

Portrayal afghan domestic
women in Khaled Hosseini's a
thousand splendid suns and
Atiq Rahimi's the patience
stone

by Yeni Probawati

Submission date: 26-Dec-2022 03:55PM (UTC+0700)

Submission ID: 1986669227

File name: Buku_Portrayal_Afghan_Women.pdf (1.19M)

Word count: 3167

Character count: 19545

Yeni Probowati

**PORTRAYAL AFGHAN
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A THOUSAND SPLENDID
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THE PATIENCE STONE**



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**Penulis:
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1 **Portrayal afghan domestic women
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4

ISBN:

978-623-343-081-4

Editor:

Tim Kun Fayakun

Layouter:

Tim Kun Fayakun

Penyunting:

Tim Kun Fayakun

Desain sampul dan tata letak:

Tim Kun Fayakun

Penerbit:

Kun Fayakun

ANGGOTA IKAPI

No: 202/JTI/2018

Redaksi:

Kun Fayakun

Genjong Kidul Sidowarek

Ngoro Jombang

Jawa Timur

61473

Hp. 0856 0755 8802

Email: penulis.kunfayakun@gmail.com

Web: kunfayakunbooks.blogspot.com

Cetakan Pertama, April 2021

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Isi di luar tanggung jawab penerbit dan percetakan

Acknowledgments

At first, the writer would like to send her great gratitude to the blessings of God, Allah SWT and the highest appreciation to Prophet Mohammed SAW. His blessings, she can finish accomplishing this book as one of the goals from her study.

Second, the writer would like to thank to her family members for their supports and love that has encouraged the writer to finish this work.

Third, the writer would like to appreciate valuable supports from her colleagues at Wijaya Putra University, for giving some advices to her in accomplishing this book. Finally, she would like to thank you to the Rector of Wijaya Putra University for his supports and encouragement to constructing the book.

Regards,

The writer

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses Afghan Domestic Women ¹ in Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and Atiq Rahimi's *The Patience Stone*. It depicts an introductory part of the study. Moreover, this consists of explanation of the background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, scope and limitation, definition of key terms, assumption and the significance of the study.

A. Background of the Study

Afghanistan is a landlocked sovereign state forming part of South Asia, Central Asia, and to some extent Western Asia. Three decades of war made Afghanistan one of the world's most dangerous countries, including for women's and children's life. ² The average Afghan girl will live to only 45 – one year less than an Afghan male. After three decades of war and repression, an overwhelming number of women remain illiterate in Afghanistan. Afghan girls are also discouraged, sometimes fatally, from seeking an education and Afghan rape victims can be forced, by law, to marry their attacker. More than half of all brides are under 16, and one woman dies in childbirth every half an hour. A large majority, up to 85 percent, of women in

Afghanistan give birth with no medical attention. It is the country with the highest maternal mortality rate in the world (Khan, 2012).

Furthermore, violence against girls or women in Afghanistan reached record levels in 2013, according to the Independent Human Rights Commission of Afghanistan (AIHRC). Figures released last month show that the six-month period between March and September 2013 witnessed a 25 percent increase in recorded attacks. As Sima Samar, the chair of AIHRC, told Reuters, attacks were more frequent and more brutal, with incidents including “the cutting of women’s noses, lips and ears,” and ‘public rape’. (Diplomat, 2014)

³ About representation of Afghan domestic women, conflict in Afghanistan has had a disproportionately negative impact on them. Afghan women have borne the brunt of the oppression and remain subjected to practices that reflect gender biases. While the international community still hopes to liberate and empower Afghan women in so-called post-conflict Afghanistan, gender programs are struggling to take gender (in a robust sense of the word) into account. Afghan women are fighting to reverse perceptions that they have no agency, that they are victims. Yet they are experiencing increased levels of violence. Despite being four years beyond conflict and into

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

In this second chapter, the writer would like to present a theory which related to the statement of the problems that have already mentioned in the previous chapter. This theory uses to verify the study, the data collection, and data analysis during the research. This chapter is divided into several sections and subsections. The main sections are previous studies, gender, society and culture , oppression, the impact of oppression, women's struggle, and feminism.

