

**WOMEN'S OPPRESSION IN AFGHANISTAN**

**PORTRAYED IN KHALED HOSSEINI'S**

***A THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS***

**THESIS**

**Muhammad Aji Fansuri**

**NIM 07320037**



**ENGLISH LETTERS AND LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND CULTURE**

**THE STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY**

**OF MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM MALANG**

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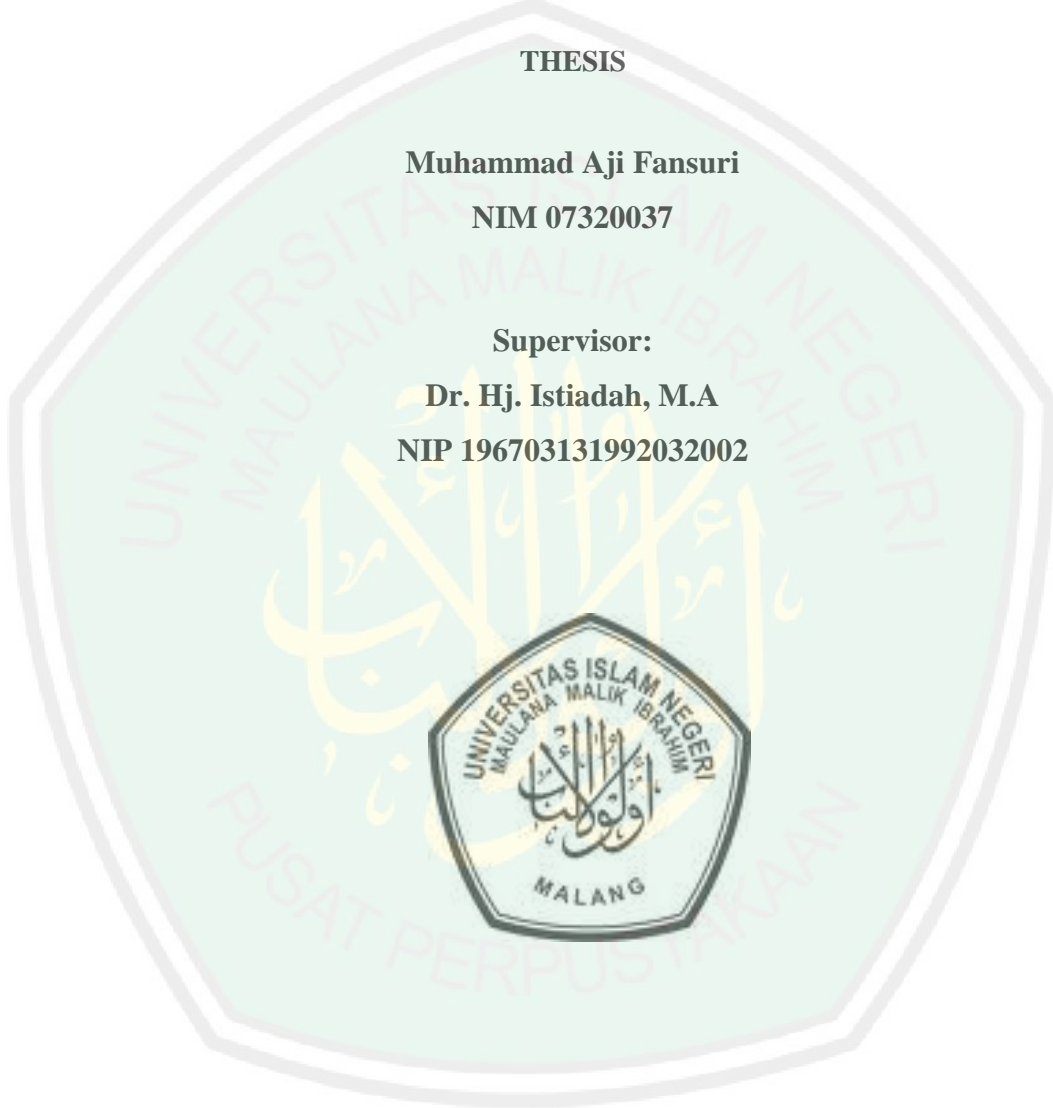
**Muhammad Aji Fansuri**

**NIM 07320037**

**Supervisor:**

**Dr. Hj. Istiadah, M.A**

**NIP 196703131992032002**



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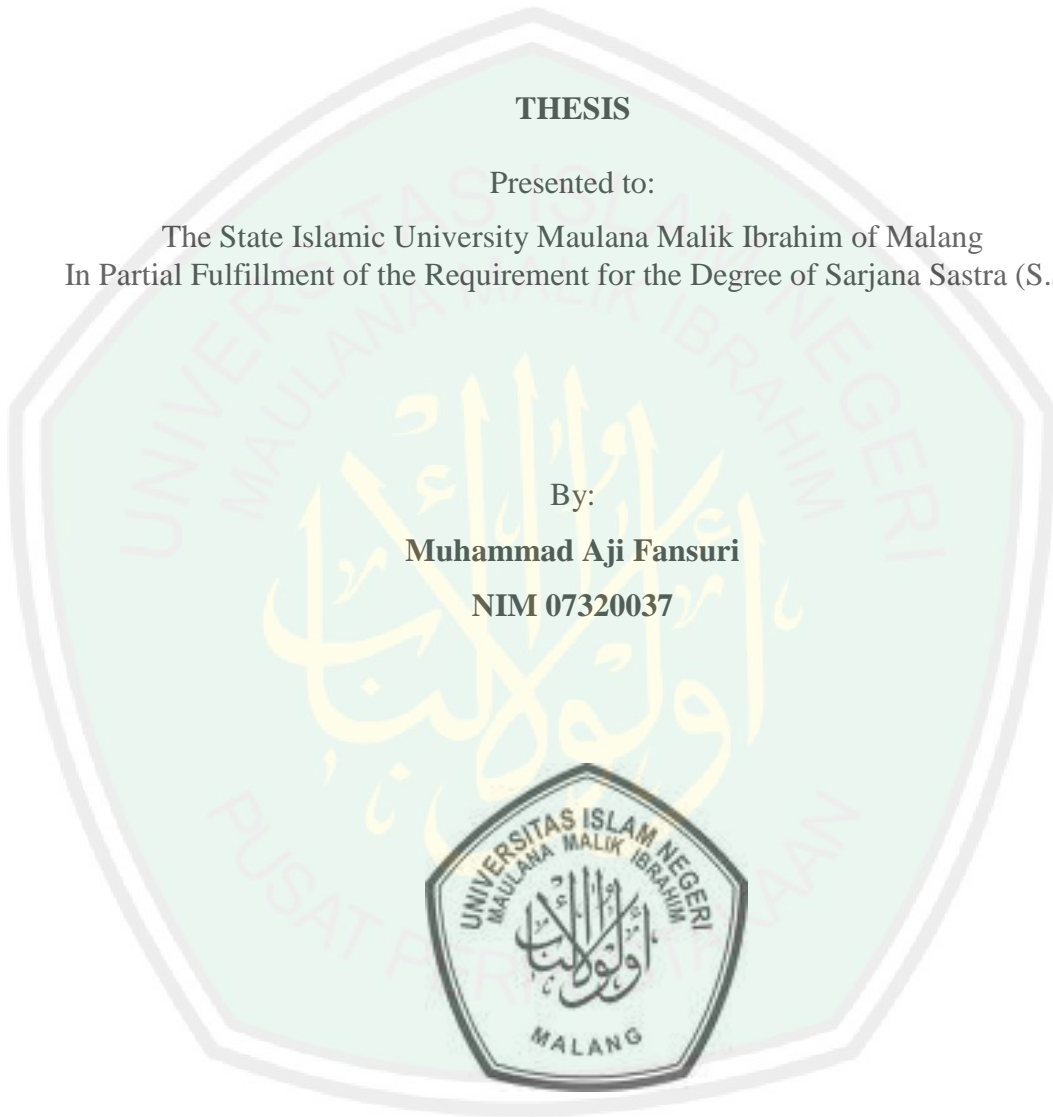
Presented to:

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Sarjana Sastra (S.S)

By:

**Muhammad Aji Fansuri**

**NIM 07320037**



**ENGLISH LETTERS AND LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT  
HUMANITIES AND CULTURE FACULTY  
THE STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY  
MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM MALANG  
2013**

## STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY

Name : M. Aji Fansuri  
Reg. Number : 07320037  
Department : English Language and Letters  
Address : Brangkal, Sooko-Mojokerto

Hereby, I certify that the thesis I wrote to fulfill the requirement for Sarjana Sastra(S.S) entitled *Women Oppression in Afganistan Potrayed in Khaled Hoseini's A Thousand Splendid Suns* is truly my original work. It does not incorporate any materials previously written or published by another person, except those indicate quotations and bibliography. Due to the fact, I am the only person responsible for the thesis if there is any objection or claims from others.

Malang, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013

**M. Aji Fansuri**

## APPROVAL SHEET

This is to certify that Aji Fansuri's thesis entitled "*Women oppression in Afganistan Potrayed in Khaled Hoseini's A Thousand Splendid Suns*" has been approved by the thesis advisor for further approval by the Board of Examiners.

The Advisor

Malang, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013  
the Head of  
English Letters and Language Department,

Dr. Hj. Istiadah, M.A  
NIP 196703131992032002

Dr. Hj. Like Raskova Octaberlina, M.Ed  
NIP. 197410252008012015

## LEGITIMATION SHEET

This is to certify that Aji Fansuri's thesis entitled *Women oppression in Afganistan Potrayed in Khaled Hoseini's A Thousand Splendid Suns* has been approved by the board of examiners as the requirement for the degree of Sarjana Sastra (S.S) at The State Islamic University Maulana Malik Ibrahim of Malang.

The Board of Examiners

Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
NIP.

(Main Examiner)

\_\_\_\_\_  
NIP.

(Chair)

**Dr. Hj. Istiadah, M.A**

NIP. 196703131992032002

(Advisor)

Approved by  
The Dean of Humanities and Culture Faculty

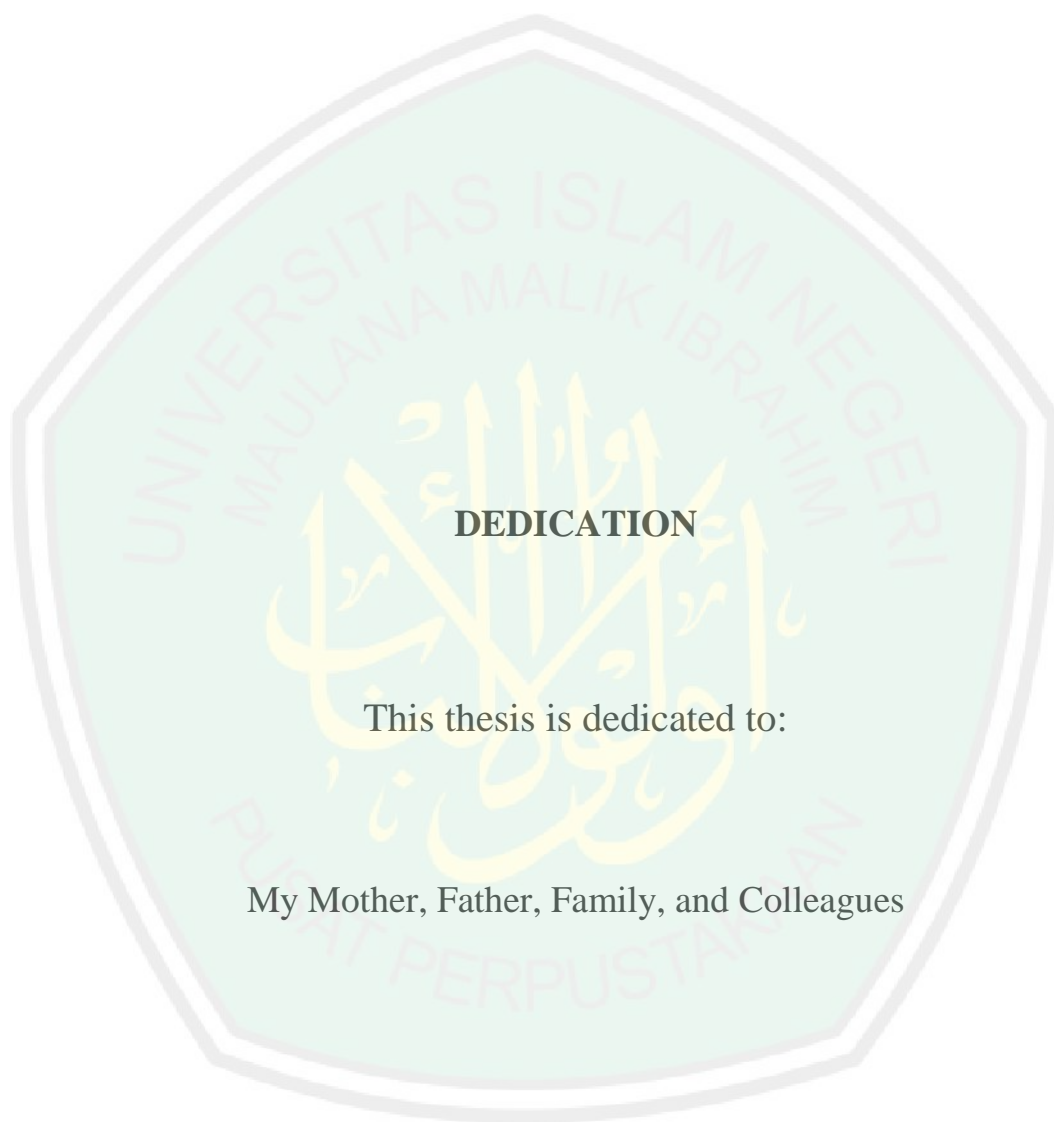
**Dr. Hj. Istiadah, M.A**  
NIP. 19670313 1992203 2002



