein (2021) illustrates that artists' choice of colour in any piece of art relies heavily on their mental state at that given time, affecting the viewer in the aftermath of its production. Similarly, colour psychology has a significant role in becoming therapeutic. Hussain (2021) professes: "[...] colour psychology comprises a sub-section of 'Art Therapy', a general term which encapsulates a constellation of associated arts approaches to therapeutic ends" (p. 303). This proves the understanding that art is mood-dependent. This also applies to novels just as it does to paintings or drawings, to the same effect, ends, and means, whereby authors assert and give more prominence to certain colours, with much emphasis on the mood that they emit.

In terms of *The Kite Runner*, however, certain colours are more apparent than others within such a context. The colours in question are: red, brown, blue, yellow and white. Each colour has become integrated within Amir's psyche to the extent that he can no longer see past them after the night in the alley with Assef and Hassan. To varying degrees, their enunciation is palpable since Amir himself feels trapped within his memory, haunted by those colours as intrusive trauma memory has previously suggested. Showing the connection, the paper considers the unconscious employability of the theory and its implications on Amir's psychologically colourful personality. In other terms, the paper sheds light on the author-colour interaction, discussing its vitality in constructing meaning and construing it.

### III. DISCUSSION

As stated earlier, there are certain colours to which Hosseini gives more prominence than the rest in *The Kite Runner*. They range from warm colours (red) to pale ones (white), covering almost every bit of emotion along Amir's way to ensure that his colour associations do not occur haphazardly. Those colours are deeply associated with his trauma that keeps resurfacing. Horowitz (1969) discusses the implications of such an underlying issue, stating that "it has long been argued that the underlying mechanisms that are involved in the development of intrusive trauma memories are similar for both psychiatric levels and sub-threshold levels of posttraumatic stress" (qtd. in Krans et al., 2009, p. 1077). This works in tandem with the assumption that Amir himself does indeed suffer from post-traumatic stress, meaning that he does unwillingly construct melancholic, intrusive, and traumatic memories without his realisation.

In some excerpts in *The Kite Runner*, Hosseini (2003) focuses on colours even before Amir displays any symptoms of trauma as if to pave the way to what is yet to come in the narrative in the form of a flashback. At the beginning of the novel, Amir admits that the alley still haunts him, "looking back now, I realise I have been peeking into that deserted alley for the last twenty-six years," (Hosseini, 2003, p. 1), proving that he still belongs there, to that place. Elaborating on this realm of possibility, Trigg (2009) illustrates it in two stages in his article entitled "The Place of Trauma." At first, he suggests that there is a spatial void, a dichotomy; then, he connects it with the traumatising event after it adopts an attachment. This attachment evolves into existing autonomously beyond its "spatio-temporal borders" (Trigg, 2009, p. 95). In other words, Trigg (2009) argues that places exist in two dimensions: their original physical presence and the mental image engraved within people's psyches regarding those places. This explains Amir's recollection afterwards when he is depicted to be having a walk in Golden Gate Park after he ends the call with Rahim Khan, where he says, "then, I glanced up and saw a pair of kites, red with long blue tails, soaring the sky [...] like a pair of eyes looking down on San Francisco" (Hosseini, 2003, p. 1). The place here, San Francisco, is of little significance since Amir does not relate to it physically, but to the mental image of the alley after twenty-six years as he earlier states. The act of remembrance due to the kites' colours is where the emphasis should be focused. Krans et al. (2009) comment on the phenomenon of recollection in the sense that traumas do not subside; in fact, their trigger remains in effect, meaning that the memories are event-bound, which is how they resurface. The resurfacing is cued in once Amir sees the kites and their colours. Concerning this, Lloyed-Jones and Nakabayashi (2009) elaborate on that, noting:

It appears that two distinct mechanisms may mediate shape-colour binding in online object identification and object memory, respectively: (a) Effects of colour on object identification are mediated by an input representation that combines object shape and associated colour, and (b) effects of colour on object memory are mediated by a form of new-association priming. (p. 311)