A. Previous Studies

There are some previous studies that are relevant and have some correlation with the present study. This section explores the previous studies which have been done by the researchers to distinguish this thesis and others. It is due to validate the authenticity of this study.

The first study is a thesis of Azam Kazemiyan (2012) entitled *A Thousand Splendid Suns: Rhetorical Vision of Afghan Women*. In this study, Kazemiyan analyzes the representations of Afghan women in the Western media and notably in the U.S. news media provide a critical concern to scholars. Much of the relevant literature on this topic speaks to

the fact that the dominant portrayal of Afghan women in the Western media has shown them as passive victims of war and violence, to be liberated only by the Western military intervention.

Kazemiyan in this study intends to apply Bormannian fantasy theme analysis of this novel conveys the passivity of women in the context of Afghanistan. The findings reveal that the portrayals of Afghan women in the novel correspond with the images of Afghan women in the Western media. Moreover, an examination of a sample of book reviews of the novel unveils the important contribution of Khalid Hosseini to the Orientalist discourse. (Kazemiyan, 2012)

The second study is *Resistance, a Facet of Post-colonialism in Women Characters of Khaled Hosseini's A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Areej Saad Almutairi, 2013. This article looks at female level of resistance through the viewpoint of post-colonialism and feminism based on Khaled Hosseini's novel. The article concentrates on levels of resistance as a part of Afghan female's lifestyle against the gender oppression that are enforced on them through their lifestyle and culture. The novel is selected for discussion of this problem as it shows the conflicts experienced by afghan women in regards to their roles and positions in the family (Almutairi, 2013)

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

In this chapter, the description of the method was presented. It consists of research design, research object, sources of data, data collection technique, and data analysis technique.

A. Research Design

This thesis writer used qualitative approaches to analyze how the representation of Afghan domestic women is described in Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and Atiq Rahimi's *The Patience Stone*, and the impact of male oppression of Afghan women described in Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and Atiq Rahimi's *The Patience Stone* by using feminism theory, especially radical feminism. According to radical feminist, they claim the patriarchal and gender are characteristics by power, dominance, hierarchy and competition. It must be overtuned on the way to women's liberation (Tong, 2009 : 46-47)). The analysis is focused on the representation of Afghan domestic women and the impact of male oppression of them in two novels.

This study used Tong's theory of feminism. She divided the feminism into four types, they are : liberal, radical,

socialist/marxist and psychoanalytic feminism. (Tong ,2009 : 11- 162). These types of feminism could not be separated from the other types of feminism like post-modern and post-structuralist feminism, black feminism because they are quite close in the definition. To make it focus, the feminism theory that is used in this study is radical feminism because the fundamental idea of this feminism is the patriarchy system that happens in the society and becomes the culture of the people.

B. Research Object

The object of this study is how the representation of Afghan domestic women is described in Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and Atiq Rahimi's *The Patience Stone*. These two novels are chosen because both novels shared the similar topic that is the representation of Afghan domestic women who are oppressed, powerless, marginalized and also portraying their struggle toward male's oppression. Those novels are also categorized as best sellers and have won a number of prizes. *A Thousand Splendid Suns* received favorable prepublication reviews from *Kirkus*, *Publishers Weekly*, *Library Journal*, and *Booklist*, as well as reaching #2 on Amazon.com's bestseller list before its release. The novel has so far been published in 60 countries. *The Patience Stone* received the Prix Goncourt.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter provides analysis to reveal representation of Afghanistan domestic women as the protagonist characters in Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and Atiq Rahimi's *The Patience Stone*. The analysis describes Afghan domestic women as represented by **Mariam and Laila in *A Thousand Splendid Suns*** and **unnamed woman in *The Patience Stone***. Then this analysis covers the description of the impact of male oppression over them. Moreover, comparative study will be used to answer the third statement of the problem about the differences of Afghan domestic women and the impact of male oppression of Afghan domestic women **in Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and Atiq Rahimi's *The Patience Stone***.