### **MOTTO**

**Have you ever been hated or discriminated for something you  
didn't do?**





## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to:

My Mother, Father, Family, and Colleagues



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*Bismillahirrahmanirrahim*

Proudly, I would like to express my best gratitude to our greatest Allah SWT who has given me knowledge, enthusiasm, and patience for this study. Peace is upon the greatest reformer of Islam, Prophet Muhammad SAW, who has led to a true moslem.

Furthermore, because of mercy from Allah SWT, I am able to finish this thesis entitled *Women Oppression in Afganistan Potrayed in Khaled Hoseini's A Thousand Splendid Suns* as requirement for the degree of SI at The State Islamic University Maulana Malik Ibrahim of Malang.

In addition, I would like to dedicate my deeply grateful expression to some people who have given me motivation in finishing this research.

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The last, I invite the readers' suggestions and critics to respond the presence of my thesis; hopefully, this research will give many advantages to all of people who much concern in English Language.

Malang, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013

**The Researcher**

## ABSTRACT

**Fansuri, MA.** 2013. Women oppression in Afghanistan Portrayed in Khaleed Hosseini's "*A Thousand Splendid Suns*". Thesis. Undergraduate Program in English Letters and Language Departement Faculty of Humanities and Culture, State Islamic University of Maulana Malik Ibrahim of Malang.

Advisor : Dr. Hj. Istiadah, M.A

Key words : Oppression, Afghan Women, Woman Oppression.

Literature is the expression of phenomena that happen in human's life such as their problem, struggle, love, sacrifice, sorrow, or conflict. It means that literary work expresses the human lives and ideas in a beautiful language. One literary works is novel. By reading novel, people can get so many values and message about the human life that is complex with many conflicts to be faced. "*A Thousand Splendid Suns*" is a kind of novel that the story is easy to understand. Besides, the problems faced by the main character are interesting to be analyzed.

The purposes of this analysis are to know Mariam's and Laila's oppressions and to know how they solve their problems.

This analysis used a descriptive qualitative research design because there was no treatment as in experimental research. This analysis describes condition or situation. The approach used in analyzing this novel was objective approach because the researcher did not study about the author's life and background of the work but just analyzed the work itself. The object of this study was the novel with the title "*A Thousand Splendid Suns*" written by Khaled Hosseini.

The result of this analysis showed that Mariam and Laila felt oppressed when the faced many difficulties in her life. Their oppressions are dealing with exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence.

Finally, the way to solve oppressions felt by Mariam and Laila was making a divorce with their husband and make their life better than when they lived with Rashed.



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## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**



## ABSTRAK

**Fansuri, MA.** 2013. *Penindasan Terhadap Wanita Digambarkan dalam Novel “A Thousand Splendid Suns” Karya Khalid Hussein.* Skripsi. Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Humaniora dan Budaya, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang.

Pembimbing : Dr. Hj. Istiadah, M.A

Kata Kunci : Penindasan, Perempuan Afghan, Penindasan Wanita.

Sastra adalah ekspresi dari fenomena yang terjadi dalam kehidupan manusia seperti masalah-masalah mereka, perjuangan, cinta, pengorbanan, kesedihan, atau konflik. Ini berarti bahwa karya sastra mengungkapkan kehidupan manusia dan ide-ide dalam bahasa yang indah. Salah satu karya sastra adalah novel. Dengan membaca novel, orang bisa mendapatkan begitu banyak nilai-nilai dan pesan tentang kehidupan manusia yang kompleks dengan banyak konflik yang akan dihadapi. "A Thousand Splendid Suns" adalah jenis novel yang ceritanya mudah dimengerti. Selain itu, masalah yang dihadapi oleh karakter utama adalah menarik untuk dianalisis.

Tujuan dari analisis ini adalah untuk mengetahui penindasan yang dialami oleh Mariam dan Laila dan untuk mengetahui bagaimana mereka memecahkan masalah mereka.

Analisis ini menggunakan desain penelitian deskriptif kualitatif karena tidak ada pengobatan seperti dalam penelitian eksperimental. Analisis ini menggambarkan kondisi atau situasi. Pendekatan yang digunakan dalam menganalisis novel ini adalah pendekatan objektif karena peneliti tidak belajar tentang kehidupan penulis dan latar belakang pekerjaan tetapi hanya menganalisis pekerjaan itu sendiri. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah novel dengan judul "A Thousand Splendid Suns" yang ditulis oleh Khaled Hosseini.

Hasil analisis ini menunjukkan bahwa Mariam dan Laila merasa tertindas ketika banyak kesulitan yang dihadapi dalam hidupnya. Penindasan mereka berurusan dengan eksploitasi, marginalisasi, ketidakberdayaan, imperialisme budaya, dan kekerasan.

Akhirnya, cara untuk mengatasi penindasan dirasakan oleh Mariam dan Laila membuat perceraian dengan suami mereka dan membuat hidup mereka lebih baik daripada ketika mereka tinggal bersama Rashed.



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The result of this analysis showed that Mariam and Laila felt oppressed when the faced many difficulties in her life. Their oppressions are dealing with exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence.

Finally, the way to solve oppressions felt by Mariam and Laila was making a divorce with their husband and make their life better than when they lived with Rashed.



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Facing continual conflict, Afghanistan is one of the unstable countries for woman to develop their career, education and interest. Although the restriction on woman mostly depends on the ruling party, the implementations are often applied through religion, culture and tradition.

According to Skaine (2002), that in Afghanistan, the process of achieving equal rights for women has been a complicated one. Their conditions depend on where they live. In rural areas, the question of female employment and education has not been an issue. They have always worked on the land and have been provided with a minimal level of education.

Additionally, the wish to protect women has resulted in purdah, which is restricting women's movements so that they have limited contact with men outside family or village community (Marsden, 1998). Further, Afghan women life becomes a common issue to explore the discrimination, marginalization, and domination that exist in patriarchal culture. Those stand up on the superiority of men. Superiority is rank, status and quality that is to present men as super-power in the societies. They dominate to possess women in social, domestic, politic, economic and other sector in their society and culture. Men early claim and force their culture that women have to be under- control of men.

Winarti (2002), in her research on *The Scarlet Letter*, also found that men's culture is also dominant in the literary work. A man is considered having

superiority as a writer and a character. In a work, a male character is the subject while a female character is treated as the object in the male writer's perspective. Dealing with this phenomenon, Sheldon (1986) states that women do not see the same things in the ways as men do, and have different ideas and feeling about what is important or not important.

It is supported by Mc Fadden (2007) that certain spaces of women have been culturally, religiously and politically marked as either "male" or "female," and we know that in terms of the latter spaces, these were and still are largely linked to women's breeding and feeding functions in all human societies, without exception. The spaces we refer to as public are assumed to be male, and for centuries men have excluded women from the public where all the key decisions relating to power are deliberated and implemented.

Based on the description above, public space is assumed to be men's, therefore the only place for women is in domestic sphere where their jobs are limited to be a caregiver and home maker. This limited space put women in difficult situation since all factors such as education, vocation that enable someone to develop her personal existence are in the public sphere. The construction of women's space is done by the patriarchal system in every main aspect that gives the most important influence in a society such as religion, culture and political system. Therefore, it is not surprising that for ages, in most culture, religion and political system, women are susceptible to subordination.

For generations, women in Afghanistan have lived in a limited space. Historically, Afghan's tribal customs have put women in seclusion and restriction.

Although there are some progress in the treatment toward woman in big cities, the countryside still give no right for woman in education and political right such as the right to vote.

After communist no longer rules Afghanistan, the ruling party is Taliban. Their rules brought the most oppression for women. Taliban employs rules that limit women access to get into social, economic and political independence. By using religion, Taliban forced them to leave their job, education, took away their freedom and existence. Moreover, Taliban supported the rules with physical and verbal violent punishments. The “honor killing” and other tribal custom are legalized and encouraged by the Taliban government. Unfortunately, women no longer participate in society because everything that related to the existence of woman had been removed or prohibited.

The fall of Taliban reign in 2001 brought hopes for Afghan woman. Some changes have been made to help them. However, the oppressions still happens. Alvi (2008), writes that ten years the fall of Taliban reign, Afghan women’s life expectancy falls short compared to men. Approximately 1,700 Afghan girls or women die in childbirth (per 100,000 live births). This is a staggering maternal mortality rate (MMR), the second highest in the world. In Afghanistan, the majority of deliveries occur at home, and usually a skilled health professional is absent. There are also other factors affecting MMR, “such as lack of services for maternal health care, violence against women, child marriages, overall poor health, and frequency of childbirth.



It indicates that Afghan women cannot feel any changes after the Taliban handover the leadership. Violence and seclusion are still happen. The violence and themortality rate are very high. As the brutality is rooted in the main values in the society, and most of the families still highly influenced by the tribal tradition, it is hard to bechanged.

However, Afghanistan is a country that faces many conflicts, starting with racial conflict to colonialism. The colonialism somehow makes the country fall into destructive changes that only based on political benefit. It makes the country often unstable resulting asociety that is trapped in war zones. Certainly, the space for their women becomes more restricted. The traditions in Afghanistan construct a very limited space for their woman. This situation is narrated in the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007) written by Khaled Hosseini. In this novel, the problems of conflicts and a specific manner that applies to a particular culture or society bring about suffering for women living in this chaos country. It is reflected from the life of two protagonists who live in unhumanist life. In this novel, some characters as patriarchal representative, construct the space for the Afghan women through in doctination and violence in family and the state.

In discourse of gender equality, women experience inequality, oppression and even violence in different condition. Man is one who becomes the subject to discriminate women as inferior and subordinate by the system that is created by men them selves through the culture. For example this novel describes the life of Afghan woman. Women in Afghanistan become victim of discrimination of patriarchal culture. They cannot work and go out their home.

They have to use veil (*burqo*) when they are out of their home and must be accompanied by their family. Every woman whom breaks the law must be punished as a consequence of their measure. That is the system of violence put by patriarchy toward woman as an object.

Mariam and Laila represent the women oppressed in Afghanistan as it is clearly depicted by Khaled Hosseini. This novel tells the story about the struggle of two women in finding their freedom in a life of torments from their abusive husband in an unsupported circumstance. This study describes the women oppression in Afghanistan in Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* through the description of oppression of Mariam and Laila both from their husband and surrounding society and on how they deal with the oppression.

