

Children's Experience of Subalternity and Power Dynamics Shaped by Feelings of Alienation and Social Rejection: A Comparative Analysis of Ferrante's *My Brilliant Friend* and Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*

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Abstract

Various dimensions of subalternity and subordination are studied by focusing on the experience of distinct subaltern groups. The most prominent of these social groups are women. Recently, a lot of studies are trying to depict the male experience of subalternity. This study, however, tries to gauge the experience of children in a setup where power is used and abused and strict social hierarchies might be observed. Hosseini's novel presents an epic struggle between the hegemonic group and the subaltern group. Ferrante's characters too struggle with the idea of power struggle. Children in both novels, Ferrante's *My Brilliant Friend* and Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*, experience the power struggle, but only a few of them choose to re-affirm the hierachal order. The paper sees that alienation and rejection by one's own people make more aggressive and hostile to other. Amir, who is the protagonist of *The Kite Runner*, is hostile to "other" who is also his friend. Ferrante's female characters, however, reject the social hierarchies which exist in the society. This paper presents the workings of power dynamics and centuries' old dualism in a social group which is distinctively made up of children. It perceives how the children respond to the idea of power and domination. Hosseini and Ferrante present the idea of friendship within the complex power structures of race and ethnicity. Consequently, this paper tries to establish that the female narrators often dismantle the centuries old dogmas while the male narrators re-affirm the dogmas. This paper analyses the ways in which the fear of the other operates.

Keywords: Deconstruction, Dualism, Gendered discourse, Ambiguity, Female narrators, Male narrator

Both the novels, Ferrante's *My Brilliant Friend* and Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* present the struggle between the subaltern groups and the member of a hegemonic group. The most common definition of term, "subaltern" comes from Gramsci. He used this word to refer to, "[n]on hegemonic groups or classes" (Morton, 2009, P.48). Thus, the term has evolved to refer to the marginalized population of a society.

Spivak described the idea of subalternity in her works. To her, "it is the structured place from which the capacity to access power is radically obstructed. To the extent that anyone escapes the muting of subalternity, she ceases being a subaltern." (Morris, 2010, P.8).

Subalternity encapsulates social isolation. The two novels situate the idea of social isolation with the idea of friendship. Amir belongs to a different ethnic group than that of Hassan's. Ferrante's characters experience a more complex form of social isolation. Lila is the subaltern primarily because of her unique personality. She is largely ignored by her teacher and is the lone child in school. Later too, she becomes a subaltern because she is not able to improve her socio-economic conditions. The two groups of children (Amir and Hassan in *The Kite Runner*; Elena and Lila in *My Brilliant Friend*) respond to the idea of subalternity in different manner. At the heart of the idea of subalternity is the social classification and hierarchies of different people. Hassan is the subaltern because he is not a Pashtun. Lila is an outcast because she does not possess the qualities of an average school child. In Hosseini's and Ferrante's works, the idea of subalternity is explored from the perspective of children. The narrators talk about their feelings and value judgments.

An important stimulus that triggers the children to re-enforce the social hierarchies is that of a psychological nature. It is observed that Hosseini's male character re-affirm the dualism while Ferrante's female character dismantles it. The unfair behavior that re-affirms the racism and the dualism is partially generated because of the social rejection and alienation that Amir feels about his position in the Pashtun setup. He feels as a misfit in his own social group. This is one reason why he extensively propagates the dualism that his society feeds him. However, interestingly, the female children in Ferrante's novel reject any sort of dualism. The study tries to depict how children reject or re-affirm the theories of dualism that they are fed.

Literature Review

Both the novels, Ferrante's *My Brilliant Friend* and Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* tackle the idea of friendship, childhood, memories and most importantly the perception of the Other. It is interesting to study both the novels from the perspective of subaltern studies. The authors have mixed the idea of friendship with the idea of the threat of the Other. In this manner, children are exposed the workings of the hegemonic group and its fears. The motive of this study is to see the idea of subalternity and the treatment of the subaltern in this special space that the two authors have created.

The two novels either re-affirm or negate the binary opposition that their societies withhold. Binary opposition creates two distinct groups. One is the self and the second group is the, other. (Ochoa, 1996, P.221).