A. Afghan Domestic Women in Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*

The men oppress the Afghan women. They are like nothing, un-price, doesnot have meaning, and just as a tool or property for the men. The oppressions and unjust behavior toward women are obviously the core issue in Khaled Hosseini's

novel, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. The novel tries to expose the hardship experienced by the main characters and their way to survive under male oppression in a hopeless society. Mariam and Laila are the two main oppressed women characters in the novel. Rasheed and Jalil represent the worst features of Afghan male-dominated society.

Mariam, when only aged fifteen, is forced to marry the cruel man, Rasheed, in his late 40's. Many years later, when Rasheed is at least 60, he manipulates Laila's tragic loss of her family to force her to marry him while she is but a fourteen-year-old girl. He now sees Laila as the key to producing a son for him.

The marriage ceremony is a despicable act of manipulation on the part of Jalil, taking advantage of a vulnerable Mariam just after her mother had hanged herself at the thought of losing her. As they travel towards Kabul, Rasheed will soon make it clear he has not an ounce of compassion for Mariam's grief and misery, taking expressions of this to be a personal insult. The only thing that initially tempers his behaviour towards her is the prospect that she might bear him a son to replace his son from a previous marriage, who drowned while Rasheed was in a drunken stupor. However, when Mariam proves incapable of bearing children, let alone a

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

This study reveals Afghan domestic women and its impacts of male oppression on the protagonist women in two novels. They are Mariam and Laila in Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and unnamed woman in Atiq Rahimi's *The Patience Stone*. Both of novels also depicts the similarities and differences of representation of Afghan domestic women to detect compare and contrast.

In *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, Afghan domestic women are experienced as oppression, powerlessness, marginalization, exploitation, cultural imperialism, and violence. Those kinds of representation are influenced by the socio-cultural background of the country in which the story set in. The characters of Afghan women who experienced the domestic violence are Mariam and Laila. Considering as harami, an unwanted child, Mariam becomes a subject of oppression and violence during her life. Meanwhile, Laila becomes a subject of oppression and violence after her marriage with Rasheed, Mariam's husband. Those women characters have been representatives of Afghan domestic women who experienced oppressed, faceless, powerless,

exploited by male domination in domestic area, which is family. It is the husband, Rasheed, who is powerful to cause the suffering of Mariam and Laila.

The second novel is *The Patience Stone* by Atiq Rahimi. The unnamed woman as the representation of Afghan domestic woman is the victim of man power in patriarchal society. She is as the victim of insult, beating and sexual violence. She is also experienced as oppression, powerlessness, exploitation, marginalization and cultural imperialism. Accumulation of them make the unnamed woman frustration. The impact of all the accumulation bring depression and to become a talk-active woman.

At the end of the plot, in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini it states that Mariam kills her husband, Rasheed. Meanwhile Atiq Rahimi in his novel *The Patience Stone* closes his story that the unnamed woman dies by her husband. Even both of the women intend to kill their husbands. It means, the characters in the novels, all of them are lack of self-control.

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The writer's profile



Yeni Probowati was born on October 18, 1977, at Probolinggo. She finished her studies at SMA Negeri 1 Caruban, Madiun (1996) before she continued her studies at one state college at Surabaya. Then she finished her S1 study in Surabaya State University (Universitas Negeri Surabaya) (2001). She took her master's degree (S2) also in Surabaya State University for English Teaching and Literature Study (2017).

She has been lecturing at Universitas Wijaya Putra (UWP) for almost 20 years until present. She has been working at English Department UWP as a lecturer who teaches English subject for English Department and non -English Department.

She has been actively involved in some researches dealing with literature and teaching studies. This book is her preliminary book that is the product of her study in relation to literature study.



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ANGGOTA IKAPI
No: 202/JTI/2018

ISBN 978-623-343-174-3



9 786233 431743

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