Charlton (1998) states:

“oppression occurs when individuals are systematically subjected to political, economic, cultural, or social degradation because they belong to a social group...results from structures of domination and subordination and correspondingly, ideologies of superiority and inferiority. ”Lack of economic resources underpins women's vulnerability to oppression and their difficulty in extricating themselves from an oppressed relationship. The link between oppression and lack of economic resources and dependence is circular. On the one hand, the threat and fear of oppression keeps women from seeking employment, or, at best, compels them to accept low-paid, home-based exploitative labor. moreover, without economic independence, women have no power to escape from an abusive relationship.

Additionally, Harvey (1999) used the term “civilized oppression” to characterize the everyday processes of oppression in normal life. Civilized oppression “is embedded in unquestioned norms, habits, and symbols, in the assumptions underlying institutions and rules, and the collective consequences of following those rules. It refers to the vast and deep injustices some groups suffer



as a consequence of often unconscious assumptions and reactions of well-meaning people in ordinary interactions that are supported by the media and cultural stereotypes as well as by the structural features of bureaucratic hierarchies and market mechanisms”

Based on the short description above, the researcher wants to arrange a research on a novel called *A Thousand Splendid Suns* which is written by Khaled Hosseini by using feminist literary criticism. Feminism is defined as the movement against the cultural and historical subordination of women and the struggle for economic, political and social emancipation. Feminism is an aesthetic that attained prominence and significance in the early twentieth century, which resulted in the rise of many female writers such as George Elliot, Virginia Woolf, Charlotte Bronte and Khaled Hosseini. Travers (1999) states that feminism is the women's quest for recognition, power and authority, and, it attempts to relocate women beyond the confines of their patriarchal society. Women fight for emancipation because “they are treated as a kind of subordinate beings, and not as a part of the human species”.

The researcher uses feminist literary criticism is to explore and describe the elements of culture and system in Afghanistan and how the Afghan women struggle against the phenomena that happen in family or social environment. It is because of patriarchy system in which women always gets oppression, violence and discrimination in all aspect of life. Women have no power to do everything in the world except serve men as the leader of family.

Further, this analysis is intended to disclose how far Khaled Hosseini's novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* shows the Afghan women oppressions and how they have struggles to get free from those oppressions. In other words, Women are often in great danger in the place where they should be safest: within their families. For many, 'home' is where they face a regime of terror and oppression at the hands of somebody close to them - somebody they should be able to trust. Those victimized suffer physically and psychologically. They are unable to make their own decisions, voice their own opinions or protect themselves and their children for fear of further repercussions. Their human rights are denied and their lives are stolen from them by the ever-present threat of oppressions. Based on this consideration, in conclusion, the researcher decides to work on this novel by focusing on the women oppression portrayed through the Mariam's and Laila's life.

There are some previous studies which are related with this research. The first previous study was conducted by Kusnadi (2008), he investigated *An Analysis of Main Character on Khaled Hosseini's A Thousand Splendid Suns through Feminism Approach*. Through feminism concept, the writer focused on Laila's characteristic implied that Laila was an independent women facing the force and the unfair treatment by her husband and she tried to be free from Rasheed's dehumanis behavior and from the patriarchal system.

The second previous study was conducted by Umbara (2010) who examined "An Analysis of Neurosis Syndrome Reactions in Mariam's Character in the Novel of *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini." The result of

the research indicates that Mariam's syndrome was influenced by the problems faced started from her mother called her *Harami*. Then, it was also caused by her father's family that met her with her unbeloved husband that brought her from happiness as a wife. Moreover, her expectation wished to get freedom as like another women who had career, child and study never happened in her life.

The third previous study was conducted by Ayalew (2012) who explored *Comparative Analysis on the Portrayal of Women Characters in Three Prominent Novels from the Islamic World*. He concluded that *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini "women were considered as commodities that could be spared anytime by their husbands or macho men with whom they happened to share a thread of life for this or that reason. In this novel, we learned that being a female in Islamic countries was really unlucky, though some among Islamist feminists try to say the opposite.

The last previous study was conducted by Kazemiyan (2012) who conducted a study to investigate *A Thousand Splendid Suns: Rhetorical Vision of Afghan Women*. It examined the situation of Afghan women during the four major historical periods in Afghanistan. The result stated that survival strategies and social participation of Afghan women in the same periods revealed the capability of Afghan women to fight to survive the war, to restore their basic rights, and to incite other women to contribute to shaping their own lives.

The research is different from previous studies above even the literary work which is observed has similarity. The previous studies above focused on internal conflicts between the main character and her family such as her husband

and her mother. And the previous studies above also focused on surviving the main character's life in war where all the another researchers above using feminist literary criticism theory. In order to get deeper exploration about novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, so another research is held.

This research focuses on the elements of culture and system in Afghanistan and how the Afghan women struggle against the phenomena that happen in family or social environment. It is because of patriarchy system in which women always gets oppression, violence and discrimination in all aspect of life. Women have no power to do everything in the world except serve men as the leader of family. The researcher using feminist literary criticism which is more emphasize to the five types of oppression. They are exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence. The researcher using feminist literary criticism which is more emphasize to the five types of oppression. They are exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence.

## 1.2 Statement of Problems

Concerning the statement of the background of the study, the researcher formulates the research questions:

1. What are the oppressions suffered by Mariam and Laila in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hossein?
2. How do Mariam and Laila solve their oppressions in Khaled Hossein's novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*?

### 1.3 Objectives of the Study

To get a clear vision of the research, some objectives are proposed.

They are described as follows:

1. To describe oppressions suffered by Mariam and Laila in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini.
2. To describe Mariam and Laila's struggle against oppression depicted through *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini.

### 1.4 Significance of the Study

In the relation to what have been discussed, this study is significant to conduct due to its theoretical and practical functions. The research is expected to give both theoretical and practical contribution in literary work especially in studying about Literature. Theoretically, the results of this research are expected to be beneficial for students, lecturers, and future researchers since it can provide them with some knowledge and insight of human nature. Hopefully, it also gives contribution toward literary appreciation. Related to literary appreciation, the results of the researches are expected to enrich students' and lecturers' comprehension in literary comprehension. Thus, referring to importance of literary work previously explained, it also hopefully contributes to the conviction of other students that the study of literature is valuable for it teaches them various meaningful aspects of life, that are essential in guiding them to the understanding of self-knowledge and to social interaction. In addition, the results of the study broaden the view of readers about violence through the chosen novel.



Practically, the result of this study is expected to be useful to the researcher himself to enrich the knowledge about the types of oppression against women and how they struggle against the oppressions.

### **1.5 The Scope of The Study**

There are many aspects that can be analyzed in Khaled Hossein's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* such as social, cultural, political and economic aspect of life. But, the researcher would analyze only the women's oppression as a victim of violence in the men's domination caused by patriarchal culture. It means that the analysis is only focused at the aspects inside the novel in the case is extrinsic study. The focus of the analysis is in the way of how women's environment simply relating to domestic confinements and constructing by patriarchal system happens to the women character. The study is conducted to explore the women's oppression and cultural injustice showed in the novel.

### **1.6 Research Method**

Research is the way used to get the objective of the research, and how the researcher arranges his steps of work. In brief, method is not only the way to work in good order but also the way to give clarification of what the researcher has done.

Therefore, using the appropriate method in conducting a research is very important, in this chapter the researcher will discuss some sections namely; research design, data sources, data collection, and data analysis.

### 1.6.1 Research Design

The problem of the study has been formulated clearly to specify the type of important formulation needed. The research design is the arrangement of condition for collecting and analyzing data that are taken from Kholed Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. Feminist literary criticism is used as an approach in the process of analyzing the work. This approach relates to the extrinsic elements of literary work with the fictional aspects are made by the author in the story.

By feminist approach, a literary work is seen from the eyes of women aspects of life such as how the women's life in patriarchal culture reflected on the work especially the phenomena happened to the main characters.

### 1.6.2 Data Source

All data that are analyzed in this study are taken from the text in novel "*A Thousand Splendid Suns*" written by Kholed Hosseini in 2007 published by Penguin Group Inc. Those data collected were in the form of written dialogue, monologue, expression, and to support the main data of this study. The researcher also needs much information from textbooks, and other sources, such as internet, encyclopedias, and some relevant written materials which mainly discuss the extrinsic element of literature, especially about feminist study.

### 1.6.3 Data Collection

The data in this research are taken from the work of Khaled Hosseini. Since the data are in the form of words, phrases, sentences paragraph within the novel, detailed reading, careful rereading, and deep understanding are the most appropriate data collection techniques in this study. The researcher collects the



data by reading the novel in details for several times.

After convincing the understanding the clue, researcher must underline the important paragraphs which have read. Then, puts those data in classified order and analyses them in accordance with the problems of study in the previous chapter. These techniques have both comprehensive and interpretative aspects since they are aimed at finding the relevance data based on the problem of study.

#### **1.6.4 Data Analysis**

Data analysis is the most crucial part in organizing the research, because it will influence the validity of the result of study. In analyzing the data, there are some steps as follows. First step, the researcher finding Mariam and Laila's oppression found in Khaled Hosseini's novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. Second step the researcher identifying the kinds of oppressions found in Khaled Hosseini's novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. Then the researcher analyzing the results of Mariam and Laila's oppression found in Khaled Hosseini's novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. The last step, researcher drawing the conclusion based on Mariam and Laila's oppression found in Khaled Hosseini's novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*.

#### **1.7 Definition of Key Terms**

To avoid misinterpretation, the researcher tries to explain the definition of key terms below according to their respective meaning and contexts.

1. Feminism: as a movement for social, cultural, political and economic condition of women equal to men.
2. Patriarchy: a system of culture in which a male member is valued as a

household in society

3. Oppression: refers to relations of domination and exploitation - economic, social and psychology - between individuals; between social groups and classes within and beyond societies.
4. Exploitation: the act of using people's labour to earn profit without fairly compensating them
5. Marginalization: the process in which groups of people are excluded (marginalized) by the wider society.
6. Powerlessness: the lay observer as synonymous with the presence of constraint: the greater the constraint, the greater the powerlessness.
7. Cultural Imperialism: universalization of dominant group experience and culture, and its establishment as the norm.
8. Violence: the expression of physical or verbal force against self or other, compelling action against one's will on pain of being hurt.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter, the writer of this thesis presents the review of related literature. It concerns with theoretical framework underlying this study, which will be presented briefly.

#### 2.1 Feminism

Feminism is defined as the movement against the cultural and historical subordination of women and the struggle for economic, political and social emancipation. Feminism is an aesthetic that attained prominence and significance in the early twentieth century, which resulted in the rise of many female writers such as George Elliot, Virginia Woolf, Charlotte Bronte and Khaled Hosseini. Travers (1999) states that feminism is the women's quest for recognition, power and authority, and, it attempts to relocate women beyond the confines of their patriarchal society. Women fight for emancipation because "they are treated as a kind of subordinate beings, and not as a part of the human species".

Most feminists hold a belief that women as a group are treated oppressively and differently from men and that they are subject to personal and institutional discrimination. Feminists also believe that the society is organized in much a way that it works, in general, to the benefit of men rather than women; that is, it is patriarchal (Nawal, 2001).

According to Arivia (2003), feminism is the women's struggle for equality in the political, social and economic aspects that regimented life. It is a movement focused on the root problem of women's oppression.

Furthermore, Jackson (1998) criticizes that ratio as symbol of men, in this thing cultural *feminism* explains that the coherence of ratio substantively depend on excommunication and oppression upon some features which relates to the feminine characteristic. This matter show the reasoning of law specifically obtains legitimation from the abstract and characteristic universally. He specifically wants to explain that men are more superior by the sets of ratio that are belonged to. In other hand, women are inferior that are symbolized as a weakness which rely on their feeling. By this reason, it is actually illogical think to determine women.

In addition, when we see feminism in general, there are some trends that tend to expand the case of women's issue beyond the normal curve, i.e, beyond the question of bridging the gap between the two sexes with respect to the preservation of equal rights and opportunities. For example, somewant to focus on the biological difference which is natural and at times necessary. The fact that men are predominantly stronger than women doesn't mean they are unequal in other circumstances, as some may attribute the inequality to such minor cases. It is a natural phenomenon and shouldn't be included in the discussion of equality and equity.

