

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Reason for Choosing the Topic

*A Thousand Splendid Suns* is a novel that has changed the views of many people in the world by successfully telling the story of women's lives in Afghanistan, women's rights, and how badly the impact of the decades-long war there. This novel was written by an Afghan-American author, Khaled Hosseini, and published in 2007. This novel is Hosseini's second work. Previously, he succeeded in publishing the *Kite Runner* novel in 2003 and managed to gain worldwide recognition for his outstanding story.

Not much different from *Kite Runner*, this *A Thousand Splendid Suns* novel received a lot of attention and awards. This book earned widespread critical acclaim upon publication and received favorable prepublication reviews from *Kirkus Reviews*, *Publishers Weekly*, *Library Journal*, and *Booklist*. It is the *#1 New York Times Bestseller* for fifteen weeks and was awarded the *Indies Choice Book Award for Adult Fiction*. *The Washington Post* calls it, "A brave, honorable, big-hearted book." During its first week on the market, it sold over one million copies. *Columbia Pictures* purchased film rights in 2007 and confirmed intentions to create a movie adaptation of the book. The first theatrical adaptation of the book premiered on February 1, 2017, at *The American Conservatory Theater* in San Francisco, California.

Based on the evidence above, this novel is one of the most valuable works in the world so that many studies have examined this novel. However, from the research that the researchers conducted, the studies that have been carried out are mostly in the areas of feminism and psychoanalysis. Even if there are studies that use other approaches, they are very rare and even tend to be difficult to find. Meanwhile, to understand message the author of this novel wants to convey, it is necessary to carry out several other studies outside the area of Feminism and Psychoanalysis. For this reason, the researcher decided to study the novel by

examining how the setting influenced the characterization of the characters in the *A Thousand Splendid Suns* novel.

Both characterization and setting are intrinsic elements in the novel. Intrinsic elements are elements that exist in the body of a literary work. Without an intrinsic element, a literary work will not be well-formed. In other words, the intrinsic element is the basic foundation of literary works. The intrinsic elements in the novel consist of themes, characters, plot, setting, characterizations, points of view, and mandates. However, researchers will only focus this research on the relationship between characterization and setting only.

## **1.2 The Objective and Scope of the Study**

The objective of this research is to analyze presentment of the relationship between the main characters and the settings. The writer begin this research by finding out and analyzing how the main characters work in characterization. Furthermore, there are two specific points of this research as follows:

1. To describe and analyze main characters characterization in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* novel by Khaleed Hosseini.
2. To describe settings and analyze how the settings form main characters in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* novel by Khaleed Hosseini.

## **1.3 Formulation of the Problem**

There were several problems contained in this novel, but to specify this research, the writer decides to reveal the characterization of the main characters and how the settings work to form the main characters. The writer choose to analyze it, to answer several questions:

1. How are the characters represented in the novel?
2. How do the settings form the characters?

## 1.4 Review of Related Literature

### 1.4.1 Previous Studies

Since its release in 2007, the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* has garnered positive criticism and acclaim. In the academic field, this novel does not escape the discussion raised in research and thesis in various countries. The following are some examples of research that have emerged from this novel.

Laili Agustina, Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta (2012) *Against Patriarchy In Khaled Hosseini's A Thousand Splendid Suns (2007) Novel: A Feminist Approach*. The main problem of this study is how to fight the patriarchy that is reflected in the novel. This study aims to analyze the novel based on its structural elements and feminist analysis. The research results are as follows. First, from the structural analysis of the novel, it shows that Khaled Hosseini wants to illustrate and convey his ideas about how women are subordinated and exploited in a patriarchal culture and how to speak out against patriarchy. Second, based on a Feminist Approach. The conclusion is that there is something contrary to patriarchy in this novel and emphasizes that female characters can break the types of positions, rights, roles and participation of women categorized by patriarchal culture. Therefore, the ability of women to speak out against patriarchy is categorized as a feminist attitude.

Hanna Fauzia Agus, Padang State University (2012) *Constructing a Woman's Space in the novel a Thousand Splendid Suns (2007) by Khaled Hosseini*. This thesis is an analysis of the text (literary work) of the novel to see to what extent this novel shows the constructs that shape the limitations of women's movement, especially in the public sphere and how far the contribution of literary elements such as characters, conflicts and settings is to reveal construction methods. The analysis is based on text and context-based approaches that are linked to the theory of women's

sphere by Kate Millet and Barbara Welter. The results of the analysis show that there are two ways used in constructing women's movement space, namely indoctrination and violence (physical and mental).