Peggy Ochoa in his article entitled, "The Historical Moments of Postcolonial Writing; Beyond Colonialism's Boundaries" refers to the binary opposition created by

the colonial enterprise. He gives the examples of the, “colonizer versus colonized and definers versus defined ” (Ochoa, 1996, P.221).

Binary opposites re-affirm a sense of dualism. In this system of binary opposites, there exists a hierarchy of ideas. Some words hold a higher social significance than other words. There is a brutal hierarchy established, according to Derrida. (Klages, 2006). Binary opposition exists in the modern world of the character as well. Hosseini’s novel presents the dualism concerning the ideal women and the fallen women. Ferrante’s novel dismantles this dualism. Another dualism that is prominent is that of speech and writing. Both novel touch upon these two activities. Many critics have largely discussed the idea of speech and writing.

Critics such as Derrida have presented their critique on the binary opposition. In his book, *Of Grammatology*, he studies this classification. He says that Western philosophy creates a dualistic perception. It holds the spoken word on a higher pedestal than the written word. This is because the former depicts presence while the latter negates presence. The idea is that, “speech and presence also point to the idea of self, the speaker, as the origin of what is being said.” (Klages, 2006, P. 54). Therefore, speech is more important and it creates the identity of a human being.

It can also be suggested that the first term is the creator while the second term is the creation. This is because of the structure of binary opposition. It places the important action in first place while the second word is of little value.

The cultural dualism that *The Kite Runner* suggests is of racial nature. The distinction between the Pashtuns and Hazara drives the plot of this novel. Amir is torn

off between his loyalties to his group and his loyalty to his friend.

This paper aims to study the deconstruction of numerous forms of representations. The idea of deconstruction stems from the argument that Saussure put forth. According to him, human language operates on the system of differentiation (Culler, 1986). So, the words such women and man operate on the principles of opposition just like the words light and darkness. However, Derrida refers to the idea of a system of arbitrary valuation and devaluation. This means that, "no linguistic or philosophical term can ever be fully valued in the way that metaphysics imply: terms get their value only by difference from other terms" (Durant & Fabb, 1996, P.42).

The critic believes that the two words represent each other. The first word represents a positive quality while the second one is its exact opposite. One example of this is Rich/Poor dualism.

Every society upholds some form of dualism. This means that one entity is preferred over the other. This cultural process of arbitrary valuation and devaluation is unfair as it creates classes of superiority and inferiority. Binary opposition can operate in a multiple of ways. For instance, there is a basic form of dualism that patriarchy produces, that is men/women. The first term is always preferred to the one that comes afterwards. This study aims to analyse the process of dismantling of various binary opposites that exist in a patriarchal setup. It especially studies the way in which the female narrators dismantle the dualism that exists in the society while the male narrators reaffirm the patriarchal binaries. The male narrator propagates the already established binaries such as good woman/bad woman. This is particularly seen in Khaleed Hosseini's novel where

the narrator is adamant in carrying forward the dualism that his society has taught him. However, Ferrante's female characters choose to dismantle the dualism. The traditional method to dismantle the dualism is extensively used in a variety of many novels. In that method, the order of the terms is reversed so that one reads women and men instead of men and women. However, this paper explores another strategy that is involved in the deconstruction process. Ferrante breaks the binary opposites by creating a sense of ambivalence. So instead of putting one elementary term on the pedestal of respect, Ferrante brings everyone side by side on the ground of vulnerability. Moreover, the term which appears first is the one that is subject to most criticism which is the reversal of the ethos of traditional binary opposition that one sees in the mainstream culture. This paper aims to analyze Ferrante's humanities approach to dismantle the dualism that exists in her society. It also establishes that male narrators validate various terms that signify dualism. Omitting the thoughts of female characters and mansplaining also does this. This study also examines that Ferrante doesn't choose to reverse the binaries straightforwardly. She creates an air of ambiguity in the constriction of her characters while eventually dismantling the rigid dualism.

The other group fears the subaltern. This is because of the fact that the subaltern can raise its voice against the people of the status quo. Spivak refers to the idea of strategic essentialism. It is referred to as a, "political strategy" (Morton, 2007, P.126). All the individuals can use their group identity to raise their voice against the hegemonic power. However, both the novels base the action in a child's world. Therefore, their fears are different. Amir, for instance, fears Hassan because he poses a different threat.

Amir fears that his father loves Hassan more. This poses a threat for him because the subaltern holds the potential to enter the center.

