

# STUDY ON MAIN CHARACTERS IN RELATION TO SETTING IN *A THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS* NOVEL

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## INTRODUCTION

This study examines how settings affect and shape the characters' traits in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* novel. This novel is one of the most valuable works in the world so that many studies have examined this novel. However, from the research that the researchers conducted, the studies that have been carried out are mostly in the areas of feminism and psychoanalysis. Meanwhile, to understand message the author of this novel wants to convey, it is necessary to carry out several other studies outside the area of Feminism and Psychoanalysis. For this reason, the researcher decided to study the novel by examining how the setting influenced the characterization of the characters. The researcher analyze it, to answer few questions: (a) How are the characters represented in the novel? (b) How do the settings form the characters?

By the problems above, the researcher examines this study in several following specific points: (a) to describe and analyze main characters representation, and (b) to describe settings and analyze how the settings form main characters in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* novel by Khaleed Hosseini. The study discusses relationship between setting and character in order to find out the traits and settings which shape the traits of the characters. Based on Bressler [1], the research applies structuralism approach. The approach is supported by the theory of character, setting, and relationship between character and setting. The research uses theory of Roberts [2] and Abrams [3] to discuss characters, setting, and relationship between character and setting.

## METHOD OF RESEARCH

This research method will be carried out by descriptive methods. The writer follows some steps, first in collecting the data, the writer uses close

reading technique. Then, the writer classifies the data based on the points. Finally is interpretation of data based on topic of analysis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This research is divided into two chapters. First, main characters representation, which is to break down and analyze some of the traits that the two main characters in the novel (Mariam and Laila) have. Second, analyze the settings and continue by analyzing how the settings shape the traits of these characteristics. In analyzing the main character, the researcher found 4 traits that each character has. Mariam is introverted, obedient, compassionate, and religious. Meanwhile, Laila is intelligent, cheerful, outspoken and dissident, and compassionate.

This chapter also discusses how the four settings influence the characteristics of each character. This study is divided into two parts, namely Mariam and Laila. First, Mariam. Mariam's introverted trait was formed due to her childhood experience of 15 years at kolba. Mariam only knew a few people because her mother, Nana, hated hosting guests. In her married life with Rasheed, Mariam was not allowed to receive guests in their house and if she went outside she had to wear a burqa. This introverted attitude was exacerbated by the bad experience of betrayal by Jalil, Mariam's biological father. The researcher concludes that Mariam's introverted trait was influenced by her childhood, social relationships, and marriage settings. In addition, Mariam had a mother who is very hard on her. Mariam had to bury her dream of going to school because of Nana's rejection. When Rasheed wanted to remarry, Mariam was furious. But then he obliged, fearing Rasheed. From this evidence, one can conclude that Mariam's obedient trait was influenced by childhood and marriage settings. Furthermore, Mariam's religious character was shaped by her childhood setting. When

she was a child at kolba, Mariam studied Al-Quran and spiritual matters with Mullah Faizullah. This was what made Mariam a person who continues to remember God. Lastly, compassionate. Having only known a few people since childhood, Mariam really loved them. In addition, in her violent and misogynistic married life, Mariam shared her fate with Laila and loved her and her children. In addition, the war that took place made Mariam a protective figure. Compassionate nature is shaped by marriage and war setting.

Second, Laila. Laila's intelligent trait was greatly influenced by her childhood setting. Laila had a father, Babi, who was a bookworm who often asked her to discuss and helped her with homework. The intelligence of Babi, combined with his prowess to motivate and invite Laila to discuss, made Laila a smart girl, both at school and in life. Similar to her intelligent trait, her outspokenness and dissident were also shaped by the setting of childhood. For a child who was accustomed to reading books and discussing it, of course, it was very easy for her to have her own way of thinking. Laila was a person who likes to ask questions and argues against things and fights against what she considers untrue. Furthermore, Laila's cheerful trait was influenced by her childhood and social setting. In the family environment, Laila had Babi who always took good care of her. Laila also had friends and a boyfriend named Tariq. Laila also had a neighbor who welcomed her into their home. Lastly, the compassionate trait is clearly shaped by childhood, marriage, and war settings. If seen from the childhood setting, Laila had people who really love her, so that she appeared as a loving figure. Apart from that, forced marriage and having to face violence and misogyny, Laila suffered terribly. From this marriage, Laila shared her fate with another woman named Mariam. They faced suffering together and continued to protect each other until the end. Finally, the war that occurred left many people dead. The more people who died, the more often Laila lost her loved ones. This makes Laila did whatever it took to protect and care for the people she loved. In this case, it can be concluded that Laila's compassionate trait is influenced by marriage and war settings.

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The results of this study indicate that each main character has 4 most prominent traits and is directly influenced by the settings. This proves that

the intrinsic elements of the novel in the form of settings are very influential and have an impact on the lives of characters, especially on their traits or attitudes.

The results of this study are expected to provide moral values that are beneficial to the lives of readers. From the analysis of the two main characters above, we can understand that every trait shown by people is something that is influenced by what they have been through. The researcher hopes that through this research the reader will gain knowledge that is more related to the human values contained in this novel. On the other hand, what the novel wants to convey, namely the struggle of women and the bad life of humans caused by war can be learned. Thus, readers will get additional insight in order to make life in a better direction.

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### Book

Hosseini, Khaled. *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. New York: Riverhead Books, 2007.