



Technical Analysis of the Historical Novel the Conqueror of Isfahan by Nasir Ahmad Arya

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Abstract

Nasir Ahmad Arya has written this research under the title Technical Analysis of the Historical Novel the Conqueror of Isfahan. It thoroughly analyzes and explores the novel, with careful and detailed reading of its various parts. Different technical elements such as suspense, language, character, and plot have been identified based on the theory of novel writing, and relevant examples have been provided. The findings of the research clearly show that these technical elements have been used in a very skillful and artistic manner in the novel. It is evident that these technical elements form the essential and foundational structure of the novel, giving it color, flavor, and depth. The significance of this research lies in the fact that, until now, no one has written about this novel. Thus, it offers new material to future writers and critics, helping them to analyze more accurately and deeply. It also paves the way for further exploration in narrative literature, especially in the field of novels. The conclusion of the research shows that technical elements not only provide structure to the novel but also add artistic flavor and depth. My analysis and exploration of The Conqueror of Isfahan have been based on these foundational elements of novel structure. The research method is bibliographic, and I have used text analysis and critical review methods.

Keywords: Plot, Message, Suspense, Language, Character.

Preface:

It is a well-known fact that life is a story, and a story is life; because if one were to observe human life from the time of Adam until now, it becomes clear that humans have experienced many ups and downs—events that have been preserved only in the form of stories. Often, we find them so extraordinary that we struggle to believe them even when we hear or read about them.

In reality, it is humans who create stories, and it is humans who become the heroes of these stories. They represent the various stages of life, fight against hardships, endure countless difficulties, and refuse to surrender to adversity.

For example, if we reflect on the lives of the friends and saints of God (Allah), we see that all are stories in themselves—some of them even brought the dead back to life. These are events and realities that truly occurred in the lives of the prophets and saints of God (Allah), but now they remain with us only as stories.

Nasir Ahmad Arya writes this article under the title Technical Analysis of the Historical Novel the Conqueror of Isfahan. No matter how much work is done on this topic, it will never grow old. Other researchers may choose to analyze another novel or conduct a study on a different research-based or investigative book. They can explore other fascinating aspects of novels and provide new insights and works to enrich Pashto literature.

Significance of the Research

It is a clear fact that every research must be conducted with a certain value or purpose in mind. Therefore, the significance of my research is as follows:

- To understand the value of the novel in world literature
- To highlight the role and importance of technical elements within a novel
- To demonstrate the literary value of the historical novel *The Conqueror of Isfahan* in Pashto literature
- To explore the technical elements of *The Conqueror of Isfahan*, providing new material for readers and literary critics

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this research are as follows:

1. The main objective of this study is to analyze the technical aspects of Nasir Ahmad Arya's historical novel *The Conqueror of Isfahan*.
2. To understand the message conveyed in Nasir Ahmad Arya's *The Conqueror of Isfahan*.
3. To analyze the element of suspense in the novel.
4. To understand the use of language in the novel.
5. Another objective is to understand the role of character in *The Conqueror of Isfahan*.

Research Questions

1. What is the message of the historical novel *The Conqueror of Isfahan*?
2. What role does suspense play in *The Conqueror of Isfahan*?
3. What role do characters play in *The Conqueror of Isfahan*?
4. What are the technical features of *The Conqueror of Isfahan*?

Research Methodology

After selecting the title, I developed a mental framework. Then I read the historical novel *The Conqueror of Isfahan* and identified the key elements mentioned above. Each part was carefully analyzed and examined in depth, and the research was completed based on my own interpretation and analysis.

The type of my research is bibliographic, and I have used the method of textual analysis and exploration.

Background of the Research

Many books have been written about novels, and numerous studies have been conducted, offering new information and theories. However, these studies are still ongoing. In Pashto literature, only a handful of works have been written, and specifically, no complete book has been dedicated to the technical elements of the novel. In some books, discussions have been made regarding the definition and identification of certain elements, but no comprehensive analysis has been done.