This paper studies a major difference better the male narrator and the female narrator in Hosseini's novel *The Kite Runner* and Ferrante's novel *My Brilliant Friend*. Spivak hints that, "knowledge is not innocent and expresses interest of its producers." (Brohi, 2014, P.1). So , when the narrators in both the novels are recounting their childhood experiences of racism, and patriarchal dogmas they are not only replicating the images from their memory that society had fed them but also forming and propagating their own perspectives This paper examines that the female narrator in Ferrante's novel , particularly aims to dismantle these centuries old social hierarchies through her special way of depicting and narrating the neighbor in which she has spends the days of her childhood. It also studies how the narrator in Hosseini's *Kite Runner* re-affirms the social patterns of judgment and dualism that he has been told. Hosseini's is a remarkable craftsman who leaves out some information. For instance, there is little if any presence of an authentic woman's voice in his novel. The narrator, Amir, erases the second term of the male/female binary opposites. Here one feels that women are not thought to be capable enough to share a linguistic space with the male figure. Women in the patriarchal set up are not only otherwise but also erased from the social sphere. This removal of the second figure doubly marginalizes the women. Also, this paper demonstrates that in Asian patriarchal setups women don't even make to the linguistic space that is the part of binary opposition. Hidden behind in veil in public and in the four walls of home, women are denied the right to exist on the same space that the men claim their own. This brutal erasure of women renders them speechless and they are

mis-represented. The paper will study the way in which Amir, the protagonist in *The Kite Runner*, sees women as. His representation of women is largely ill informed and mythical. This is because women were never looked upon and the idea of even comparing men to women is alien to people in closely-knit patriarchal setups.

Connection between Two Novels

Both the authors, Ferrante and Hosseini, study the treatment of the subaltern in a largely divided society. Various studies have depicted the subaltern present in Hosseini's novel. Such as Erwin (2012) suggests an alternative view of the subaltern. He examines how the subaltern is, domesticated in a context. The subaltern here breaks the rigid boundaries of class. However, it is interesting to note how Amir, who is not a subaltern, is dislocated from his group. The rigid class boundaries collapse. However, Amir still tries to hold onto his group identity although he fails miserably. His failure is partly due to the fact that he holds onto the dogmas of his society and he values and affirms the rigid dualism that is taught to him. Ferrante studies the same phenomenon. However, Elena is most different from Amir. She discards the bias that her society has fed her. Even when she becomes successful in her career, she does not obey the principles of binary opposition.

Discussion and Analysis

Society categorizes things and phenomena in a way that is termed as binary opposition. All societies foster a duality of some sort. So, for instance some societies prefer good to evil. Levi Strauss pointed out this way of categorization. He terms it as binary opposition. The system of categorization helps one to analyze the society that is being observed (Chueh, 2004).

Unfair dualism exists in every corner of the world. Both the novels place their character and the primary plot in a world of socio-political chaos. Theirs is the world of increasing strife between a dominant group and a subordinate group. Groups are created on the basis of race and financial standing. The primary factor is most prominent in Hosseini's novel. Amir belongs to a hegemonic group. He has a higher standing in Kabul because he belongs to a ruling group. Hassan, however, is a Hazara. His group has been subject to considerable persecution. Amir's first experience of this unfair dualism is through the academic means. He comes across a book which represents the historical data on the condition of Hazaras in his homeland. He says, "in it, I read that my people... had persecuted and oppressed the Hazaras" (Hosseini, 2003, P.8). He is shocked at this discovery. However, it answers his questions regarding the unfair treatment of Hassan by his friends. He doesn't acknowledge the fact, however, later he uses this idea to advance his own egoistical needs. He does not try to save Hassan from Assef. Later, he plots against Hassan in order to get rid of the boy. He feels that his father respects and loves Hassan more than him. He tries to meet his egoistical desire by unconsciously supporting the racist and devilish actions of Assef.