Nurul Istiqomah, Jogjakarta State University (2015) *Women's Attitudes toward Gender Discrimination in Khaled Hosseini's A Thousand Splendid Suns*. This study aims to identify the types of gender discrimination faced by women and to analyze women's attitudes towards gender discrimination in novels. By using feminist literary criticism, the analysis of this novel then found two results. First, related to four types of gender discrimination faced by female figures. They are (1) violence: sexual, psychological, and physical violence; (2) subordination: women are isolated in remote places, boys are preferred over women, women are forced to marry, women's dress styles are restricted, women's mobility is restricted, and women are treated unfairly in polygamy; (3) stereotypes: stupid women and submissive women; and (4) marginalization: from health facilities and from education. The second result relates to women's attitudes towards discrimination. Influenced by many factors, the three female characters show different attitudes. Nana shows her acceptance by having no resistance towards the bully Jalil, taking her anger out on Jalil's children, and being self-destructive. Meanwhile, Mariam and Laila show their struggles by working in a fraternity to escape Kabul, fight against bully Rasheed, and use education to end discrimination.

Sumiati, State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga Jogjakarta (2015) studied *Mariam's Personality in Facing External Conflict as Seen in A Thousand Splendid Suns*. This research focuses on analyzing one main character, Mariam, in dealing with external conflicts. As a qualitative study, this study aims to find out the external conflicts experienced by Mariam's character, what are the causes of the external conflicts she experiences and how her personality is in responding to these conflicts. Analysis of external conflict in this study uses the psychoanalytic theory of Sigmund Freud; personality structure consisting of id, ego and superego.

In this study, the author found that the main character in this novel experienced several conflicts, including Mariam's conflict with her mother, Mariam's conflict with her husband and Mariam's conflict with existing social naturalists. Researchers also found several conflict factors, including pressure and humiliation when Mariam was a child and when she was older. He is always ridiculed as Harami which means illegitimate child. Another cause of conflict was her husband who committed domestic violence and sexual violence. Under the pressure Mariam endured, she finally killed her husband to save his life.

Fidelia Fitri, Malang University (2016) studied *Psychoanalytic Study of Mariam's Character in Novel A Thousands Splendid Suns*. Researchers have an interest in realizing that the unique personality of a story character in this novel is Mariam who is still closely related to her childhood experiences. In order to be able to analyze the relationship between Mariam's childhood and her adult personality, the researcher puts forward several salient aspects of the character's childhood and then explains, using psychoanalytic theory, in what ways these aspects affect her adult personality. In addition, the researcher also uses Freud's ideas about three psychic structures, namely the id, ego, and superego in the analysis process. This idea proved effective in understanding the uniqueness of Mariam's character personality, especially in understanding why the character exhibits certain behaviors. In this thesis, it can be concluded that the childhood of Mariam's character is very much related to her adult personality, and it is very potential for the character's childhood to be the main cause of the character's introverted and obedient personality, as well as the character's tendency to punish himself. These findings prove that even though Mariam's character is a representation of Afghan women, personal experiences from the character's childhood also play a big role in shaping her personality and individuality as a story character.

Stefani Amanda Anggi Riany, Sanata Dharma University (2017) *The Impact of Opressions toward Women Seen through Two Women*

*Characters in Khaled Hosseini's A Thousand Splendid Suns.* By using psychoanalysis, this study tries to see the impact of oppression on women. There are two problems formulated to be discussed during this research. The first is the oppression experienced by the two female characters in this novel. The second is what repression has had on the character. Using Iris Young's concept of oppression, it is found that the two characters experience some bullying in the form of violence and helplessness. In further analysis, using the basic concept of psychological criticism from Lois Tyson, it was found that these figures indicated an indication of three main problems as a result of the oppression they experienced. Furthermore, by using Pablo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, it is found that there is a change in the character's characterization. From the analysis, it can be concluded that bullying has an impact on Mariam and Laila's character.

From some of the research examples above, the study of the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is dominated by feminism and psychoanalytic studies. This is because this work does have themes related to things that are close to it. Meanwhile, there has not been a single research that has focused on the relationship between character and setting. Research conducted by Fidelia Fitri (2016) is a study that focuses only on the personality of one character, namely Mariam with her childhood. This study succeeded in finding two adult traits of Mariam (introverted and obedient) which were influenced by one setting: childhood alone. In addition, this research was conducted with a psychoanalytic approach.

As previously explained, this study examines two intrinsic elements in the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, namely the main characters and settings. This study uses structuralism theory which studies the relationship between these two elements and how one element affects the other. Next leads to how the setting shapes the character of the main characters.

## 1.4.2 Theoretical Framework

This research studies characters in relation to setting in the novel. It discusses how settings form characters; attitudes. The study discusses relationship between setting and character in order to find out the traits and settings which shape the traits of the characters. Novel is the author's imaginative work which is composed through intrinsic elements. The intrinsic elements are in the form of theme, plot, characters, characterization, settings, and message. All these intrinsic elements have a very close relationship and are related to one another (Bressler, 1999).