Moreover, many scholars wrote about the poor treatment of women by societies and their husbands aswell with the conviction of the fact that almost all

societies have been patriarchal which in most cases has never been conducive for women to establish harmonious co-existence with their male partners on equal footing. Moreover, the role of husbands over their housewives has been given much attention in that women are subdued to inferior life due to their economic dependence.

One of the scholars, Rosemarie (1998), explains that the dominance of the husband is expected in a continuing sexual double standard. What for the woman is a crime entailing grave legal and social consequences is considered honorable in a man or, at the worse, a slight moral blemish which he cheerfully bears. Female adultery certainly occurs, but it is far more risky and subject to far greater social sanctions than adultery by men. Economic considerations ... make women put up with the habitual infidelity of their husbands – concerns for their own means of existence and still more for their children's future.

### **2.1.1 Patriarchal System**

One important term that goes along with feminism is patriarchy. In short, it refers to the “social organization which produces and guarantees superior status for the male and inferior for the female and this is more true in the Islamic world based on the fictional depiction in the novel selected. According to Moghadam (1992) the term patriarchy is used to mark the specific gender arrangements based on patrilocal residence, i.e. living with the husband's family, and patrilineal descent, i.e. descending through the father.

Patriarchy is practically defined as control by men. It is a system applied in certain societies to determine the roles of men and women in their



environments. In patriarchal system, men have the power to control their opposite gender, women. And it caused women constantly fight for their rights and sometimes should struggle just to survive under the power and domination of men. Mann (1986), explained that patriarchy is a social organization marked by the supremacy of the father in the clan or family, the legal dependence of wives and children, and the reckoning of descent and inheritance in the male line, and also broadly control of man on the woman.

As it is indicated above, patriarchy is the dominance of male authority over female subjects beginning from home to state level. A society is considered patriarchal when men establish or inherit a social order where they dominate positions of power and authority or when important achievements and historical events are attributed to the actions of men.

There are many effects resulted by the patriarchal system. The most occurrence resulted by patriarchy is domestic violence. Domestic violence is the inflicting of physical injury by one family or household member on another; also: a repeated or habitual pattern of such behavior (Peter and Wolper, 1995:16). It can appear in various forms, including physical violence, psychological violence, economical violence, sexual violence and so on.

As women were oppressed by this system, their consciousness to fight for their rights and break the system of patriarchy gradually arises. This awakening usually linked by the women movement called feminism. This movement is started by individual consciousness to break the domination of men in the smallest domain, family, and continuous to the larger domains. It can be in

form of individual rebellions toward domestic rules, exchanging roles between men and women, breaking cultural laws that discriminate the women, group movement to fight for women's rights, and so on.

### **2.1.2 The Effects of Patriarchal System**

Afghanistan is also considered as a religious country. This country is dominated by Muslims as Islam has been its major religion. Therefore, Afghanistan's culture is unavoidably influenced very much by Islamic teaching. Almost all laws in Afghanistan are arranged based on its society's interpretation of their religion.

According to Moghadam (1992) the term patriarchy is used to mark the specific gender arrangements based on patrilocal residence, i.e. living with the husband's family, and patrilineal descent, i.e. descending through the father. In Mann's (1986) elaboration of the history of patriarchy, patriarchal society is defined as one in which power is held by male heads of households. He explains that in a patriarchal society, power is shared between males and no female holds any formal public position of economic, ideological, military, or political power.

One of cultural elements of Afghanistan that has been influenced by Muslims' beliefs is gender discourse. The society of Afghanistan has put men and women in certain positions and roles according to their understanding of their religious laws. It means that actually, what they acted or assumed or thought in the name of their religious laws, is not always what their religion means.

In Islam, all creatures are created equally for one reason; it is to worship their God. The best creature is only who has the best quality of faith. So, it can be the men or women. Both of these two sexes have the same rights and



opportunities to be the best. The only difference between men and women is only their physical appearances. It is told that men are stronger than women. This difference actually is purposed to make the men and women take care, honor, help, cooperate and complete each other, not to dominate or discriminate each other.

Observing the life of Afgan society by focusing to the central character Maryam, unfortunately, seemingly the religion's explanation about the difference between men and women has invited some misinterpretations. It causes the men who were told as the stronger creatures felt that they have the more rights than the women. They also felt that they should control the women as their properties. Automatically, this view has supported the growth the patriarchal system in Afgan's society.

The patriarchal system in Afgan has come with some sufferings for Afgan women. They often get some violence from their husbands or other men whose treatments however have been legalized by this system. The violence appears in various forms, including the physical violence, psychological violence, and economical violence. Yet, the dominant patriarchal culture in Afghanistan and therefore more restricted, oppressed conditions for women, an academic study contends that Afghan women are not necessarily voiceless and powerless. It is explained by Khalid Hosseini through *A Thousand Splendid Suns* that Afghan women have been capable to fight to survive and to take part in social participation to reclaim their rights and further their enhancement.

## 2.2 Oppression

Oppression is a concept that describes a relationship between groups or categories of people in which a dominant group benefits from the systematic abuse, exploitation, and injustice directed toward a subordinate group. Relationships between groups and relationships between groups and social categories, it should not be confused with the oppressive behavior of individuals.

According to Charlton (1998: 8),

“oppression occurs when individuals are systematically subjected to political, economic, cultural, or social degradation because they belong to a social group...results from structures of domination and subordination and, correspondingly, ideologies of superiority and inferiority.”

Additionally, Johnson (2000) recognizes that for every social category that is privileged, one or more other categories are oppressed in relation to it. The concept of oppression points to social forces that tend to press upon people and hold them down, to hem them in and block their pursuits of a good life. Just as privilege tends to open doors of opportunity, oppression tends to slam them shut.

This section takes up a study of the depiction of oppression in Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007). Apart from the oppression and ravages of war, a great deal of this variety of oppression is also portrayed in this novel through the story of the women in Afghanistan. This novel acquaints readers with the situation of women in Afghanistan, their inferior status, the unspeakable atrocities they are made to undergo and the collusion of the forces of

patriarchy and official agencies that make feasible the discrimination and exploitation of half the human population on the basis of gender.

In the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini, women oppression is one of the major themes that can be clearly seen through the experiences of the main characters, Mariam and Laila. They experience oppression from two directions, from their husband and from the society where they live. The oppression they encounter in their lives have been classified into five types of oppression, namely exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence.

### **2.2.1 Types of Oppression**

According to Young (1996), there are five “faces” or types of oppression: exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence.

#### **2.2.1.1 Exploitation**

The first type of oppression to be described is exploitation. Exploitation is the act of using people’s labour to earn profit without fairly compensating them as Young said,

“Some people exercise their capacities under the control, according to the purposes, and for the benefit of other people”.

Exploitation uses capitalism to oppress. The economic theory of capitalism states that people are free to exchange goods freely. Yet, whenever this has happened throughout history, it has created different classes of people: wealthy and poor. According to Tilly (1998), exploitation occurs when one section of the population produces a surplus whose use is controlled by another section....under

capitalism, exploitation takes the form of the extraction of surplus value by the class of industrial capitalists from the working class, but other exploiting classes or class fractions share in the distribution of surplus value....capitalism differs from non-capitalist modes of production [such as feudalism or slavery] in that exploitation normally takes place without the direct intervention of force or non-economic processes.

### **2.2.1.2 Marginalization**

Marginalization can be defined as the process in which groups of people are excluded (marginalized) by the wider society. Marginalization is often used in an economic or political sense to refer to the rendering of an individual, an ethnic or national group, or a nation-state powerless by a more powerful individual.

Of course, the forms of marginalization may vary-generally linked to the level of development of society; culturally, and as (if not more) importantly, with relation to economics. It is also a slippery and multi-layered concept. Whole societies can be marginalized at the global level while classes and communities can be marginalized from the dominant social order. Similarly, ethnic groups, families or individuals can be marginalized within localities. To a certain extent, marginalization is a shifting phenomenon, linked to social status. So, for example, individuals or groups might enjoy high social status at one point in time, but as social change takes place, so they lose this status and become marginalized. Similarly, as life cycle stages change, so might people's marginalized position.

On the other hands, Marginalization is at the core of exclusion from fulfilling and full social lives at individual, interpersonal and societal levels.

People who are marginalized have relatively little control over their lives and the resources available to them; they may become stigmatised and are often at the receiving end of negative public attitudes. Their opportunities to make social contributions may be limited and they may develop low self-confidence and self esteem. If they do not have work and live with service supports, for example, they may have limited opportunities for meeting with others, and may become isolated.

However, The impacts of marginalization, in terms of social exclusion, are similar, whatever the origins and processes of marginalization, irrespective of whether these are to be located in social attitudes (such as towards impairment, sexuality, ethnicity and so on) or social circumstance (such as closure of workplaces, absence of affordable housing and so on).

### **2.2.1.3 Powerlessness**

Powerlessness is seen by the lay observer as synonymous with the presence of constraint: the greater the constraint, the greater the powerlessness. A truly powerless person is seen as having no discretion in the selection of actions. The behavior of any actor labeled 'powerless,' then, must inevitably be a product of the situation, including whatever compulsion is exerted by more powerful others. In some criminal cases, for example, perpetrators are exonerated because of their powerlessness.

The powerless are dominated by the ruling class and are situated to take orders and rarely have the right to give them. Some of the fundamental injustices



associated with powerlessness are inhibition to develop one's capacities, lack of decision making power, and exposure to disrespectful treatment because of the lowered status. However, the deeper forms of powerlessness are far more insidious. It is the strongest form of oppression because it allows people to oppress themselves and others.

#### **2.2.1.4 Cultural imperialism**

Cultural imperialism is called as universalization of dominant group experience and culture, and its establishment as the norm. It constructs a difference that shows the other people's lack and finally it becomes oppressive since it results the feeling of deviance and inferiority. There were many forms of cultural imperialism, it depended on in what society it existed. The form of cultural imperialism in this context was a patriarchy, in which husbands had the dominant power in the household.

In addition, the cultural imperialism is the economic, technological and cultural hegemony of the industrialized nations, which determines the direction of both economic and social progress, defines cultural values, and standardizes the civilization and cultural environment throughout the world.

Futhermore, the cultural imperialism involves taking the culture of the ruling class and establishing it as the norm. The groups that have power in society control how the people in that society interpret and communicate. Therefore, the beliefs of that society are the most widely disseminated and express the experience, values, goals and achievements of these groups.



### 2.2.1.5 Violence

Violence against women is one of the most widespread violations of humanrights. It can include physical, sexual, psychological and economic abuse, and it cuts across boundaries of age, race, culture, wealth and geography. It takes place in the home, on the streets, in schools, the workplace, in farm fields, refugee camps, during conflicts and crises. It has many manifestations- from the most universally prevalent forms of domestic and sexual violence, to harmful practices, abuse during pregnancy, so-called honor killings and other types of feticide.

In addition, violence is the expression of physical or verbal force against self or other, compelling action against one's will on pain of being hurt. Worldwide, violence issued as a tool of manipulation and also is an area of concern for law and culture which take attempts to suppress and stop it. The word *violence* covers a broad spectrum. It can vary from between a physical altercation between two beings where a slight injury may be the outcome to war and genocide where millions may die as a result.

Generally, Santoso (2002) divides violence into three categories; violence is as an action of actor or community of actor, violence as a product of structure, and violence as relation between actor and structure. Violence is "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation.

Finally, violence is something that caused people cannot actualized his

common potential in his life. He said that structural violence is indirect violence, not appear, static, and show the particular stability. Thus, violence is not only created by actor or mass, but it is created by structure of the political form.

### **2.3 Afghan Women Struggle**

When we study the history of Afghanistan, we finally realize that Afghans have held women in high esteem. Women's activities were not restricted to rallies and protest demonstrations. They participated in organized struggles such as abduction, assassination, and bombing of the enemy position (Skaine, 2002). In cities, the women's underground was organized in three sections. One group investigated people who were suspected of cooperating with the enemy. Another group followed the suspects and discovered their connections. The third group carried out assassinations. In Kandahar, they hid the weapons under their burqas to replace them (Ellis, 2000). In countryside, women cooked for the Mujahidin fighters and carried out food to them in the hills. They worked on fields at night because of bombing runs during the day. Sometimes they fired upon the Soviets from windows when the Soviets came to search a village (Ellis, 2000). Women paid a heavy price for these activities. Hundreds of women and girls were arrested and tortured, and many were executed.

