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## **AFGHANI AMERICAN LITERATURE AS A PORTRAIT OF THE CONTEMPORARY AFGHAN SOCIETY**

One of the youngest literatures of Asian origin in the USA is Afghan American literature, which development dates back to 1979 and is linked to foreign invasion of Afghanistan and further immigration to the USA. Afghan American literature is contemporary literature written by Americans of Afghan descent. The very term *Afghan* was selected by Ahmad Shah Durrani and means “people who cause suffering,” while the *-istan* means “land” [1, p. 5]. According to “*The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Asian American Literature*”, “the term Afghan American is a post – 9/11 creation. As an American ethnic community, Afghans did not come to speak of themselves as Afghan Americans until post-9/11 required this particular community to voice their opinions and offer their assistance and expertise in the situation in Afghanistan” [1, p. 5]. Afghan American writers spotlight current political and the internal community issues, linguistic unity, ethnicity, war and peace reality. The notable writers of this category are Khaled Hosseini, Mir Tamim Ansary, and Farooka Gauhari. The interest towards the Afghani issues in literature may fluctuate depending upon the political agenda. With the focus shift to the war in Iraq, Afghan topics have been brushed aside for a while. Some writings like “*Come Back to Afghanistan: A California Teenager’s Story*” (2006) by Said Hyder Akbar, with Susan Burton; “*Torn Between*

*Two Cultures: An Afghan American Woman Speaks Out*” (2004) by Maryam Qudrat Aseel; *“A Bed of Red Flowers: In Search of My Afghanistan”* by Nilofar Pazira (Afghan Canadian); and *“My War at Home”* (2006) by Masuda Sultan appeal to the return to Post-Taliban Afghanistan.

The Afghani writings can be grouped as those written by male and female authors with the first Afghani American female writer Farooka Gauhari, a biologist at the University of Nebraska, who delivered a memoir, *“Searching for Saleem: An Afghan Woman’s Odyssey”* (1986), which was linked to the Soviet period in Afghanistan and her subsequent migration. Other female authors whose fiction and non-fiction grew in America are Wajma Ahmady, Sahar Muradi, Khaleda Maqsudi, and Zohra Saed.

Asian American literature can be written by the authors of hybrid background. Thus, a journalist, Mir Tamim Ansary, the son of an Afghan father and an American mother, created a memoir *“West of Kabul, East of New York”* (2002) and a historical novel set in Afghanistan, *“The Malang of Kabul”*, set in the nineteenth-century Anglo-Afghan Wars. While the first works features the contemporary to the author country, the novel dwells on its past.

Afghanistan's contemporary literature has its deep roots in rich heritage of both oral composition and traditionally written texts, which makes it to some extent intertextual. Despite the considerable heritage, left by the American Afghani authors, the most notable critical acclaim has been achieved by the contemporary California-based doctor of Afghan origin Khaled Hosseini. “Born in Kabul, Afghanistan, to a diplomat and high school teacher, Hosseini was an internist from 1994–2006” [1, p. 6]. His novels *“The Kite Runner”* (2002), *“A Thousand Splendid Suns”* (2007), featuring the brotherhood in the first case and the world of Afghan women within the war-torn reality in the second, were on the best-seller list of the *New York Times* for two years. His further novels *“And the Mountains Echoed”* (2013) and *“Sea Prayer”* (2018) also reached a mainstream market.

The topography in the novels by Khaled Hosseini is always linked to Afghani setting. His characters are mono-ethnic and face the challenging both from inside of the closed Afghani Muslim society and the intruding alien forces embodied both by the USSR and the USA. The traditional realias like burqa and hijabs get intervened with the contemporary European elements like red high-heeled shoes and lipstick. The European elements are linked to progress and innovation, as well as destruction. The characters watch the *Titanic* movie, children lose their limbs on the foreign mines and get foreign prosthetic hands and legs, which have to be substituted while they are aging. Thus, on the one hand, the alien culture is beautiful, intriguing and beneficial (e.g. education for women), on the other, it is

robbing and then compensatory. The Afghani society is portrayed as the one ailing with the unhealthy ideas of Taliban, characterized by gender oppression and rigid stratification.

Thus, the Afghani American literature is often self-contemplative and tries to solve the issues inside the society which, being to great extent stuck in its traditions, needs to learn living in the new world.

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### **ДАВНІ БІБЛІОТЕКИ ШИНГЕТТІ – ПЕРЛИНА АРАБСЬКОЇ КУЛЬТУРИ ПОСЕРЕД ПУСТЕЛІ**

Арабська культура багатогранна. Рівень її багатства та різноманітності виходить далеко за межі Хіджазу, де вона зародилася. В той же час арабська культура стрімко поширювалася не лише на сучасний Близький Схід, а й на територію Африки. Завойовницька політика арабських країн також була однією з найголовніших причин поширення арабської культури. Варто відзначити, що чинну роль відіграв іслам, який стрімко знаходив прихильників у нових землях. Можна констатувати, що саме через іслам посеред пустелі Сахара у західній частині теперішньої Мавританії зародилися бібліотеки Шингетті.

Найдавніші пустельні арабській бібліотеки ще є маловідомими в Україні. Постає питання популяризації цих перлин арабської самотньої культури.