When one compares Amir's nature to one of Ferrante's characters one sees a major difference. Aamir is propagating the dualistic ideals of his tribal community. He actively divides people into convenient boundaries of good and bad. However, Elena (Ferrante's narrator) rejects this classification. One sees how Amir does not fit in properly within his own people. His group actively shuns him as an outsider because he is not bold enough. His father represents the epitome of Pakhtoon identity to him. However,

Amir says that, “I always felt that Baba hated me a little...the least I could have done was to have had the decency to have turned out a little more like him. But I hadn’t turned out like him. Not at all” (Noor & Hosseini, 2004). This rejection from his hegemonic social group renders deadly consequences for the character and his development as a strong willed character. Aamir relies on upholding the dualism because he feels that he is an outcast. His act of actively supporting the racial bigotry will in the end help him win the support of his people. Alienation and isolation play an important role in deforming the individual’s personality and morality. The individual tries to be more like the group he belongs to and less like himself. Ferrante’s characters reject the dualism. Elena is partially a subaltern and partially belongs to a hegemonic group. Elena is a subaltern because of the way in which critics see the position of subalternity. Gramsci studied the subaltern groups and he, “mentioned two important ones: races that are marginalized as inferior, and women” (Green, 2011, P.252). Elena is marginalized as a woman in a neighborhood that is vastly patriarchal. However, later one sees her emerge as a representative of a hegemonic group. This unidentified group is the educated elite of her neighborhood that holds a powerful position in the neighborhood. Elena has been successful in getting the education that she wanted. She has managed to escape her neighborhood. Ferrante progresses the story in a way that shows that Elena has more success than her friend. However, this sense of superiority is temporary and one sees Ferrante dismantle it gradually. Before moving to this it is important to discuss Derrida’s perception of western dualism. Derrida’s critique on binary opposition is presented in his book. The book entitled of *Grammatology* suggests the different forms of dualism.

Derrida here refers to two distinctively opposite activities. He studies the actions of speech and writing (Klages, 2006). He suggests that in traditional setting speech holds a higher position than writing. It is suggested that, “speech gets privileged over writing because speech gets associated with presence” (Klages, 2006, P.54). Elena who holds a superior position yet she chooses a medium that holds a secondary position. She decides to write about her friend rather than speak about it. She says that, “I turned on the computer and began to write-all the details of our story, everything that still remained in my memory.” (Ferrante, 2012, p.4) The fact that a privileged woman has to resort to the act of writing and not speech (which is seen as a superior medium according to western philosophy) hints that Ferrante will dismantle other ethos as well.

Ferrante’s characters speak in a different way than Hosseini’s characters. Elena does not depict men in the same way as Amir represents women. One sees a minute dualism in Amir’s depiction of the women that he has seen. Amir’s narration re affirms the binary opposition. Binary opposition works in an important way. Traditionally, “the first term is valued over the second term” (Klages, 2006, P.57).

Hosseini’s novel lacks any strong female voice. When Amir speaks of the two women that he has seen in his childhood, he speaks to re-affirm the dualism. He first describes the angel in home persona of his mother. He says in the very beginning of the novel that, “there was a picture of my parent’s wedding night, Baba dashing in his black suit and my mother a smiling young princess in white” (Noor, & Hosseini, 2004).

It is only after this description that he provides the description of the bad women. It is an elaborate description of Hassan’s mother who according to him was a

bad woman. He draws an interesting contrast of the two women and says that, “While my mother hemorrhaged to death during childbirth, Hassan lost his less than a week after he was born. Lost her to a fate most Afghans considered far worse than death: she ran off with a clan of travelling singers and dancers” (Noor, & Hosseini, 2004).

Amir uses the male gaze to depict the world around him. He defines a good woman and a bad woman. This is the only description of women that one finds in the novel. Women are largely missing in the narrative structure. Women are merely depicted by Amir and that too in a largely misogynistic way. His male gaze renders women a fractured identity. It is similar to, “the Freudian Madonna-whore complex, which bifurcates women as either pure saint like creatures or devious, tempting and promiscuous” (Rojos & Michie, 2013, P.204).

A neutral woman appears in the latter half of the story. She is Amir’s wife. She seems strong willed. However, her past is as dark as Amir’s. Her story recounts how she is subject to the same patriarchal subservience as hundreds of thousands of Afghan women. She says that “When we lived in Virginia, I ran away with an Afghan man. I was eighteen at the time... rebellious... stupid, and... he was into drugs... Padar [her father] eventually found us. He showed up at the door and... made me come home. I was hysterical. Yelling. Screaming. Saying I hated him...” (Noor, & Hosseini, 2004).