This research studies the relationship of intrinsic elements, that is the relationship of characters and settings. Based on Bressler (1999), the research applies structuralism approach. The approach is supported by the theory of character, setting, and relationship between character and setting. The research uses theory of Roberts (1999) and Abrams (1981) to discuss characters, setting, and relationship between character and setting. The approach and the theories are presented in the following discussion.

### 1.4.2.1 Structuralism

A method of interpretation and analysis of aspects of human cognition, behavior, culture, and experience that focuses on relationships of contrast between elements in a conceptual system that reflect patterns underlying a superficial diversity. According to Bressler (1999), the relationships are those of among intrinsic elements which make meaning. Meaning of the text is made by the relationships among the elements which form or build the text. It means that meaning of text of novel, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* novel by Khaleed Hosseini is made by the elements of character, setting, plot, point of view, and theme which have relate each other. In the research, relationship of character with setting help make

meaning of the text of *A Thousand Splendid Suns* novel by Khaled Hosseini.

Besides that, Bressler (1999) said that meaning of the text is autonomous, meaning that meaning of the text only derives from the intrinsic elements – the extrinsic elements do not contribute to the meaning of the text. Authors of the text are those who produce the text, but their intention does not influence meaning of the text. Based on Bressler (1999), meaning of the novel, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is made by interpreting the intrinsic elements of character, setting, plot, theme and point of view. The meaning according to structuralism is made by studying the relationship of the elements.

Based on the structuralism assumption that the research makes meaning by studying the relationship between characters and settings in the text of *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. Characters, setting and their relationship are understood based on the following concepts.

#### **1.4.2.2 Character**

According to Roberts (2003) in his book of *Writing Themes about Literature*, characters in this research is understood as characterization. Furthermore Roberts (2003) defines that characterization is the process of character appearance by giving the character, traits, or habits of a character in a story. Characterization can be done through narrative techniques and demonstration techniques. The character and characterization can be seen in physical actions (actions and speech) and spiritual actions (contemplation or thoughts).



In this research, traits of the characters who are represented in the text of *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. The traits are analyzed through the picture of the physical action and spiritual action. Roberts (2003:66) state that “character is a verbal representation of a human being as presented to us by authors through the depiction of actions, conversation, descriptions, reactions, inner thoughts and reflections, and also through the authors own interpretive commentary”.

#### **1.4.2.2 Setting**

Setting refers to the natural or artificial scenery or environment in which characters in literature live and move. Seeing also includes what in the theater would be called props or properties—the implements employed by the characters in various activities. Such things as the time of day and the consequent amount of light at which an event occurs, the flora and fauna, the sounds described, the smells, and the weather are also part of the setting. Paintbrushes, apples, pitchforks, rafts, six-shooters, watches, automobiles, horses and buggies, and innumerable other items belong to the setting.

References to clothing, descriptions of physical appearance, and spatial relationships among the characters are also part of setting.” (Roberts, 2003). Roberts (2003) stated that setting is the natural, manufactured, political, cultural, and temporal environment, including everything that characters know and own.

#### **1.4.2.4 Character and Setting**

In accordance with Abrams (1999), the overall setting in narrative works is related to general locale, the historical time, and

also related with the society or the social circumstances in which place, time, and society the action occurs. It means setting is anything around character's life which influences the personality of the character by environment like place, social circumstance, and time of human growth and change. Abram statement implies that setting influences characters. Setting shapes characters – it means that traits are influenced by setting in which the characters live.

Based on Abrams (1999), it can be concluded that character has relationship setting. Settings in the form of place and social circumstances shape the traits of the characters. Referring to the theoretical concept, the research will study character in relation to setting in the text of *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. The study will analyze the traits of the characters and settings which influence the traits. Settings which will study are those which have contribution to the formation of the character traits.

## **1.5 Methode of Research**

This research method will be carried out by descriptive methods. Whitney and Milholland (1993) writes that “Descriptive method is the existence of fact with correct interpretations. Descriptive research studies about the problem in the society, with the system which acts in society together with certain situations including relationship, activities, behavior, point of view with the process which happened and the influences of phenomenon”. It means that descriptive method is used to describe the information that is needed to explain the how the characterization of the main character, how the setting is depicted in the novel, and how the settings affect the characterization of the main character in the novel.

In this research, the writer follows some steps, first in collecting the data, the writer uses close reading technique. Jacobus (1999:6) writes that “Close reading takes the form of writing, discussion or silent observation, should be based on questioning the text. Close reading requires that you take the text

seriously enough to study it, to read and read it, search for details that might otherwise go unobserved, examine the text for special words and terms and refer to the dictionary to be sure of their meaning where necessary". Means that to do this research the writer reads the novel twice even frequently to get the right data. Then, the writer classifies the data based on the points. Finally is interpretation of data based on topic of analysis.