Women continued to have their active participation in political arena under the Taliban rule. Skaine (2002) mentions the demonstration in front of the governor's office by poor beggar women in 1996. The women determined to persuade the governor to order shopkeepers to accept small bank notes, or the shops would be closed. Later in 1996 in Kabul when the Taliban protested against

foreign interference, women held a five hour rally in Mazar-e- Sharif, producing slogans such as “Taliban law is not Islamic Law” (Skaine, 2002, p. 21). Toward the end of 1996 in Herat, 50 women protested the closing of women’s bath houses (Skaine, 2002). Alongside rallies and protest demonstrations, their activities were largely concentrated on running secret schools, which addressed the practical needs of women like education and vocational training (Moser, 1989). Of course, many of these women were caught by the Taliban, but even though they were persecuted, jailed, and tortured, these women continued their bitter struggle. They encouraged other women to fight for their rights, and they have successfully gained the trust and support of communities (Rostami, 2003).

In one such case, the Revolutionary Afghan Women’s Association (RAWA) began to advocate women’s role in the political life of the country and their rights to access to education, training, and employment while remaining within the Islamic fold (Marsden, 1998). RAWA ran schools for girls and mobile health-care teams. All courses and all home-based classes were completely underground. They supported income-generating projects like carpet weaving for women. They were hit with sticks, arrested, and put in prison, but they continued to fight (Skaine, 2002).

Although the twenty two years of war and violent conflict eroded social capital in Afghanistan, women were capable to organize around gender-related survival strategies and became aware of more gender-specific concerns. They worked together in groups and organizations and generated networks, norms, and trust in their communities. How women in Afghanistan have bravely shown their

capacity to devise ways of coping with life even under the most extreme forms of coercion. As social actors, women have experienced 22 years of war, civil war, and violent conflict and have sought alternative ways of surviving and formulating their objectives within a context of restricted resources and restrictive cultural practices

Such evidence supports the findings of Johnson and Moghadam that Afghan women have not been “passive targets of policies or the victims of distorted development,” but that “they are also shapers and makers of social change” (as cited in Skaine, 2002, p. 21), who found ways to move forward despite the loss and the suffering the war has brought.

The above literature review examined the trends and findings that have been significant to shed the light on the active backdrop of women throughout the history of Afghanistan. The thin history of Afghan women’s participation in social and political arena speaks to the fact that Afghan women are active agents who fought to survive the war and risked their lives to restore their basic rights. Against such a backdrop, the present study intends to explore how *A Thousand Splendid Suns* contributes to the readers’ understanding of Afghan women.

#### **2.4. Previous Studies**

The theoretical discussion above is also supported by the empirical works or studies done by Kusnadi (2008), Umbara (2010), Ayalew (2012), and Kazemiyan (2012). Kusnadi (2008) investigated *An Analysis of Main Character on Kholeed Khosseini’s A Thousand Splendid Suns through Feminism Approach*. Through feminism concept, the writer focused on Laila’s characteristic implied

that Laila was an independent women facing the force and the unfair treatment by her husband and she tried to be free from Rasheed's dehumanis behavior and from the patriarchal system.

Umbara (2010) examined *An Analysis of Neurosis Syndrome Reactions in Mariam's Character in the Novel of A Thousand Splendid Suns by Kholeed Khosseini*. The result of the research indicates that Mariam's syndrome was influenced by the problems faced started from her mother called her *Harami*. Then, it was also caused by her father's family that met her with her unbeloved husband that brought her from happiness as a wife. Moreover, her expectation wished to get freedom as like another women who had career, child and study never happed in her life.

Ayalew (2012) explored *Comparative Analysis on the Portrayal of Women Characters in Three Prominent Novels from the Islamic World*. He concluded that *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Kholeed Khosseini "women were considered as commodities that could be spared anytime by their husbands or macho men with whom they happened to share a thread of life for this or that reason. In this novel, we learned that being a female in Islamic countries was really unlucky, though some among Islamist feminists try to say the opposite.

Kazemiyan (2012) conducted a study to investigate *A Thousand Splendid Suns: Rhetorical Vision of Afghan Women*. It examined the situation of Afghan women during the four major historical periods in Afghanistan. The result stated that survival strategies and social participation of Afghan women in the same periods revealed the capability of Afghan women to fight to survive the



war, to restore their basic rights, and to incite other women to contribute to shaping their own lives.

The review of the previous studies suggests that *A Thousand Splendid Suns* written by Khaled Hosseini describes the plights of Afghan women under the repressive forces of political parties and at their homes. Women in Afghanistan overcome adversity and oppression by the opposite sex everyday of their lives in and outside the confines of their own homes. What Khaled Hosseini describes in the novel is really unfortunate not for the women only but for the humanity at large. The Afghan women are really fighting for their existence of being born women. Khaled Hosseini is concerned with their health, education and their being abused by their fathers, their husbands, their neighbours and largely by the politics of unending war in Afghanistan. On the other hand, the present study of this tries to explore the history of Afghanistan speaks to the fact that, alongside the oppression imposed by the Taliban and Mujahidin, this country is among the strongest patriarchal societies that begets more restricted, oppressed conditions for women.

The contribution of the previous studies above is about the character being analyzed. They focused on the major character in the novel, Mariam and Laila. It is almost the same as the research concern; the researcher of this thesis also tries to take one major character to in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* novel, because the character who always has problems and conflict is Mariam and Laila. Here the researcher will continue and complete the previous discussion of novel Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* but in this research, the researcher



analyzes the novel by using different theory. The researcher using feminist literary criticism which is more emphasize to the five types of oppression. They are exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence.



## CHAPTER III

### ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the writer presents the findings and the discussions of the study. The presentation discusses Mariam's and Laila's oppression in Kholeed Khoseini's novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. This study concerns with the description and the women subject to gender-based exploitation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence and how they solve their oppression.

#### 3.1 Oppressions experienced by Mariam and Laila

Based on the result of data analysis, the researcher finds out the type of oppressions that are experienced by the main female characters, Mariam and Layla and how they have solutions to solve their problems. In addition, the oppressions experienced by Mariam and Laila are divided into five types of oppression covering; exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence.

##### 3.1.1 Exploitation

The first type of oppressions to be described is exploitation.

Exploitation is the act of using people's labour to earn profit without fairly compensating them as Young said, "some people exercise their capacities under the control, according to the purposes, and for the benefit of other people". In the following discussion, exploitation happens to Mariam only. She experiences exploitation from her husband, Rasheed.

Mariam as the wife has done her duties in the household without wishing any wage but a comfort and happy marriage. However, Rasheed does not compensate her fairly, he does not give Mariam a comfort, a happy marriage, even, he treats Mariam badly by always pointing her faults,

*he was more apt to these days, to fault her cooking, to complain about clutter around the yard or point out even minor uncleanliness in the house,” (ATSS, P-100).*

In addition, Rasheed too, offends Mariam by speaking rudely toward her. He easily judges Mariam's innocence as a stupidity, even he chortles. What he does, pointing Mariam's fault, is like the employer who is not satisfied with the slave's work, and indirectly he wants Mariam to do better and command her to avoid her fault in the other times.

*“What's the matter?” he mewled, mimicking at her. “What's the matter is that you've done it again.”  
“But I boiled it five minutes more than usual.”  
“That's a bold lie.”  
“I swear—” (ATSS, p-109)*

Rasheed's exploitation does not end, it goes on. He makes a judgment of Mariam's cooking, as if Mariam cooks improperly. As he keeps trying to find Mariam's fault, he becomes closer to the term exploitation. The form of exploitation in this novel is not like the exploitation in the colonialism era, the thing to be emphasized here is how Rasheed compensates Mariam. These evidences are to explain how wicked Rasheed is in compensating Mariam's work.

*He shook the rice angrily from his fingers and pushed the plate away, spilling sauce and rice on the sofrah. Mariam watched as he stormed out of the living room, then out of the house, slamming the door in his way out. (ATSS, p-109-110)*

Furthermore, she always becomes the object of Rasheed's fault and humiliating. Both fault finding and humiliating are the same as bad compensation or low wage amount in the work place. Rasheed benefits from Mariam the meal every day, the clean house, the clean clothes, and nights of coupling, just like the employer who benefits from the good work of the slave's. It is his turn to pay Mariam back with compliments, comfort, and happiness like the employer who pays the slave with the fair amount of wage.

Another treatment exploitation by Rasheed when Rasheed was tempted to marry Laila. Rasheed married Mariam and then Laila, just for his sexual desires and depends himself on religious grounds. Upon the marriage of Rasheed and Laila, Mariam is scared and unsure. Mariam, at this point, holds deep contempt for Laila even though both were compelled by the circumstances though different. The sharing of one husband can cause great rivalry among women; however, they realize that without creating peace, they are even more powerless and miserable. Mariam's initial discontent for Laila and Rasheed's marriage draws attention to the demeaning practice. The proof can be seen below:

*"With each disappointment (six other miscarriages), Rasheed had grown more remote and resentful. Now nothing she did pleased him." (ATSS, p-98).*

However, The exploitation of women in male dominated society of Afghanistan is further highlighted by the fact that Rasheed serves as more than a symbolic character, representing the evil and oppression that Islamic law places on women. There is a comparison regarding the concerns of women between the Taliban and Communist rule. The communists paved the way for the women to

get education and work in offices. The Taliban, especially created an environment that made it unbearable for a woman to get education and function on her own. Rasheed happily compels his wives to wear burqas after their marriages. It is the evil that emanates from Rasheed, his joy in the restrictive laws enforced by the Taliban that made him an unfavorable character. It can be proved in the following quotation:

*In the eyes of the Taliban, being a communist and the leader of the dreaded KHAD made Najibullah only slightly more contemptible than a woman. (ATSS, p-272)*

The quotation above proved that the Taliban laws had not changed the lifestyle of Rasheed. In his mind, the laws helped him by placing restrictions on his wives and the little power they had left.

### 3.1.2 Marginalization

Young states that marginalization or alienation oppresses people by expelling them from the useful participations in the social life (Young, 1999). Some categories of people are marginalized in the social life because of their differences which reduce their abilities and power. They are the people who live in lack of equality and said as the dependent people. Marginalization in the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* happens to both Mariam and Laila.

Mariam is born as a harami, “a harami was an unwanted thing.

*You are a clumsy little harami. This is my reward for everything I've endured. An heirloom-breaking, clumsy little harami. (ATSS, p-4).*

At the age of five Mariam couldn't understand the anger and hatred in Nana's mind but later she regrets that,



*“A harami was an unwanted thing; that she, Mariam, was an illegitimate person who would never have legitimate claim to the things other people had, things such as love, family, home and acceptance.” (ATSS, p-4).*

That was because of Nana’s personal dismay of being cast aside to live in a shack with her harami, Mariam that she is driven to hate Jalil and resent Mariam for her loyalty towards him. She expressed her anger as,

*A man's heart is a wretched, wretched thing, Mariam. It isn't like a mother's womb. It won't bleed; it won't stretch to make room for you.” (ATSS, p-27).*

The writer of this novel contrasts Nana’s emotions with the innocence of Mariam as a young girl. She admires her father, his family and his riches, even though she does not share in them. Jalil’s occasional visits to Kolba are satisfying because she does not know anything else beyond reality. The fact that Mariam relishes her time spent with Jalil, even prays for his long life portrays that many women are born ignorant of reality. Mariam is kept ignorant of how carelessly Jalil regards her till she too is betrayed by him. Jalil is the representative of wealthy men who are more concerned with appearance and status than a child who is his own flesh and blood. He lives the greater part of his life disregarding his mistreatment of Mariam and lets her sleep on the doorsteps when she visited her house for the first time. It is the society’s brutally negative outlook of haramis that Jalil acts in this manner. Nana is left powerless in the situation, just as women are essentially powerless in the society. Similarly, Mariam was rejected by both of her parents, Jalil was ashamed of her and Nana in her deep despair committed suicide, rejecting Mariam and leaving her to suffer from the cruel hands of the society.