She seems strong yet she regrets her decisions. She accepts the idea that she was once a, “fallen woman”. She sees her mistake in the same way just as any man would see it. Therefore, she borrows from the male gaze. Ferrante’s women have their own unique and humanistic perspective to things.

The narrator, Elena, defines men and women in a humanistic way. The work is largely female centric yet Ferrante properly represents every man in the neighborhood in a realistic manner. Elena criticizes the way the idea of internalized misogyny works. She believes that, “at home I [she] was my father’s favorite, and my brothers and sisters, too, loved me .The problem was my mother” .(Ferrante, 2012, P.15). She also recounts how her mother instigated her father to beat her because she disobeyed her. Moreover, she represents a fairly civil relationship with her father. She does not categorize the other gender as good or bad but rather neutral. Interestingly, she does not even judge Don Achilles who is feared by all. Don Achilles has earned a bad repute because he loots the town’s people. Elena draws a funny caricature of the Don which is childish but it does humanize the Don. The Don is evil yet he gives the two girls money to buy dolls. Elena has been able to view things in her own way because she does not feel alienated like Amir. She does not have to uphold the societal dogmas in order to gain its approval where Aamir has to. Elena also criticizes the idea of toxic masculinity and how men demeaned other men.

She says that, “all the neighborhood men, my father in the lead, considered him [Sarratore] a womanish man …because he wrote poems and read them willingly to anyone” (Ferrante, 2012, P.10). This disturbs Elena and she criticizes the prominent male gaze.

Aamir values the male gaze. His lack of self-esteem is primarily because of the reason that he cannot uphold his father’s ideals. He says that he was a, “a son who preferred burying his face in poetry Books to hunting... well, that wasn’t how Baba

had envisioned it, I suppose. Real men didn't read poetry--and God forbid they should ever write it! Real men--real boys--played soccer just as Baba had" (Noor, & Hosseini, 2004).

Amir feels guilty for his love for poetry. Poetry was not a man's domain. This dualism that defines gender roles and expectations destroy his self-growth. He feels as an outcast. Therefore, he must do something to re-affirm his identity as an authentic man. Aamir falls prey to Assef ideas. Assef hates Hassan. Amir denies any support to Hassan because that would further put his own identity as a Pashtuns at stake. He must not fight with his own for the other.

Ferrante's characters present a classical situation to study the idea of subalternity. The idea of an intellectual speaking up for the rights of the subaltern is not a new phenomenon. Spivak presented this idea. She says that, "the subaltern cannot speak ...The female intellectual as intellectual has a circumscribed task which she must not disown" (Borella, 2006, P.42) Therefore, it becomes the duty of Elena to represent Lila. Lila is the subaltern who cannot represent herself. It is the duty of Elena to write about her friend and their country. Likewise, it is the duty of Amir to speak for Hassan. Aamir chooses the spoken word instead of writing about his friend. It is also suggested in the novel that Amir lacked the writer's sensibilities. He could not write a good story. Elena however chooses to write. It hints the idea of dismantling of the logo centric approach. Elena values writing while Aamir values speech. The former dismantles the binary opposition that has long plagued the Western philosophy. The idea of placing speech on a higher position and writing on the lower position has long been present in the tradition thought.

Spivak affirms that the subaltern cannot represent itself. However, the intellectuals can represent the subaltern. Spivak also suggests that, "the subaltern does speak when we open up to learning to learn from the subaltern" (Moore & Rivera, 2011, P.187). Elena follows this rule. She, till this day, is willing to learn from Lila. She writes down her story in order to make sense of her personality. She narrates her story in an inquisitive manner. Even when Elena was a child she felt dominated by her friend. Her friend, however, was the social outcast. Elena from her childhood wanted to learn something from this strange friend of hers. Elena says that, "Lila appeared in my life in first grade and immediately impressed me because she was very bad." (Ferrante, 2012, P.14). Elena struggles till this day to understand Lila's strange motives. The former didn't understand why Lila forced her to skip school and go with her out of their neighborhood. Amir's description of Hassan is very different. Amir doesn't intend to learn anything but rather to provide an apt description of the subaltern that was his friend. This further categorizes Hassan as the other.

Fear of the other plays an important role the relationship of the hegemonic group and the other. The subaltern group is not powerful. However, it poses a threat to the people of the status quo. Critics suggest that these people can collaborate a fight against the hegemonic group (Bishop, 2008, P. 146).