Main Text of the Research:

The Definition of Novel in Linguistic and Terminological Terms

The word "novel" is derived from the Italian term *novella*, which first entered the English language and literature, then moved to Urdu, and later to Pashto literature. In linguistic terms, the word "novel" conveys the meaning of something new, strange, and fresh in various cultures. In literary terms, a novel is a narrative or story that is longer than a short story but shorter than a romance. It must have a structured plot, with primary and secondary characters. (Hashemi, 145, 1395)

However, the same linguistic root in our languages (Pashto and Dari) also carries the meaning of something new (in Persian, the term refers to something novel or new). As a literary term, the novel, like other forms of narrative literature, does not have a fixed definition that has been universally accepted by scholars. Literary scholars have defined the novel based on its characteristics, offering different definitions. Some definitions are similar, while others highlight specific differences. The following definitions are considered more comprehensive for the novel:

- A novel is a prose story that portrays life's connected issues with a new, strange, and fascinating atmosphere, full of curiosity.
- A novel is a prose story that is longer than a short story but shorter than a romance.
- A novel is a creative and literary work that analyzes characters within a social context.
- A novel is a prose narrative, typically the length of a book, that presents characters and events in a manner that can resemble real life. (Omar, 5, 1394)
- A novel is a prose narrative where the subject matter is human life, and the writer presents various aspects of life in a complete and distinct order.

In general, the novel is a new and advanced form of storytelling. It is a fictional story, presented in prose, that depicts an imaginary world or event that may seem realistic. (Omar, 17, 1394)

The Novel as Defined by Additional Literary Scholars: The term "novel" is borrowed from the Italian language, where it refers to stories and tales. Literally, it means something new or a new narrative genre that does not differ significantly from a story. However, in terms of structure, it has a unique framework, plot, or characterization. (Rafiq, 66, 1397)

Scholars have offered various definitions concerning the term *novel*, and many differing opinions have been presented. However, most of these share common points. In summary, we can say:

A novel is an advanced form of storytelling, a distinctive genre of artistic prose in which social events are presented in a way that is close to reality and truth. By truth, it does not mean that the event occurred exactly as depicted in the novel, but rather that these are hypothetical events that could have happened or might happen in real life. (Rashidi, 134, 1397)

The Novel Writing Process in Pashto Literature

It has been established in literary research that the novel, in its current form and meaning, was first introduced to Pashto literature through translation from Urdu. Among the earliest translated novels are *Naqsh-e-Nakin* by Mia Haseeb Gul Kakakhil in 1293 AH and *Toba al-Nasuh* in 1950 AD, translated by Muhammad Yusuf. These novels were originally written by the famous Urdu writer Nazir Ahmad. Later, Pashto writers became familiar with this genre and made significant contributions in the field.

The first Pashto writer to experiment with novel writing was Syed Rahat Zakhili, who earned the distinction of being the first novelist, similar to a short story writer. His first novel, *Naul de Mah Rukhe*, was written in 1910 AD and later published by the Kabul University Press in 1363 AH (190 pages). The novel was incomplete, and the author intended to expand the story, but due to life's other commitments, he was unable to write the remaining parts.

This marked the beginning of novel writing in southern Pashto regions. For a long time (until 1950 AD), there was no significant development in novel writing or publication. However, in 1950 AD, Sahibzada Muhammad Idris's novel *Pighla* was published, and it could be considered the first complete novel in Pashto literature. Six years later, in 1957 AD, Ashraf Durrani published his novel *Zarkay's Eyes*, and in the same year, Hamza Shinwari's written novel was also published. At this point, novel writing in Afghanistan began to flourish, initially through translations, and later many Pashto writers began experimenting with the genre, contributing to its development and enriching their language and literature.

In Pashto literary studies, it has been noted that Professor Abdul Hai Habibi had translated the great novel *Les Misérables* by Victor Hugo into Pashto, and it was published in *Tole Afghani* in 1311 AH under the name *Biyozlan* (The Poor). However, it is now clear that it was not translated directly from the original Pashto, but rather from the Persian text with slight changes in words.

The first original novel written in Pashto was *Patta Meena* (Hidden Love) by Burhanuddin Kashki, published in 1317 AH. In 1318 AH, the same author's *Polisi Naul* (*The Hidden Investigation*) was translated, and in the same

year, Muhammad Rafiq Qani's novel *Dwah Sarah Meen Warona (Two Loving Brothers)* was published. Around the same time, Noor Muhammad Taraki's *Be Tarbita Zoy (The Undisciplined Son)* was published in *Kabul Magazine*.