Mariam cannot be separated from marginalization even she has been a wife Rasheed. Society's emphasis on the male dominance is displayed with Rasheed's treatment of Mariam's miscarriages. His mood changes dramatically,

*"With each disappointment (six other miscarriages), Rasheed had grown more remote and resentful. Now nothing she did pleased him." (ATSS, p-98).*

On the other hands, Rasheed claims that man is superior and has power over rules and decision toward woman's space. It is describing in the following argument between character and his wives;

*"They can't make half the population stay home and do nothing," Laila said.*

*"Why not?" Rasheed said. For once, Mariam agreed with him. He'd done the same to her and Laila, in effect, had he not? Surely Laila saw that.*

*"This isn't some village. This is Kabul. Women here used to practice law and medicine; they held office in the government.." Rasheed grinned. "Spoken like the arrogant daughter of a poetry-reading university man that you are. How urbane, how Tajik, of you. You think this is some new, radical idea the Taliban are bringing? Have you ever lived outside of your precious little shell in Kabul, my gul? Ever cared to visit the real Afghanistan, the south, the east, along the tribal border with Pakistan? No? I have. And I can tell you that there are many places in this country that have always lived this way, or close enough anyhow. Not that you would know."*

*"I refuse to believe it," Laila said "They're not serious."*

*"What the Taliban did to Najibullah looked serious to me," Rasheed said. "Wouldn't you agree?"*

*"He was a communist! He was the head of the Secret Police."*

*Rasheed laughed. Mariam heard the answer in his laugh: that in the eyes of the Taliban, being a communist and the leader of the dreaded KHAD made Najibullah only slightly more contemptible than a woman.*

*(ATSS p:155)*

Realizing the strict rules that prohibit any activity for woman, the wife tries to tell her opinion and objection. However, the inner conflict resembles her

own secluded life that happen even before the Taliban has power in big cities. The husband, Rasheed, is the representative of traditional Afghan's society who tends to dismiss any possibility for woman to have education, career and job by secluding their daughter and wife away from any information and knowledge. Here the husband tries to provoke his wife's point of view by describing the woman's inferiority in most part of Afghanistan. Hence, this quotation also implies the hidden thread for woman who tries to reject the rules.

The marginalization not only happens in family, but also in governmental institution such as judicial system. Two characters in the novel, who work as judge, use their authority to do marginalization. This is done by rejecting women as witness and always making them as the culprit in a case. It can be revealed from the following reasons in the court;

*"I wonder," the young Talib said. "God has made us differently, you women and us men. Our brains are different. You are not able to think like we can. Western doctors and their science have proven this. This is why we require only one male witness but two female ones."*

*"I admit to what I did, brother," Mariam said. "But, if I hadn't, he would have killed her. He was strangling her."*

*"So you say. But, then, women swear to all sorts of things all the time."*

*"It's the truth."*

*"Do you have witnesses? Other than your ambagh?"*

*"I do not," said Mariam.*

*"Well, then." He threw up his hands and snickered.*

*(ATSS p:221)*

The quotation shows the marginalization that uses religion and science as the reasons for the blames toward woman's case in judicial system. The setting refers to the judgments and the atmosphere that discredit women in judicial system. The comparisons between man and women in the utterances: you women

and us men explains the way to classify men and women in the opposite of each other. It is used to justify the difference attitude in woman's case by creating the image of women as the inferior in religion. Therefore, he affirms that the women cannot be trusted, as supported from the utterance women swear to all sorts of things all the time. In short, the character want to assure that woman cannot deserve the same treatment with men. Instead, they have to be controlled.

Furthermore, marginalization is done by a police officer through abusing the law for the advantages of men. It is shown in the arguments between characters below;

*"Let us go, Officer..." She read the name on his lapel tag. "Officer Rahman. Honor the meaning of your name and show compassion. What does it matter to you to let a mere two women go? What's the harm in releasing us? We are not criminals."...*  
*"It's a matter of qanoon, hamshira, a matter of law," Rahman said, injecting his voice with a grave, self-important tone. "It is my responsibility, you see, to maintain order."*  
*"If you send us back," she said instead, slowly, "there is no saying what he will do to us."*  
*She could see the effort it took him to keep his eyes from shifting. "What a man does in his home is his business."*  
*"What about the law, then, Officer Rahman?" Tears of rage stung her eyes. "Will you be there to maintain order?"*  
*"As a matter of policy, we do not interfere with private family matters, hamshira." (ATSS p:160)*

The main female characters has two points in this marginalization, law and family matters. It shows the double standard in law that helps in constructing women's space. The utterances a matter of law explains the manipulation in determining what is law and how it is implemented. The conflict emerges when Laila realized that women's condition never becomes the point in law enforcement. The officer emphasizes the words law to offense any critics

regarding woman's case. The sentence to maintain order explains the hypocrisy for blames woman. The utterance What a man does in his home is his business shows the reason to ignore the case against men. In shorts, the implementation of law discriminate woman. Therefore, as long as it gives benefit for men the implementation of law tend to be on the men side. The setting refers to the discrimination on women's situation, which is without any supports from government.

### 3.1.3 Powerlessness

The powerlessness which is experienced by Mariam goes on after almost four years of her marriage; Rasheed shows her that he is the man who cannot tolerate anyone disappointing him. Since Mariam's pregnancies fails him seven times, as none of the pregnancies cannot give him a son, even not a baby, Rasheed bring Mariam to an understanding that she is disappointing him by easily pouncing on mistakes she does. But Mariam is not strong enough to build her self defence against Rasheed's accusation, Mariam is still in powerlessness. She cannot feel anything but a fear, a dread, a fright of Rasheed's coming in the evening.

Together with Mariam and her little Aziza, Laila plans to escape and flee to Pakistan. On the day when they run away, they manage to reach bus station, but finally they are caught and returned home by police.

It infuriates Rasheed. In the following extract, Rasheed tortures them by punching and locking them in different places, without food, water, and light, and it lasts for several days. The powerlessness takes a role as Mariam and Laila



cannot unlock the door to get out. They do not have power or authority to make Rasheed undo his action.

*“Azan rang out a second time and still Rasheed had not given them any food, and worse, no water. That day, a thick, suffocating heat fell on them. The room turned into a pressure cooker” (ATSS, p- 288).*

The way Rasheed intimidates them actually is to show how powerful he is. He wants them to believe that they are powerless and unable to fight against him. The following quotation is the real fact:

*It wasn't easy tolerating him talking this way to her, to bear his scorn, his ridicule, his insults, his walking past her like she was nothing but a house cat. But after four years of marriage, Mariam saw clearly how much a woman could tolerate when she was afraid And Mariam was afraid. She lived in fear of his shifting moods, his volatile temperament, his insistence on steering even mundane exchanges down a confrontational path that, on occasion, he would resolve with punches, slaps, kicks, and sometimes try to make amends for with polluted apologies and sometimes not (ATSS p- 55-56).*

The quotation above indicates how powerless Mariam is, in the four years since the day at the bathhouse, there had been six more cycles of hopes raised then dashed, each loss, each collapse, and each trip to the doctor more crushing for Mariam than the last. With each disappointment, Rasheed had grown more remote and resentful. At that time, nothing she did pleased him. She cleaned the house, made sure he always had a supply of clean shirts, cooked him his favorite dishes. Once, disastrously, she even bought makeup and put it on for him. But when he came home, he took one look at her and winced with such distaste that she rushed to the bathroom and washed it all off, tears of shame mixing with soapy water, rouge, and mascara.

At that time, Mariam dreaded when she was hearing the sound of him



coming home in the evening. The key rattling, the creak of the door these were sounds that set her heart racing. With her ears, she took inventory of his doings:

*“Chair legs dragged across the floor, the plaintive squeak of the cane seat when heat, the clinking of spoon against plate, the flutter of newspaper pages flipped, the slurping of water. And as her heart pounded, her mind wondered what excuse he would use that night to pounce on her. There was always something, some minor thing that would infuriate him, because no matter what she did to please him, no matter how thoroughly she submitted to his wants and demands, it wasn't enough. She could not give him his son back. In this most essential way, she had failed him-seven times she had failed him-and now she was nothing but a burden to him. She could see it in the way he looked at her, when he looked at her. She was a burden to him” (ATSS p-56)*

The dehumanism behavior of Rasheed can also be found in the following statement:

*"Get up," he said. "Come here. Get up."  
He snatched her hand, opened it, and dropped a handful of pebbles into it.  
"Put these in your mouth." "What?"  
"Put these in your mouth."  
"Stop it, Rasheed, I'm" (ATSS p- 59).*

In the dialog above, Rasheed shoved two fingers into her mouth and pried it open, and then forced the cold, hard pebbles into it. Mariam struggled against him, mumbling, but he kept pushing the pebbles in, his upper lip curled in a sneer.

In the next case, there is a certain kind of common understanding in patriarchal culture that lay down women deeply in ravine of men's rule systematically. This rule is understood as culture and moral that must be obeyed by women. For instance, women only keep the command of men. So, it will go on as a finger of men. We pay attention this order as follows:

*"Sit down before you faint and cut your head open" (ATSS p-114).*

This command shows us to the weakness of women that is given by patriarchal culture naturally cannot be refused. This example indicates us to infraction of the right. And this mistake is not ever in mindful of society. However, the case of this domination or oppression is about women's rights equality that should be struggled.

The way Rasheed intimidates them actually is to show how powerful he is. He wants them to believe that they are powerless and unable to fight against him.

#### **3.1.4 Cultural imperialism**

Everyone is born into a culture a set of shared ideas about the nature of reality, standards of right and wrong, and concepts for making sense of social interactions. These ideas are put into practice in behaviors and material objects. As total dependent infants we are socialized-taught the rules, roles, and relationships of the social world we will inherit. In the process of growing up, we learn to think, act, and feel as we are "supposed to". As adults, we are embedded in our culture's assumptions and images of gender.

In this pattern, patriarchy has dominant roles to give perception how the idea can be shared and accepted in society. Furthermore, patriarchy begins to construct the ideas becomes a system of society. But unfortunately, they come by sets of the ideology about superior and inferior that put women are under control of their authority and always subordinate. In this case, patriarchy wants that women ought to recognize their destiny as naturally, it cannot be refused and must

be accepted. According to researcher's opinion, that is the acceptance of destiny or consciousness of it that has been compelled. But actually, the author wants to give this pattern as women's consciousness to the struggle that must be built up as resistance.

Here, the author represents the voice of women as the opposition of patriarchy by taking this case of neglect. Inequality of right in this novel is fundamental issue to review gender phenomena in patriarchal society. Emotional neglect in this case is the root of abuse and generally categorized as cultural imperialism aspect.

*"Of all the daughters I could have had, why did God give me an ungrateful one like you? Everything I endured for you! How dare you! How dare you abandon me like this, you treacherous little harami" Then she mocked.  
"What a stupid girl you are! You think you matter to him, that you're wanted in his house? You think you're a daughter to him? That he's going to take you in? Let me tell you something- A man's heart is a wretched, wretched thing, Mariam. It isn't like a mother's womb. It won't bleed, it won't stretch to make room for you. I'm the only one who loves you. I'm all you have in this world, Mariam, and when I'm gone you'll have nothing. You'll have nothing. You are nothing!" (ATSS p- 17).*

The data above is form of verbal aggression that expresses disaffection of certain condition. It's kind of judgment to point out how sacrifice of woman to her children. In this condition man cannot pay woman's sacrifice when she bears her children. Man cannot feel how smarting woman face their baby comes out. And the question is, why she must accept her shellacking when she success and pass through of it?