To reinstate, they refer to the possibility that colours are object-dependent when it comes to their identification, and therefore, they aptly require an identifiable object with which they can be represented. As a result, Amir sees the objects (the kites), and thus his memory (the priming mechanism) bridges their image with the traumatising event that has haunted him up to that point. As for the meaning of the colours themselves, it is attainable, from context – red is associated with the droplets of blood in the aftermath of Hassan's rape, whereas blue is associated with hope or lofty dreams. Cementing this claim are the burdensome memories, which Amir carries around with him. While analysing both colours, Hasan et al. (2011) argue that red is associated with "anger, love, and passion" (p. 209) and that blue has a connotative meaning, for it is sky-bound. It is also believed to be divine since it is linked with God's presence (Hasan et al., 2011, p. 209). Călin and Bîrsănescu (2017) agree on the conceptualisation of blue as they profess that "blue is the colour of conventional, of duty and serenity. It generates inner peace, a constant need for truth" (p. 152). This is accurate since Amir is searching for a method to regain himself after he has lost it in the alley. That is why he sees the blue kite as "my key to Baba's heart" (Hosseini, 2003, p. 62). To him, it is dutiful to win his father's love and emerge triumphant. As for red, it is the "colour of power, health, passion and energy, it stimulates orientation" (Călin & Bîrsănescu, 2017, p. 152). Red, then, reminds Amir of the power Assef has had over him and Hassan. It is also a reminder of Amir's weakness before the inevitable.

Hosseini, henceforth, assigns a new characteristic of the colour red in his novel to include severe guilt, of which Amir is reminded every other second.

Additionally, the second incident that proves the essentiality of colour psychology in Hosseini's novel is when both Amir and Hassan run up the hill of the pomegranate tree after Hassan's rape. Amir narrates, "We trekked up the hill, our boots squishing in the muddy snow. Neither one of us said anything. We sat under our pomegranate tree and I knew I'd made a mistake" (Hosseini, 2003, p. 76). It is rather deliberate of Hosseini to approximate the imagery of the muddy snow and the pomegranate tree. Readers end up having two new colours: white (snow) and brown (muddy snow); each of them has distinctive symbolic features. According to Hasan et al. (2011), white is "clear, clean and pure" (p. 209), and what makes this association more fitting to the novel is that it is linked with Amir's and Hassan's innocence at the time, even after the fateful night. As for brown, Hasan et al. (2011) do not give it that much importance in their analysis. Perhaps that is due to its secondary type in everyday lives. Călin and Bîrsănescu (2017), however, claim that brown is a "colour of security, comfort, intimacy" (p. 153). While this might be practically true, it is not the case in *The Kite Runner*. There, Hosseini almost conclusively links it with sin and impurity. It is, one could say, the counterpart of white in this sense; it is not black anymore.

There is a clear running motif of the colour brown and its negative association with sinful acts, also relating to the night in the alley. While narrating, Amir expresses how fixated he is on Hassan's brown corduroy trousers. He details:

There were two things amid the garbage that I couldn't stop looking at: One was the blue kite resting against the wall, close to the cast-iron stove; the other was Hassan's brown corduroy pants thrown on a heap of eroded bricks. (Hosseini, 2003, p. 66)

The corduroy pants, therefore, resemble the act of rape, the most heinous act that has befallen Hassan. This colour would always connect itself to sin when Amir recollects the incident in vivid detail for years to come, haunted by his unconscious as he relives the moment on repeat. Ohtsuki (2000) proposes that the predominant cultural understanding of the colour brown is either that of religion or a taboo-like behaviour, meaning that something is menacing about the colour despite its being of a warm wavelength; it does not induce comfort, rather it accentuates disgust and labour.

Continuing the analysis of the colour brown, there is an excerpt that focuses on how brown is associated with sinful acts. Amir notices how "people bought their scotch as 'medicine' in brown paper bags from selected 'pharmacies.' They would leave with the bag tucked out of sight" (Hosseini, 2003, p. 14). The fact that the scotch is wrapped in "brown paper bags" is very telling of Hosseini's perception and innate understanding of the colour itself, emphasising the deep-rootedness of literature and the psychology of colours. In his survey, Skard (1946) concludes:

Experimental psychology has shown how colour preference is determined not only by the constitution of the individual but quite as much by environment and social status. In literature, one of the strongest of these environmental factors is the characteristics and traditions, means and methods of literature itself. (p. 174)

Hence, there is a well-established connection between the environment and individuals. In the excerpt above, for instance, people would feel the need to hide their 'medicine' out of shame because they belong to an environment that does not take kindly to sinners, whereby Hosseini accentuates the actuality of the sinfulness through the colour brown, which the paper at-hand has already proven that Hosseini utilises to highlight the contamination of the pure. Hence, brown is the colour of sin.