After this, novel writing received little attention until 1958 AD when Qateel Khogyani's novel *Dwah Yaran (Two Friends)* was published in Nangarhar. Notably, Noor Muhammad Taraki's novels, such as *Bango Safari*, *Chira*, *Spin*, and *Sangsar*, became significant in the development of novel writing in Pashto literature. Currently, we still have strong and renowned novelists whose works are complete and accurate in literary and artistic terms, such as the novels written by Shapoon Saib like *Sheen Taghi*, *Gatiyali*, and *Samche Yaran*. Some literary researchers have categorized novels into the following general types based on their subject matter: Romantic or Love Novels, Social Novels, Historical Novels, Political Novels, Detective Novels, Scientific Novels, Psychological or Emotional Novels, Erotic Novels, Reformist Novels, and Ideological Novels. (Hashemi, 114, 1395)

The Language of the Novel *The Conqueror of Isfahan*

Language holds immense value and significance for narrative literature. The language of a story should be smooth, easily understandable, and simple, enabling the reader to easily grasp its meaning and achieve the intended purpose. The language of the story should be standard, literary, and descriptive, ensuring that readers can quickly reach the message and be impacted by it. Literary and descriptive language plays a crucial role in storytelling, enhancing the beauty of the novel and making it more appealing. Descriptive language increases the artistic value and beauty of a novel and encourages readers to engage with it. It deeply impacts the reader's emotions.

In *The Conqueror of Isfahan*, the author has applied great care and attention in the use of language. Even though the novel is written in the Kandahari dialect, with some words and expressions in pure Kandahari, it has been largely successful. The language in the novel is mostly simple, understandable, and smooth. The descriptive language used is so vivid that readers could read the novel multiple times a day without growing tired of it. Although the novel is written in the Kandahari dialect, it is widely known that the Kandahari dialect of Pashto is sweet, and readers are often drawn to read it again and again.

The language in *The Conqueror of Isfahan* is simple and understandable. Any member of society, even those with basic literacy, can easily comprehend it and read it without difficulty, thus grasping the intended message. However, the author predominantly uses words from the Kandahari dialect. It would be even better if, in future novels, the author could incorporate the standard and widely accepted words in addition to the pure Kandahari words within quotation marks, ensuring greater accessibility.

Let's read a few paragraphs from the novel to appreciate its sweet language:

A few paragraphs from the novel:

"Not long after, when Sher Ali arrived, he first looked at the clothes, and then turned to Ridi, saying with a wry smile:

'It seems you didn't enjoy it?'

Ridi looked at the clothes.

'No, sir! It's not that, but...'

He fell silent. Sher Ali, without saying anything, turned to him with a knowing look:

'You see, I'm on my way, so I didn't feel the need.'

"When Ridi performed the evening prayer, Sher Ali entered the room. He had clothes in his hand. Before greeting, he gave Ridi a gentle smile:

'You must be from Isfahan! Yesterday, the soldiers raided several places. They even captured some Afghans.'

(Arya, 1395, p. 17)

When we look at this novel and its language, it is clear that the language of "*The Conqueror of Isfahan*" is not only sweet and delightful, but the author has effectively utilized the characteristics of the Kandahari dialect. As mentioned above, certain words like "Nafs-e-Tang Su" instead of "Nafs-e-Tang Sho" and "Khar Ghondai Su" where "Sho" is replaced by "Su" are characteristic of the Kandahari dialect. Additionally, words like "Maul"

(instead of "Mawil") and "Roghbar" (used instead of "Stari Mashi" for greeting) are commonly used in the Kandahari dialect, highlighting the charm and nature of the language.

The author's greatest effort is to present such words and expressions in a simple, fluent, and easily understandable language. This ensures that the reader can easily access the content of the novel and grasp its message. Often, writers get caught up in using complex words and expressions, attempting to distance their work from the simple understanding of the public. However, the author of *The Conqueror of Isfahan* has found the art of presenting language in simplicity. They have managed to create an art form in simple, fluent words that people can understand and enjoy.