The explanation is actually the effect of emotional neglect that threat

woman as a victim. That the emotional expression of sufferings. Everyone wishes the charity and love as reward to her sacrifice. Nana is only making a warning to Mariam that Nana is the only one she has in this world. When Nana dies, she will have nothing. We can see as follow:

*"I'm all you have in this world, Mariam, and when I'm gone you'll have nothing. You'll have nothing. You are nothing!" (ATSS p- 25).*

It means that there is no one who will recognize and take care on Mariam after Nana die. Society will not legalize the harami because it is the rule of social and reputed as crime of morality. Conventionally, society has put standards value of the right and wrong. But in patriarchy society standards value of social culture always put on the patriarchal paradigm that is override equality of women's right. We can see as follows:

*"I wonder," the young Talib said. "God has made us differently, you women and us men. Our brains are different. You are not able to think like we can. Western doctors and their science have proven this. This is why we require only one male witness but two female ones" (ATSS p: 191).*

The paradox of human nature is that, always a manifestation of cultural meanings, social relationships, and power politics; —not biology, but culture, becomes destiny. However, the powerlessness which is experienced by Mariam goes on after almost four years of her marriage; Rasheed shows her that he is the man who cannot tolerate anyone disappointing him. Since Mariam's pregnancies fails him seven times, as none of the pregnancies cannot give him a son, even not a baby, Rasheed bring Mariam to an understanding that she is disappointing him by easily pouncing on mistakes she does. But Mariam is not strong enough to build her self defence against Rasheed's accusation, Mariam is still in



powerlessness. She cannot feel anything but a fear, a dread, a fright of Rasheed's coming in the evening.

### 3.1.5 Violence

The continual use of physical and mental violence gives contribution in women's space. It continually happens at the same time in family and society in order to make the space becomes smaller. The setting that related to violence can be seen from the threatening situation and oppression toward women. Then the conflict emerges when characters struggle to against the violence.

The character who does violence in family is Rasheed, the husband of Mariam and Laila. The character affirms his power and limits the movement through physical and mental violence. Mental violence is usually reflected from sarcasm, humiliation and insulting words. It has a stronger effect than the physical violence in making women accept the constructed space. It is described from the following quotation;

*Downstairs, the beating began. To Laila, the sounds she heard were those of a methodical, familiar proceeding. There was no cursing, no screaming, no pleading, no surprised yelps, only the systematic business of beating and being beaten, the thump, thump of something solid repeatedly striking flesh, something, someone, hitting a wall with a thud, cloth ripping. Now and then, Laila heard running footsteps, a wordless chase, furniture turning over, glass shattering, then the thumping once more ... "You try this again and I will find you. I swear on the Prophet's name that I will find you. And, when I do, there isn't a court in this godforsaken country that will hold me accountable for what I will do. To Mariam first, then to her, and you last. I'll make you watch. You understand me? I'll make you watch. And, with that, he left the room. But not before delivering a kick to the flank that would have Laila pissing blood for days. (ATSS p:163)*



The quotation above shows the conflict that emerges when the character oppressed his wives. He believes that women should be controlled and be obedient. Therefore, he treats them rudely as he thinks that he is the owner of his wives. The opposition rise when the wives try to run away from home. The words beating, hitting, ripping and kicking show the acts of physical violence that put women in the corner. Moreover, the character even use mental violence to forces his wives to obey by intimidating them with threat and fears. The utterance I will find you, I'll make you watch show how he affirms his power in doing anything to punish his wives. The utterance there isn't a court in this country explains the threat that shows there is no support for women in their society. It shows the tendency to ignore the violence that happens in Afghan's family. The setting refers to the horrible situation faced by the women that keep them stay at the constructed space. Therefore, the space becomes smaller and very difficult to be achieved.

However, the legal punishment through judicial system brings a strong influence in the success of constructing the space. Many women are imprisonment due to the "honor" offense, that common in Afghan tradition. It is depicted in the following experience of the woman's character;

*NONE OF THE women in Mariam's cell were serving time for violent crime, they were all there for the common offense of "running away from home."*  
*The most avid was Naghma, she said her father had promised her to a tailor some thirty years older than her.*  
*She'd tried to elope to Gardez with a young man she'd fallen in love with, the son of a local mullah. When they were caught and sent back, the mullah's son was flogged before he repented and said that Naghma had seduced him with her feminine charms. She'd cast a spell on him, he said. He promised he would*

*rededicate himself to the study of the Koran. The mullah's son was freed. Naghma was sentenced to five years. It was just as well, she said, her being here in prison. Her father had sworn that the day she was released he would take a knife to her throat.*  
(ATSS p:256)

The collaboration of family's unwritten rules with the legal written punishment makes a strong opponent to the existence of woman's right in Afghanistan. Most of the cases are related to the struggle for the right, for example regarding marriage decision. The rules supports the absolute power for the father to force his daughter to any suitor whom he choose. The women, who reject or flee, are threatened with legal punishment, while the men can easily avoid the punishment. This tendency shows the abuse of power in supporting the process of constructing woman's space.

In addition, most of women have experienced economical violence by denying their access and not allowing women to work. They are constructed to stay home serve her husband and take care on their baby. The researcher finds the data as follow:

*Attention women:*

*You will stay inside your homes at all times. It is not proper for women to wander aimlessly about the streets. If you go outside, you must be accompanied by a mahram, a male relative. If you are caught alone on the street, you will be beaten and sent home.*

*You will not, under any circumstance, show your face. You will cover with burqa when outside. If you do not, you will be severely beaten.*

*Cosmetics are forbidden.*

*Jewelry is forbidden.*

*You will not wear charming clothes.*

*You will not speak unless spoken to.*

*You will not make eye contact with men.*

*You will not laugh in public. If you do, you will be beaten.*

*You will not paint your nails. If you do, you will lose a finger.*

*Girls are forbidden from attending school. All schools for girls will be*

*closed immediately.*

*Women are forbidden from working.*

*If you are found guilty of adultery, you will be stoned to death*

*Listen. Listen well. Obey. Allah-u-akbar (ATSS p-144).*

The the people of Kabul receive a message that lists the laws enacted by the Taliban. These new statutes require strict adherence to Islamic law. For the men, this includes growing beards and wearing turbans. Women are forbidden from leaving the house unaccompanied, showing their faces, or speaking without being spoken to first. The punishment for women who laugh in public or neglect to wear a burqa is a beating by the Taliban. All schools for girls are immediately shut down, and women are forbidden from working.

Perhaps, it is enough to prove that the women cannot reach their freedom to get welfare economically. That's one of the rules that they are not allowed going to work and must stay inside home at all the time. This matter is inflicting a financial loss for women by denying their access. By this matter we can include these patterns to the form of economical abuse against women. Limitation of economic access will damage the welfare of women totally. Because they will forever depend on their husband materially without demand. Consequently, they Since, Rasheed's store burns down in a fire; they have to sell everything that they could spare to make ends meet. Rasheed is home during the day, because he got fired from working at two local restaurants. Laila harasses Rasheed about why he got fired, and Rasheed beats her, saying she would make him kill her. Food is running out, and the family is forced to skip meals often. Rasheed steals food when he can, but the family begins to realize that they might starve.

Rasheed, Laila, Mariam, Aziza, and Zalmai leave Kabul for Karteh-Seh. They are dropping Aziza off at what she tells her is a "special school", but in reality it is an orphanage that is in bad shape. Laila and Mariam promise that they would visit Aziza. The orphanage is led by a kind man named Zaman. Laila tells him that she is ashamed to leave her child in an orphanage, but Zaman understands. When Laila and Mariam leave Aziza, they try to be calm, but Aziza yells and panics.

In the effect of economic problem, women are the first victim because of their dependent upon their husband. They have no access to fulfill family's necessary if their husband does not go to work again. Thus, they submit to one's fate. This condition is noted as abusive behavior that is mediated by the law of Taliban that prohibit women to go outside for work.

### **3.2 The Way Mariam and Laila Deal With the Oppression**

In this analysis, it discusses a struggle of women in patriarchal culture to be equal in education. Here, Mariam wants to go to school. She wants to have an education. But Nana cannot allow her to go to school. Now, Mariam only studies Koran to Mullah Faizullah and other knowledge. Nana thinks that there is no one will accept her in school because she is a harami. That's a fear of Nana to her daughter in the society that she can do nothing and no one care about harami. By that reason, women is only one skill, that's Tahamul (endure), but Mariam implicitly wants to change her destiny and struggles to get an education.

*"If the girl wants to learn, let her, my dear. Let the girl have an education"...*

*... "What's the sense schooling a girl like you? It's like shining a spittoon. And you'll learn nothing of value in those schools. There is*



*only one, only one skill a woman like you and me needs in life, and they don't teach it in school. Look at me"...*

*... "Only one skill and it's this: Tahamul Endure"...*

*... "It's our lot in life, Mariam. Women like us. We endure. It's all we have. Do you understand? Besides, they'll laugh at you in school. They will. They'll call you harami. They'll say the most terrible things about you. I won't have it" (ATSS p-12).*

Symbolizing women negatively will cause not to be recognized women potential. That will limit the access in strategic position in public. In the one hand, that education promises women to get the same right with men. Actually, women are equal with men in every aspect. There's no reason to forbid them if men can do it. As we can see as follow:

*... Khala Rangmaal did not wear makeup or jewelry. She did not cover and forbade the female students from doing it. She said women and men were equal in every way and there was no reason women should cover if men didn't (ATSS p-62).*

How very important the education for women to change their life and society. Hakim, father of Laila said that the education is everything in this life. He explains that women should not marry soon, because there is more important than it, that's education. He always remembers Laila to learn much knowledge.

*I know you're still young, but I want you to understand and learn this now, he said. Marriage can wait, education cannot. You're a very, very bright girl. Truly, you are. You can be anything you want, Laila. I know this about you. And I also know that when this war is over, Afghanistan is going to need you as much as its men, maybe even more. Because a society has no chance of success if its women are uneducated, Laila. No chance (ATSS p- 63-64).*

He believes in something that Afghanistan can be developed by struggle of women and if all of women are educated the society will have a chance to get success. As we know that is emancipation of women. By giving a chance of education for women and change the tradition that women are not allowed outside



and must be accompanied by *mahrom*, perhaps, at this time women will reach their right and freedom of their life.

*... More specifically, the education of women. The government had sponsored literacy classes for all women. Almost two-thirds of the students at Kabul University were women now, Babi said, women who were studying law, medicine, engineering. Women have always had it hard in this country, Laila, but they're probably more free now, under the communists, and have more rights than they've ever had before, Babi said, always lowering his voice, aware of how intolerant Mammy was of even remotely positive talk of the communists. But it's true, Babi said, it's a good time to be a woman in Afghanistan. And you can take advantage of that, Laila. Of course, women's freedom - here, he shook his head ruefully - is also one of the reasons people out there took up arms in the first place (ATSS p-76).*

Hakim gives more understanding to Laila about freedom of women; that she will acquire her right to be women. As a parent, Hakim hopes for a bright future for Laila, and believes that his daughter will be successful in the future. He bucks women's progressive in all aspect of life that society has to leave the ancient tradition. It's said that women are rarely seen on the streets and is only accompanied by *mahrom*. He doesn't agree with that statement, for him it's not right and can make society stay in the traditional understanding where the society never reaches the progressive. Hakim wishes the change for Afghanistan by giving education to women.

Furthermore, Hakim actually prefers Afghanistan is under communist policy because they give freedom for women to make their own choice. He wants a new tradition by coming of communist that supports women going to school, to university and working outside home. And Laila is certainly happy for Babi's support that education is important in her life. Laila is smart girl in the school. Babi also gives some course on her at home in the night about the lesson which

was learned in the school. That activity becomes a habit for them that Babi always gives an adding knowledge for Laila.

Since communist has leaved Afghanistan, the condition is change suddenly. It is under politic power of Taliban. And women are oppressed and discriminated by fundamental understanding upon the rule of Taliban. Women, children, and old people can do nothing under their power. Everything is changed and turned away to the authority of patriarchy.

*She shuddered at what he would do if he found out that she had been stealing from him. Every week, since Aziza's birth, she pried his wallet open when he was asleep or in the outhouse and took a single bill. Some weeks, if the wallet was light, she took only a five-Afghani bill or nothing at all, for fear that he would notice. When the wallet was plump, she helped herself to a ten or a twenty, once even risking two twenties. She hid the money in a pouch she'd sewn in the lining of her checkered winter coat (ATSS p-129).*

The data explains that Laila begins to think her planning. That thing only can do Laila to arrange the planning. She dares to steal his money by consequence that it is her decision. Now, she knows what she does because she has own way and planned something to do it. Quietly, she plans to run away from his home. She has drawn up everything to get her aim. She intends to go away with Mariam and bring her daughter.