After red, blue, and brown, yellow is probably the last colour of prominence in Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*. Like the other colours discussed thus far, yellow has a fair representation of traumatic memories and psychology. When Amir describes Hassan's optimism while lifting the kite to fly, it is apparent that yellow is a colour of energy and hope. Amir describes, "Hassan's face brightened ... He lifted our kite, red with yellow borders" (Hosseini, 2003, p. 55). Hettiarachchi and De Silva (2012) declare that yellow is believed to be a colour of joy and happiness, energising the nervous system. Therefore, it is noteworthy here that Hosseini symbolically registers the colour yellow as a fighting spirit that makes its observer full of life. Proving this is another incident when Amir describes the people in the park, saying: "[...] and sunlight glittered on its looking glass-clear surface. On Fridays, the lake was bustling with families out for a day in the sun" (Hosseini, 2003, p. 12). The novel depicts the same feeling of yellow in the excerpt before it, whereby the narrator attests that the colour is energetic, full of life, and vibrant. Accordingly, people seek refuge in the sun to recapture their inner peace and the feeling of belonging to nature. Hosseini, nonetheless, does not exclusively assign yellow such a positive meaning.

In the following incident, nevertheless, Hosseini permits yellow to be that of sickness when Amir rides the car with his father and relatives in the car after the kite tournament. One of Amir's relatives says, "Pull over, Kaka! His face is yellow! I don't want him throwing up on my new dress!" (Hosseini, 2003, p. 73). Hosseini presents the readers with another side of yellow, a completely off-putting image materialises for the colour as it becomes negative rather than relative. Within this vein, Hasan et al. (2011) agree with such a drawn conclusion, affirming that authors depict yellow as a sign of death or the unpleasantness experienced by people. Subsequently, yellow is dual functional; it does not follow all that is hopeful, but indeed has a negative association employed by Hosseini, that of sickness. In other words, it is not only a warmth-emulating symbol just like the sun, but also its opposite: joy and sickness.

Moreover, Amir's physical colour— yellow, like which he looks before throwing up, swiftly changes afterwards to brown— the colour of sin— which brings to attention Hassan's old corduroy trousers. Amir confesses, "Little shapes formed behind my eyelids ... formed a single image: Hassan's corduroy pants" (Hosseini, 2003, p. 74). Hence, it is

conspicuous that Amir adheres to that night irrespective of where he goes or what he does according to the intrusive trauma theory. Krans et al. (2009) attest that some survivors process traumatic information abstractly, rather than concretely. Since Amir talks of “figures” and “little shapes” (Hosseini, 2003, p. 74), it is by definition an abstract notion through which he unconsciously initiates the remembrance process.

Hosseini, therefore, utilises this processing in a colour-associated pattern. Doing so allows him to utilise such a connection for two main functions, namely the recollection of trauma and colour psychology to pertain to the understanding that Amir does not go on a self-actualisation trip, but rather is forced to keep revisiting the events of the alley in his mind quite constantly. Consequently, he falls prey to his belonging to the physical place where the rape has occurred, meaning that he no longer controls his memory and imagination since each time he tries to escape his reality, he is haunted once more by the factuality of his betrayal of Hassan.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Intrusive trauma memories and colour psychology in Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* have resulted in distinctive analyses and a modern threshold on the narrative. The paper has proven that when Hosseini employs colours, it is a need for necessitation rather than a need to create an appealing narrative. On the contrary, his utilisation of colour psychology increases the intensity of the story, especially when Amir is fixated on red, blue, brown, yellow and white to express his emotions, or when he even remotely remembers a past interaction he has had. With that in mind, Amir psychologically suffers from a traumatic, memory-based loop out of which he gets only through understanding the true horror of remembrance. The paper has divulged, in this sense, that each colour has a symbolic nature. Red, for instance, is reminiscent of Hassan's oozing blood after Assef rapes him. Blue, as presented in the kite, is Amir's key to his father's unattainable love, which he fails to get at the end despite sacrificing his half-brother for it. Brown is the colour of sin, which signifies Alcoholic drinks, Hassan's corduroy trousers as another reminder of rape, as well as the impurity of mud when combined with snow. Thus, it is negative all around: sin, rape, and Alcoholism. Last but not least, yellow is of a duality in purpose: warmth and life on one hand, whilst sickly and despicable on the other. Conclusively, therefore, it appears that children are colouring books, but they cannot choose which colours they want to remember, and which ones to neglect.

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