The art of literature is also in simple language because language should not only align with the understanding of the reader, but also convey some form of appeal and art. When language is presented in a simple and fluent manner, it not only conveys the message to the reader but also evokes a sense of understanding, impact, and pleasure in their heart. The author of *The Conqueror of Isfahan* has fully understood this art and executed it in this novel. His writing is for the people of society, and his art lies in this simple and fluent language.

Suspense in *The Conqueror of Isfahan* Historical Novel

Suspense is one of the essential elements of narrative literature, especially for novels, and holds great value. It drives the plot forward, adds artistry and beauty to the story, and enhances the enjoyment of reading. Without suspense, a novel would simply be ordinary prose, which may only be a pleasant read but wouldn't capture the reader's full attention. Suspense is crucial in a novel—if it is absent, a gap forms between the story and the reader, leading to a decrease in the novel's readership and diminishing its value.

The author of the novel must be very careful and meticulous in this regard. The beginning of the novel should be crafted in a way that draws readers in and keeps them engaged until the end. The novel should consistently contain elements of suspense, keeping readers intrigued throughout. Some authors start their stories with dry, rigid words that either lose the essence of the novel or reduce the number of readers. Many writers fail to maintain the tension and suspense in their work until the very end, and, if necessary, they break the suspense or resolve the tension too early, in a manner that resembles climbing a mountain peak, making it impossible for readers to easily descend back into the story.

In *The Conqueror of Isfahan*, the author uses suspense to maintain the reader's interest and to ensure that the plot moves forward without losing its charm. The art of weaving suspense into the narrative is essential to creating an engaging and thought-provoking experience for the reader, and this novel successfully incorporates that element.

Suspense in *The Conqueror of Isfahan* Historical Novel

As every story has three parts—beginning, middle, and end—the author must approach these parts with great care and attention to ensure the story is meaningful to society and provides value to the reader. The author should begin the story with words that provoke various questions in the reader's mind. At the start, the author should not reveal everything, because once the topic is clear, the reader may lose interest and stop reading the novel.

A key element in writing a story is the mental stimulation or suspense that the author creates within the story. The author must work to make this part strong and impactful, as it determines the value and significance of the story. When readers have questions, they are compelled to keep reading to find the answers.

The author should begin the novel in a way that keeps the readers hooked until the end, and this can only be achieved through suspense. In *The Conqueror of Isfahan*, the author has made an effort to start the novel in a way that keeps the reader engaged throughout. When I started reading *The Conqueror of Isfahan*, I encountered many questions, which made me rush through the book in order to reach my answers and read further.

The Conqueror of Isfahan is a complete novel in terms of suspense, with every section filled with suspense. Every part of the novel confronts the reader with suspense, making it impossible to stop reading.

In one part of the novel, we read:

"In the final months of 1721, rumors spread about Shah Mahmood Hotak's attack on the Safavid Empire of Isfahan. These rumors, while sparking debates among the people of the city, also made the Safavid government view every foreigner as a potential spy or informant from the Afghan government.

In the last month of that year, on an evening, a group of people gathered in the narrow streets of a wealthy neighborhood in Isfahan. Everyone stood frozen in the street, staring at the soldiers on horseback who were stationed at the end of the alley. The horses were struggling to control their mounts, their chests puffed up as they took quick, tense steps.

A young man, hiding behind a corner, turned his eyes away from the horses and whispered to an elderly man next to him:

"The Shah's elite guards are here!"

The old man turned again to the horses and murmured, 'It seems something bad has happened!... I don't remember ever seeing them in this area.'

The young man nodded in agreement, adding, 'The street is also blocked from the back.'"

In this passage from *The Conqueror of Isfahan*, the presence of suspense from beginning to end keeps the reader engaged. The novel is designed in such a way that every section raises questions, making the reader continue to the next page. The suspense is so strong at the start that it forces the reader to read on until the end. After finishing the novel, all questions are answered, and the entire credit for this intricate design goes to the author, Arya.

Character in *The Conqueror of Isfahan* Historical Novel

Character is also one of the fundamental elements of narrative literature and is considered the backbone of a novel. A novel cannot be written without characters, as they are the ones who create the events and story through their actions and dialogue. These characters face challenges and obstacles, and despite falling and struggling, they continue their journey towards their goal (Dranai, 31, 1395).

