

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Talking about literature and its product is a very interesting topic. At the first time, literature was defined as an imaginative and fictional writing which is not literally true (Eagleton, 2003: 1). However this definition is debatable because there are so many events, places and times are stated clearly in the literary works which indicate the real events, places or times. Some of them are matched to the real fact but some of them tell of ‘the different fact’. Then the Russian formalists (Eagleton, 2003: 4) see the literature as a special kind of language which has a set of deviations from a norm and linguistic violence in contrast to the ordinary language used by people commonly. Welleck and Warren (2014: 14) stated that a literature is an ambiguity language which contains many homonyms and irregular and irrational categorization.

Further, a literary work, such as a novel, is an author’s vehicle to express the ideas, a reflection of a reality or the incarnation of some transcendental truth. The literary work is a material fact which can be analyzed further. Welleck and Warren (2014: 32) stated that a literary work functions to free the author and the readers from their emotion pressure. Then a literary work can be analyzed differently by the readers in the different time. A literary work’s analysis cannot be limited in the time when it was

created; it can be analyzed in the different time because a literary work can be considered as the mirror of the society.

One of the most popular literary works is a novel. A novel is a genre which affirms the common life and also the form in which values are at their most diverse and conflicting. It is also a sign of freedom, because through a novel, author or the readers are freed to give form and meaning as a creative act (Eagleton, 2005: 5). Furthermore, Lukacs in Eagleton (2005: 12) stated that a novel is the product of an alienated word and also as a utopian response to it. Alienation is the condition in which men and women fail to recognize the objective word as their own subjective creation (Eagleton, 2005: 12). Alienation happened because of the class oppression in the society.

What cannot be done by the author in the real world can be done by the author in his novel. The author can express his ideas independently. The author can use his works as the struggle medium to make a social movement. At least, by his works, an author can tell what happened in a certain place to the other people in the other place. Khaled Hosseini is not an exception for this case.

A Thousand Splendid Suns which was published in June 2007, is the second work of Khaled Hosseini after *The Kite Runner*. The novel can be seen as the symbol of Hosseini's freedom in giving the form and meaning to the story as reflected in the novel. It is Hosseini's response to the women condition in Afghanistan. How he arranged the plot and the events in A

Thousand Splendid Suns is very attractive and can drive the readers into ‘the madness’.

A Thousand Splendid Suns consists of four parts. Part One talks about the story of Mariam and Part Two tells of Laila’s story. Part Three focuses on the shared lives of Mariam and Laila under the same house, and Part Four presents a happy ending story of Laila’s life with Tariq and her children after Rasheed’s and Mariam’s deaths.

There are so many responses to *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, both the positive responses and the negative ones. The positive responses can be taken from some quotations which are printed in the novel’s cover. *Oprah Magazine* stated that: “The hidden emotion, the power of love, the beauty, the forbidden things and unlimited patience were presented by Khaled Hosseini in *A Thousand Splendid Suns*”. Meanwhile *New York Post* wrote that *A Thousand Splendid Suns* does not only present the Afghanistan reality to the readers but also shows Hosseini’s capability and talent in creating melodrama at each plot; a sharp picture; black and white characterizations and the wonderful emotional play in the story. *The Guardian* argued that Hosseini’s prose is so deep, he did not only expose the political side but also the personal relationship one.

Meanwhile the negative response can be taken from Ligoria’s study in www.academia.edu which was accessed on February 26th, 2016 at 09:45 am. She said that the novel shows the bad side of *sharia* or the Islamic Law, especially about the women’s right. Hosseini did not give equal

understanding of *sharia* equally based on the Holy Book, *Koran*. However, she underlined how religion is often used as the main reason to marginalize the women.

Because *A Thousand Splendid Suns* got so many public responses, it proves that the novel had created its own reality and interesting to study further. The other reason, why the novel is interesting to study is the fact, that Khaled Hosseini is a man, but in the novel he told of the women's rebellion in gaining equality for their rights in some aspects of life.

This study analyzed Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007) by using Marxist theory, especially in *Class Struggle* which is represented in the form of women rebellion in the novel. Marx (Boswell and Dixon, 1993: 686) defines rebellion as the movement against the oppressor to create the class struggle or even a revolution based on the class consciousness. Marx as quoted in Suseno (2001: 112) said that the history of the man is the history of the class struggle. The main point of the class struggle is to gain the equality.

O'Sullivan, Tim, et. al. (1994: 39) stated that social classes are those distinct social formations made up of groups of people who have a similar relationship to the means of production in society and, as a result, a common social and cultural position within an unequal system of property ownership, power and material rewards. The classes will divide the society into different group. The consequence is that the grouping will create oppression form in

the society. The oppression will raise the class consciousness for the oppressed side to make a class struggle.

The class struggle, in the large scale, can be represented by the oppressor in one side and in the oppressed in the other side. In the small scale, the oppression can happen between the man to the woman. Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* tells of Laila and Mariam's rebellion to the man's oppression. Before making the real study, the simple investigation should be conducted. It covers the theory, the previous studies of the novel and the assumptions of the novel. Therefore, I try to design the pre-study research in this paper in order to give a clearer view about the novel. The principles of Marxism are delivered initially because the Marxist theory is used in the real study.

Based on the story of the Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* that tells of Mariam and Laila rebellion in gaining the equal position to the men, I am interested in doing the research entitled *WOMEN'S REBELLION IN KHALED HOSSEINI'S A THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS: A MARXIST APPROACH*.

B. Research Questions

The problem is the women rebellion. Based on the problem, I formulate some research questions as follows:

1. How is women's rebellion described in Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*?

2. What factors motivate the women to rebel?
3. What did Khaled Hosseini's response to solve the problem?

C. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To describe the rebellion in Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*?
2. To find out the characteristics or indicators of women rebellion in Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*
3. To get the reasons of women rebellion in *A Thousand Splendid Suns*
4. To observe Khaled Hosseini's response to solve the problem

D. Benefits of Study

After finishing the study, it is expected to give some theoretical benefits and practical benefits to the writer and the readers as follows:

1. Theoretical Benefits

- a. To give a social awareness to the readers about the literature as 'a struggle media'
- b. To give additional information to literature research, especially those dealing to Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*

2. Practical Benefits

- a. To encourage the readers to see the literary work as the mirror of the society

- b. To give any contributions to other literary researchers, especially in the study of Khaled Hosseini's work

E. Research Paper Organization

In order to make the thesis easier to discuss, the study is organized into five chapters as follows: Chapter I includes introduction which covers background of the study; limitation of the study; problem statement; objective of the study; benefits of the study; and research paper organization. Chapter II covers the underlying theory which consists of: previous studies on Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*; Theoretical Review – Marxist Theory Principles –, especially about the rebellion. Chapter III tells of the research method including: type of research; object of the research; subject of the research; data and the data source; technique of the collecting data; data validity and technique of collecting data. Chapter IV discusses the research findings and discussion; meanwhile Chapter V presents conclusion and suggestion of the thesis. This thesis is also supplemented by the bibliographies and the necessary appendixes.