However, subalternity in the both novels works differently. The subaltern in both novels is not feared because of the aforementioned threat. The subaltern is feared because it poses a threat to the position of the character and acts as a scapegoat. Amir worries that his father loves Hassan more. He worries that his father's love will be

divided. He worries that the subaltern will cease to exist on the periphery. It will rather take a position in the Centre. Secondly, the subaltern is used as a scapegoat to meet one's own personal agendas. Amir does not stand up against his people because he wants to prove that he is one of them. Likewise, in Ferrante's novel one sees a similar trend. Elena worries that Lila will take up her place. This starts from the classroom setting and ends up in the neighborhood setting. Elena fears that the Lila will eventually become the teacher's favorite. Earlier on Lila was the problem child. However, as soon as the teacher discovers the little girl's potential, the threat of the other coming to the center emerges. Later, Elena feels bad when Lila gets the attention of more men. This threat of the other becomes prominent when Elena says that, "She [Lila] always did the things I was supposed to do, before me and better than me," (Waldman, 2018, P.1). This statement represents the fears of the hegemonic group. It also represents the sense of entitlement that Elena felt. This was of course because of the fact that Lila was perceived as a subaltern.

Elena who is the protagonist of Ferrante's novel chooses a medium that is less appreciated than the spoken word. She chooses to write about her friend. Ferrante's character gives voice to the voiceless through writing. Elena tries to unlearn her privilege. This is the key to understanding and representing the subaltern accurately. Spivak says that one must practice, 'unlearning of our own privilege,' (Porter, 2010, P.155), which, "is a method of working critically back through one's history, prejuice and learned... responses." (Porter, 2010, P.155).

Elena discards the sensory responses that the society gave her. She is instead

driven by her childish curiously as she tries to become friends with a subaltern, Lila. Lila is seen as an outcast in her society and she seems to assume a mysterious persona as she is different from all the other girls. Elena recalls how Lila instilled in her a sense of curiosity and boldness from the very start. She says that, "Lila would thrust her hand and then her whole arm into the black mouth of a manhole, and I, in turn immediately did the same" (Goldstein, 2012, P. 8).

Elena recounts a number of such strange activities that these two girls did in her childhood years. It is interesting to note how these girls put themselves into a danger like this when they were already warned by their parents about the frequent visitation of the angel of death in their neighborhood. Elena says that death is very common in their neighborhood. This curiosity of Elena is a part of the process of her unlearning of the bias and dogmas of her society. She doesn't build walls and divide things as good or bad. Perhaps this is the reason why she is unable to understand the various dimensions to Lila's personality. She considers her as a well-rounded human being who has her flaws and strengths. This is exact opposite to how Amir sees Hassan and women in general. He gives out one-sided depiction of the people he sees and considers them as good or bad. He rejects the grey areas.

Conclusion

The comparative study of *My Brilliant Friend* and *Kite Runner* with a special application of the subaltern theory demonstrates the various dimensions of subalternity. It is implied that the female child in Ferrante's novel blurs the rigid boundaries of time, space and gender. Hosseini's male characters seem to uphold the rigid categories of the society. It

can also be identified that the sense of alienation plays an important role in shaping the perception of children. Hosseini's character Amir feels that he is not a part of his own group. He is a subaltern within his own Pushtoon culture. This sense of alienation with a sense of longing for external validation suggests that individuals that are exposed to alienation and are rejected they seem to uphold the bias of the society more strongly than the individuals that have acquired their group's approval. The study also suggests that Ferrante's female narrator is able to shun the dogmas of the society because she is driven by curiosity. She chooses to study and examine the, "other" from the eyes of a curious observer. One sees this curiosity from the very beginning of the novel. It inculcates an adoptive attitude towards life. The narrator chooses to depict the "other" not as good or bad but as it appears to be. This humanizes the subaltern. On the other hand, Hossieni's male character seems to carry the burden of social rejection throughout the novel. One sees that Amir possesses an unquestioning temperament. He has fixed, rigid beliefs about the superiority of a group over another. They suggest how the children perceive and accept/reject societal norms and values. Therefore, the two texts depict the children's experience of the subalternity and how the two narrators, Elena and Amir, differ in their approach towards the subaltern.

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