Regarding the importance of characters, Ajmal Shkli writes in his literary work *Adabi Zoya* that "in the world of fiction, priority is given to the characters, the importance of the events comes second. They understand that an event affects the reader's mind much less than a character does." Many good stories and novels are forgotten, but the character's personality remains unforgettable, and we remember the story because of that character's exceptional portrayal (Shkli, 136, 1394).

When an author writes a novel, they must create characters that have a positive influence on the reader and leave the impression that the reader sees the story unfold through vivid images or even through their own eyes. A character in a novel creates or completes a story through their actions, which in turn leads to the conclusion, prompting readers or listeners to pass judgment on them.

As Dr. Hanif Khalil states: "The events that happen to people, affect people, and are connected to people are what we call novel characters or, in general, 'kirdar'" (Khalil, 178, 2016).

In a novel, besides the main characters, there are also secondary characters. These secondary characters appear alongside the main characters to complete the narrative, but the primary characters are those that are involved in the story from beginning to end. Secondary characters are introduced when needed, and they are not consistently present in all parts of the story.

In *The Conqueror of Isfahan*, there are a few secondary characters whose roles are very limited in the overall story, and the events related to these secondary characters are short and only present in one or two brief scenes. They are not involved in most of the novel.

The author of *The Conqueror of Isfahan* has used characters that readers feel they are familiar with, as if they have lived alongside them. Arya's characters are grounded in the real world and speak the language and exhibit the manners of common people. These characters are so relatable that they almost seem tangible, meaning they are not far removed from reality.

The author has given these characters different traits, making them alive in the reader's mind. While many novels may be set in contemporary, ancient, or medieval times, and often use a fictional or imaginary approach, Arya's historical novel is grounded in reality. His characters are believable and relatable. They are real, and their lives reflect the society they belong to. This approach makes the novel appealing to readers from all walks of life, with very few criticisms of the characters.

In *The Conqueror of Isfahan*, the central character is Redi, an Afghan, a merchant, and a man loyal to his homeland and love. These qualities are well depicted in the novel. As previously mentioned, secondary characters play a crucial role in helping the story develop, but the central character's traits are key to

understanding who they are, whether they are simple or educated, cruel or kind, rural or urban, honest or deceitful. These questions are answered as the story progresses.

The author has wonderfully incorporated Redi's characteristics into the novel, making it engaging for the reader. The narrative is presented in a way that makes the reader feel as though they are experiencing everything through the characters' eyes.

Let's read a small passage from *The Conqueror of Isfahan*:

"It was evening, and Redi was sitting on the high roof of the orange palace. His eyes were fixed on the sprawling fields and orchards bathed in the sunset light. Lost in thoughts of his uncertain future, he was suddenly interrupted by a deep male voice from behind:

'Has Redi arrived?'

He turned around. It was Shah Mahmood. He waved his hand towards him with a slight smile: 'Your Excellency! I am honored to meet you, please come.'

After the formalities and greetings, Shah Mahmood moved to a large circular cushion, twisted his dark beard with his fingers, and looked at Redi:

'Is everything well? You seem to have been delayed.'

Redi cleared his throat, adjusted his neck, and began telling him some stories of Isfahan's troubles. After sharing the stories, he fell silent and looked up at the distant mountain peaks."

From this passage, we can see how the central character is portrayed—his personality, his thoughts, and his presence in the scene. As the novel progresses, we learn more about Redi and his character, and through dialogues, we understand more about his inner world. The dialogue reflects his social standing, his character traits, and his responses to events, which connect him deeply with the audience.

In conclusion, the characters in *The Conqueror of Isfahan* are vivid and alive, making the reader feel as though they are part of the world the novel creates. The clear differentiation between main and secondary characters and the way the author uses them to develop the story is a key feature that enhances the novel's depth and engagement.