Laila knows this way can endure her life and her daughter. By this reason, she must decide her own way to escape from Rasheed's cruelty. And everything is going on the planning, as data follows:

*We're leaving this spring, Aziza and I. Come with us, Mariam (ATSS p-134).*

She has drawn up everything to get her aim. She intends to go away with Mariam and bring her daughter. Laila knows this way can endure her life and

her daughter. By this reason, she must decide her own way to escape from Rasheed's cruelty. And everything is going on the planning, as data follows:

*We're leaving this spring, Aziza and I. Come with us, Mariam (ATSS p-134).*

*...it's a good time to be a woman in Afghanistan, Laila.*

Since the Mujahideen takeover in April 1992, Afghanistan's name had been changed to the Islamic State of Afghanistan. The Supreme Court under Rabbani was filled now with hard-liner mullahs who did away with the communist era decrees that empowered women and instead passed rulings based on Shari'a, strict Islamic laws that ordered women to cover, forbade their travel without a male relative, punished adultery with stoning even if the actual enforcement of these laws was sporadic at best.

*But they'd enforce them on us more, Laila had said to Mariam, if they weren't so busy killing each other. And us (ATSS p-135).*

At that time, Laila was on the way with Mariam and her daughter, Aziza. They're in Lahore Gate bus station looking for hardly and hope will find someone can be believed and take them as his family. It would be first challenge for them to go across the risk. Furthermore, Laila thinks if they arrive in Pakistan. Already burdened with nearly two million Afghan refugees, Pakistan had been nearby its borders to Afghans in January of that year. Perhaps it might become second risk for them. ... *We'll find a way when we get there, she'd told Mariam (ATSS p-136).*

Unfortunately, all the planning does not run successful. They have to face officer that prohibits women go out from their home without accompanied by their husband. They have been known that they want to escape from their home,

as consequence they must be interrogation and carried to the office. Certainly, they must be disappointed with the reason of the officer that they have broken the law, as data follows:

*"I can't."*

*"I beg you, please."*

*"It's a matter of qanoon, hamshira, a matter of law," Rahman said, injecting his voice with a grave, self-important tone. "It is my responsibility, you see, to maintain order." In spite of her distraught state, Laila almost laughed. She was stunned that he'd used that word in the face of all that the Mujahideen factions had done-the murders, the lootings, the rapes, the tortures, the executions, the bombings, the tens of thousands of rockets they had fired at each other, heedless of all the innocent people who would die in the cross fire. Order. But she bit her tongue (ATSS p-139).*

At this time, Laila is really disappointed with the pronouncement of officer Rahman that he's only doing the law and responsibility. That it is only the order that must be done. However, they are almost in debate. Laila always feels dissatisfaction of that rule because it is not fair.

*"What about the law, then, Officer Rahman?" Tears of rage stung her eyes. "Will you be there to maintain order?" "As a matter of policy, we do not interfere with private family matters, hamshira". "Of course you don't. When it benefits the man. And isn't this a 'private family matter,' as you say? Isn't it?" (ATSS p-139).*

By that awkward law will be applied the rule that prohibit and limit women activities. It's like this matter, that women will stay inside homes at all times. It is not proper for women to wander aimlessly about the streets. If going outside, women must be accompanied by a *mahram*, a male relative. If they are caught alone on the street, they will be beaten and sent home. They will not, under any circumstance, show their face. They will cover with *burqa* when outside. If they do not, they will be severely beaten.



*"They can't make half the population stay home and do nothing" Laila said (ATSS p-144).*

*...He's going to kill her, she thought. He really means to. And Mariam could not, would not, allow that to happen. He'd taken so much from her in twenty-seven years of marriage. She would not watch him take Laila too. Mariam steadied her feet and tightened her grip around the shovel's handle. She raised it. She said his name. She wanted him to see. "Rasheed." He looked up. Mariam swung. She hit him across the temple. The blow knocked him off Laila.*

*... And so Mariam raised the shovel high, raised it as high as she could, arching it so it touched the small of her back. She turned it so the sharp edge was vertical, and, as she did, it occurred to her that this was the first time that she was deciding the course of her own life. And, with that, Mariam brought down the shovel. This time, she gave it everything she had (ATSS p-182-183).*

That situation began when Zalmai (second child of Laila) had an interrogation from Rasheed. At that time, Rasheed was asking question to Zalmai about what's his mother doing when Rasheed was not at home. By his smooth, Zalmai answered honestly about someone else (Thariq) came to his mother and made conversation with Laila in home. That's the cause of this violence and the battle of Laila and Mariam to Rasheed.

As head of household, Rasheed could not receive other people came to his home without his permission. Moreover, he's known that the man who came to Laila is her friend when they were adolescent. Apparently, Rasheed is jealous to that man. And the rule it will be not ever someone else come to the wife. Since that event, Rasheed began to beat Laila by his belt.

Laila senses him strangling her, and she thinks she will die. Suddenly, she realizes that she can finally breathe, and Mariam checks to make sure she starlight. Laila realizes what Mariam has done to Rasheed and that he is, in fact, dead. Mariam and Laila do not want Zalmai to see Rasheed, so they drag Rasheed



into the backyard behind a work bench. Mariam tries to heal Laila's wounds.

From that occurrence, Mariam firstly come to make her destiny and determine her own life. Event though, she has to face consequences by killing Rasheed. Now, she has closed everything as a dream passed soon. In other hand, it will be difficulties in their life. But she believes one thing that what she's done is a pride, that she has saved respectability of women. She also believes that always there is a way even she knows that she cannot hide herself from the punishment of death penalty. Mariam realizes that, and it's waiting for her.

*Laila murmured encouragingly. It would be an existence rife with difficulties, she saw, but of a pleasurable kind, difficulties they could take pride in, possess, value, as one would a family heirloom. Mariam's soft maternal voice went on, brought a degree of comfort to her. There is away, she'd said, and, in the morning, Mariam would tell her what needed to be done and they would do it, and maybe by tomorrow this time they would be on their way to this new life, a life luxuriant with possibility and joy and welcomed difficulties. Laila was grateful that Mariam was in charge, unclouded and sober, able to think this through for both of them. Her own mind was a jittery, muddled mess. Mariam got up. "You should tend to your son now." On her was the most stricken expression Laila had ever seen on a human face (ATSS p-185).*

Mariam realizes the consequence of her measure that she will accept the punishment and will separate with Laila. And Laila just wants to be with Mariam in any conditions. She asks Mariam to stay with her and go away to Pakistan to save the live. But Mariam has to receive the responsibility on her measure of killing Rasheed.

*"I don't want any of it without you," Laila croaked.*

*Mariam smiled wanly.*

*"I want it to be just like you said, Mariam, all of us going together, you, me, the children. Tariq has a place in Pakistan. We can hide out there for a while, wait for things to calm down"*

*"That's not possible," Mariam said patiently, like a parent to a well-meaning but misguided child.*

*"We'll take care of each other," Laila said, choking on the words, her eyes wet with tears. "Like you said. No. I'll take care of you for a change" (ATSS p-187).*

Mariam tries to come up with a plan, and Laila says that they must leave. Laila tells Zalmai that Rasheed has gone away. Zalmai asks questions, and Laila tries to assure Zalmai that it is not his fault. Mariam tells Laila to leave with Tariq and the children in the morning.

Laila insists that Mariam come along, but she refuses. Mariam says that eventually the Taliban will come after all of them if they find Rasheed dead and the women missing. Mariam says it is unfair for the children to have to live on the run, and that she cannot look at Zalmai every day knowing that she has killed his father. Laila tries to make excuses, but she knows that Mariam is right. Laila weeps. Laila and Zalmai leave the house, never to see Mariam again.

*"They chop off hands for stealing bread," Mariam said "What do you think they'll do when they find a dead husband and two missing wives?"*

*"No one will know," Laila breathed. "No one will find us."*

*"They will. Sooner or later. They're bloodhounds." Mariam's voice was low, cautioning; it made Laila's promises sound fantastical, trumped-up, foolish.*

*"Mariam, please-"*

*"When they do, they'll find you as guilty as me. Tariq too. I won't have the two of you living on the run, like fugitives. What will happen to your children if you're caught?"*

*Laila's eyes brimming, stinging.*

*"Who will take care of them then? The Taliban? Think like a mother, Laila jo. Think like a mother. I am".*

*... "For me, it ends here. There's nothing more I want. Everything I'd ever wished for as a little girl you've already given me. You and your children have made me so very happy.*

*It's all right, Laila jo. This is all right. Don't be sad" (ATSS p-188).*

Mariam makes the ultimate sacrifice for Laila and the children, as she is willing to take the blame, and ultimately suffer the ultimate punishment for

Rasheed's death. Her comment concerning her death as a legitimate end to illegitimate beginnings is an interesting one, because readers may consider this execution to be the epitome of illegitimacy of power, authority and control. However, Mariam knows that her actions against Rasheed were completely justified, and her execution is therefore a legitimate manner of death.

Laila finally finds the life she has been dreaming of with Tariq in Pakistan, but still yearns to go back to Afghanistan to help her country. Even after the world's eye has focused on Afghanistan, she insists on returning and rebuilding. Before, Laila's insistence to remain in the land of Afghanistan was based on familial ties. Now, however, she has no familial ties left in the land, but feels a patriotic draw to assist her nation, despite the horror that she suffered there.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

After presenting the finding and the discussion in the preceding chapter, this research will conclude and provide some suggestions.

#### 4.1 Conclusion

After analyzing the oppression of Mariam and Laila in In the novel A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini, the reseacher concludes that Mariam and Laila faced deep oppressions, Some conclusions can be drawn from the findings as follows:

##### a. Exploitation

In the following discussion, exploitation happens to Mariam only. She experiences exploitation from her husband, Rasheed.

Mariam as the wife has done her duties in the household without wishing any wage but a comfort and happy marriage. But Rasheed does not compensate her fairly, he does not give Mariam a comfort, a happy marriage, even, he treats Mariam badly by always pointing her faults, “he was more apt to these days, to fault her cooking, to complain about clutter around the yard or point out even minor uncleanliness in the house,”

##### b. Marginalization

Mariam is marginalized because born as a harami, “a harami was an unwanted thing; that she, Mariam, was an illegitimate person who would never have legitimate claim to the things other people had, things such as love,

family, home, acceptance”. The harami status which is attached to her has reduced her ability to move freely and be important as the other people in the society. It is not physical ability which is reduced by her harami status, but her rights to have love, family, home, and acceptance.

#### **c. Powerlessness**

This type of oppression consists of people who are powerless that they do not even talk about their oppression.

The powerlessness which is experienced by Mariam goes on after almost four years of her marriage; Rasheed shows her that he is the man who cannot tolerate anyone disappointing him. Since Mariam’s pregnancies fails him seven times, as none of the pregnancies cannot give him a son, even not a baby, Rasheed bring Mariam to an understanding that she is disappointing him by easily pouncing on mistakes she does. But Mariam is not strong enough to build her self-defense against Rasheed’s accusation. Mariam is still in powerlessness. She cannot feel anything but a fear, a dread, a fright of Rasheed’s coming in the evening.

#### **d. Cultural imperialism**

The form of cultural imperialism in this context was a patriarchy, in which husbands had the dominant power in the household.

Patriarchal system basically is designed to protect women and their rights and their equality in the family, but some men have misunderstood the essence of patriarchy by considering men have more power in the family or in the household, and they treat women as the inferior, the subordinated beings.



#### e. Violence

This kind of oppression is practiced to intimidate certain group of people. In this context, Mariam, and Laila are the group of people who are oppressed in a systematic violence which committed by their husband.

The way Rasheed tortures Mariam and Laila using violence is aimed to damage and destroy them, as violence results physical wounds to the victim, even, in a certain level, violence might carry a death to the victim. From those types of oppression which experienced by them, violence is the most dangerous and harmful.

#### 4.2 Suggestion

This study only tries to explore one of Kholeed Hosseini's novels. Having analyzed this novel, some suggestion for the next researchers intending to further study this novel or other novel written by the same author presented.

The feminism approach is not the only way by which novel *A Thousands Splendid Suns* can be investigated. There are many still more possible approaches to explore this novel, such as sociological or psychological approach. Therefore, it is advisable to the next researchers to study this novel using the different possible approaches. Furthermore, since Kholled Hosseini has many other works, it is necessary for the next researchers to study and analyze them to produce more generalization concerning the characteristic of Kholled Hosseini's work.

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