The Message in *The Conqueror of Isfahan* Historical Novel

Every piece of writing serves a purpose and has an underlying goal or message. This message becomes a reality when the author uses their imaginative power to convey it to the reader or listener. Since the scope of a novel is vast, the message is often delivered across various sections of the story. It is essential for the author to effectively present their emotions and passion to the audience. As novels are written with a specific purpose, it is crucial that the author pays close attention to ensure that their message is conveyed effectively to the reader.

Some authors, when writing novels, may do so without a clear purpose, and the narrative may meander aimlessly. Such novels fail to capture the reader's interest and, ultimately, lose their impact. A story with a clear objective is far more engaging and meaningful. Without a goal, a novel risks becoming dull and lifeless. However, *The Conqueror of Isfahan* stands out as a historical novel with a powerful message. The author, Arya, delivers various important messages to the Pashtun society, particularly focusing on themes of loyalty to one's homeland, the defense of one's values, and the protection of honor and dignity.

The central message of the novel revolves around patriotism, sacrifice, and resilience in the face of adversity. The characters, particularly Redi, are willing to make the ultimate sacrifices—risking their lives for the preservation of their homeland and the values they hold dear. The author masterfully weaves these themes into the narrative, showing how these values are fundamental to the characters' decisions and actions.

A good writer is one who, when writing, does not just create for personal gain or for self-promotion but aims to send a message that resonates with the reader and has social relevance. In this regard, *The Conqueror of Isfahan* can be seen as a novel that not only entertains but also imparts significant messages to society about patriotism, loyalty, and the importance of defending one's values. Arya delivers these messages in an artistic and impactful manner, and his novel encourages readers to reflect on the importance of loyalty to one's country, family, and heritage.

In one poignant section of the novel, we see the internal struggle of Redi and his commitment to his homeland and loved ones. The emotional depth of this moment speaks volumes about the values of duty, sacrifice, and honor. Here is a passage from *The Conqueror of Isfahan*:

"Redi was looking at the crowd in front of the orange palace. Suddenly, the crowd became restless, and a man emerged from the mass, heading towards their fortress. Redi looked at Zainabi, and she turned her face away. He noticed the tears on her cheeks. As he passed, he gently wiped the tear streaks from her face with his fingers and said:

'Zainabi, patience and courage are needed.'

Her crying grew louder, and in a trembling voice, she said:

'You're going to war... war devours lives!'

She covered her face with her hands and continued, her voice choked with emotion:

'Who will endure hunger, thirst... poverty... suffering? But in this... how... how can one endure...?'

Her words were overwhelmed by her sobs.

Redi's throat tightened. He kissed her forehead, and they made their way down from the castle tower. He unfastened the reins of his horse and took a bundle containing his armor, sword, arrows, and other weapons. He held his parents' hands and left the castle."

This scene is deeply emotional, as it highlights the character's internal conflict between love and duty. Zainabi's tears and Redi's resolve reflect the sacrifices that individuals often make for their country, values, and loved ones. The pain of separation and the uncertainty of war are palpable, yet the unwavering commitment to protect one's homeland stands at the forefront.

In this passage, we see how the author conveys a powerful message about the cost of defending one's honor and values. Redi, despite his personal sorrow, is determined to fulfill his duty, even if it means facing death. This is a common theme throughout the novel: the willingness to sacrifice for the greater good of the nation and to protect the honor of one's family and community.

The Conqueror of Isfahan also emphasizes the responsibility of the younger generation to safeguard their culture and traditions. Arya portrays this duty as a sacred obligation, urging the youth to rise up and defend their homeland, even at great personal cost. The novel's message is clear: the defense of one's values, country, and honor is a noble cause, one that requires courage, sacrifice, and resilience.

In conclusion, *The Conqueror of Isfahan* is not just a historical novel; it is a powerful narrative with profound messages for society. Through the struggles of its characters, the novel addresses themes of patriotism, sacrifice, and loyalty, encouraging readers to reflect on the importance of defending their values and heritage. Arya's masterful storytelling ensures that these messages are effectively communicated, leaving a lasting impact on the reader.

The Plot in *The Conqueror of Isfahan*

The term "plot" refers to the structure or framework of a story, the underlying blueprint that holds the narrative together. In essence, the plot is the skeleton of a story, upon which the flesh of events, character development, and dialogue is added. The plot dictates how the events unfold and how the characters interact with one another within the context of the narrative. It is crucial for the plot to be well-constructed, as it ensures the story's coherence and flow. As discussed in literary theory, the plot is what connects the different events and incidents of the novel logically, making them feel meaningful and purposeful.

In the case of *The Conqueror of Isfahan*, the plot is constructed effectively, ensuring that the story progresses in a way that is both believable and engaging. The author, Nasir Ahmad Arya, has clearly worked to minimize the use of random or contrived events (also known as "coincidences"), which can weaken the narrative. The fewer the coincidences, the more the reader can trust the story and become immersed in it. By doing so, Arya strengthens the realism of the novel, making the actions and events feel natural and inevitable, rather than forced.

In many parts of *The Conqueror of Isfahan*, Arya utilizes a technique where he elongates certain scenes to provide the reader with a more vivid image of the events, rather than rushing through them. This technique allows the reader to visualize the scene in greater detail, creating a more immersive experience. For example, a

battle scene or a moment of intense emotional exchange is given room to breathe, allowing the reader to grasp its significance and the emotions of the characters involved.

One of the strengths of the plot in *The Conqueror of Isfahan* is the careful balance between action and introspection. In many historical novels, events can sometimes feel rushed or underexplored, but Arya takes the time to elaborate on the emotional and psychological effects of the events on the characters. In a notable scene, Redi, the central character, reflects on the cost of war and the importance of sacrifice. This moment is not just a description of action but also a reflection on the deeper implications of the battle and the price of defending one's country.

Take, for instance, the following passage:

"Redi had lost his leader in the battle. When Shah Mahmood inquired about the losses, Redi responded, 'Your Excellency! We came to war, and war demands lives...'

Shah Mahmood nodded gravely and said, 'You speak the truth... war does demand lives, but a leader must always keep his own head, for the lives of his soldiers are like his own. If he does so, he will gain not just their heads, but their respect.'"

This scene, though relatively simple, is an example of Arya's ability to balance action with philosophical reflection. The dialogue not only moves the story forward but also provides insight into the values of leadership and sacrifice. Arya could have summarized this moment in a few sentences, but by expanding it, he allows the reader to engage more deeply with the themes of duty, leadership, and the harsh realities of war.

The author's careful handling of the plot ensures that the events and their progression feel logical and interconnected. Each scene leads naturally into the next, and the various characters' actions and motivations are carefully considered within the larger framework of the story. This thoughtful construction helps to maintain the reader's engagement, as they can follow the events without feeling disconnected or confused.

Overall, the plot in *The Conqueror of Isfahan* is well-developed and carefully crafted. Arya has structured the events in a way that not only keeps the reader interested but also invites them to reflect on the deeper meaning behind the actions and decisions of the characters. By minimizing coincidences and maximizing emotional and narrative depth, the plot becomes a strong foundation upon which the rest of the story is built. The events, characters, and themes are seamlessly woven together, making for a compelling and thought-provoking read.

Conclusion:

The Conqueror of Isfahan is a historical novel that artistically presents the values, historical facts, and bravery of the Afghans. This novel not only focuses on historical events but also portrays various aspects of Pashtun life. Nasir Ahmad Arya, through this novel, effectively communicates the national and Islamic values of the Afghans, such as defending their homeland, sacrifice, loyalty, bravery, and love, in a highly impactful and artistic manner.

The thematic aspect of *The Conqueror of Isfahan* not only highlights historical facts but also addresses the social and cultural issues within Pashtun society. The actions and dialogues of the novel's characters provide a true depiction of Pashtun culture and values. The author skillfully presents these values as an essential part of the story, making the Afghan spirit and commitment to their country genuinely appear to the readers.

Although writing historical novels in Pashto literature is a relatively new endeavor, Arya, through this novel, portrays Pashtun history and culture in a profound and artistic way. In fact, *The Conqueror of Isfahan* not only examines historical and social issues important to Pashtuns but also takes a significant step in expanding the readers' knowledge and understanding of these subjects.

Overall, *The Conqueror of Isfahan* is not just a historical story but also a depiction of Pashtun culture, values, and bravery, which show cases the dedication and sacrifices of this society in an excellent way for its readers.

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