

**AFGHANISTAN UNDER THE FOUR REGIMES REFLECTED IN
KHALED HOSSEINI'S *A THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS* NOVEL
(2007): A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH**



**Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of the requirements for Getting the Bachelor
Degree of Education in English Department**

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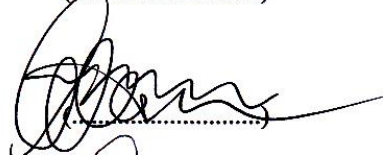
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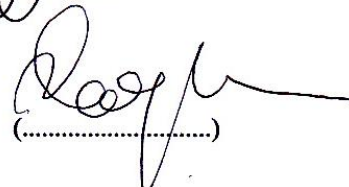
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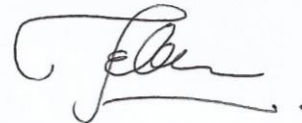
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Abstrak

Penelitian ini membahas tentang masalah sosial politik Afghanistan yang terjadi selama empat decade dibawah empat rezim yang berbeda pada novel Khaled Hosseini yang berjudul *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. Tujuan dari studi ini adalah untuk mengetahui fenomena pemerintahan Afghanistan yang tergambar dalam novel tersebut menggunakan pendekatan sosiologi. Khaled Hosseini menggunakan novel tersebut sebagai alat untuk menunjukkan kepada dunia tentang keadaan negara Afghanistan yang membutuhkan bantuan serta Hosseini ingin menyampaikan refleksi dari Afghanistan di masa lalu. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif. Data Primer dari penelitian ini berasal dari *A Thousand Splendid Suns*; Sedangkan data sekunder dari penelitian ini diperoleh dari berbagai sumber seperti, buku sastra, sumber virtual dan sumber lain yang menunjang. Kesimpulan dari penelitian ini adalah : (1) Perbedaan karakteristik dari rezim Daoud Khan, Uni Soviet, Mujahideen dan Taliban. Setiap pemerintahan dijelaskan melalui beberapa aspek politik, aspek perempuan, aspek budaya, aspek pendidikan dan aspek kesehatan ; (2) Penggambaran keempat rezim melalui karakter-karakter rezim, setting novel, peristiwa-peristiwa penting, style yang digunakan pada setiap rezim; (3) Alasan Khaled Hosseini menuliskan novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* adalah sebagai bentuk kepeduliannya terhadap masyarakat Afghanistan.

Kata Kunci : *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, sosiologi, budaya, politik, rezim.

Abstract

The research discusses the Afghanistan's socio-political phenomenon during four decades under the four different regimes in Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* novel. The purpose of this study is to understand phenomenon of the Afghanistan regimes reflected in the novel using the sociological approach. Khaled Hosseini used the novel as a tool to show the world that Afghanistan needed the aid and Hosseini wanted deliver reflection of Afghanistan country in the past. This study is a qualitative research. The primary data were taken from *A Thousand Splendid Suns novel*; the secondary data were obtained from some sources like literature book, virtual sources, and some related source. The conclusion of the study: (1) The difference characteristics between the Daoud Khan regime, Soviets Union regime, the Mujahideen regime, and Taliban regime. Each regime was explained through some aspects namely political aspect, women aspect, culture aspect, education aspect,

and health aspect; (2) The four regimes were depicted through the characters of the regimes, the settings of the novel, the important events and the styles used in each regime; (3) The reason of Khaled Hosseini writing the novel was due to the result of his care towards Afghan society.

Keywords :*A Thousand Splendid Suns, sociology, culture, political, regime.*

1. INTRODUCTION

A Thousand Splendid Suns is the interesting novel with complex problem inside. Some previous researchers had conducted various studies which focus on different issues. The previous study is grouped in sociological approach and feminism approach. The sociological approach is included: conflict between the traditional and modern cultures (Puspitasari, 2013), Ethnicity (Pertiwi, 2016), Discrimination of woman (Maharani, 2013). Mariam's problem as illegitimate child (Wicaksono, 2015), Representation of afghan institution of marriage (Qamari&Shakeel, 2015), Taliban's treatments toward women as violation to democratic values and human rights (Wahyuni et al, 2013). The feminist approach is included: Against patriarchy (Agustina, 2012), The tragic life of the main character (Iskandar, 2009), Surviving the odds: woman characters in Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. (Nigam & Dutta, 2016),

Discussion about history of Afghanistan is not far from the political issue that happened in Afghanistan, while, the political issue criticizes the regime problem. Because of the lack of the research about regime, so it is necessary to conduct the research about that issue.

When reading the Khaled Hosseini's novel, the researcher found many problems occurs in Afghanistan's regimes. In this study, the researcher identifies the regimes; discusses the characteristics and depicts the Afghanistan regime. The sociological approach will guide the research to find the cases related to society, culture, religion, political, economic issues. Sociology is relevant approach to discuss the social processes.

2. METHOD

The study uses qualitative method. Furthermore, the points of qualitative method are as following. Firstly, the type of this study is descriptive qualitative. Secondly, the object of this study is divided into two parts, material object and formal object. Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* novel as the material object and the regimes as the formal object. Thirdly, the primary data source came from the novel and the secondary data were taken from journals, virtual source, historical information, biography of Khaled Hosseini, interview of the author by journalist and other relevant information which supported the research. The following steps are the collecting data method: firstly, reading the novel repeatedly, secondly: taking important notes in both the primary and secondary data, which were relevant to the study. In analyzing data, the researcher uses qualitative data analysis by Miles and Huberman (1994), such as data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Main Findings

The points of the main finding in this discussion is divided into the four regimes: Daoud Khan Regime, Soviets Union Regime, Mujahideen Regime and Taliban regime.

3.1.1 The Characteristics of Regime

3.1.1.1 Daoud Khan Regime (1973-1978)

The Daoud Khan president build the republic state of Afghanistan. He took over the power by bloodless coup while King Zahir Shah got the medical treatment in Italy. The president was helped by the socialist to govern the Afghanistan. In this regime, the citizen can deliver their aspiration through demonstration to the government. So, in the ending of the regime occurs the demonstration from the Afghan Communist Party because of the murder of his member Mir Akbar Khyber.

Women on social processes shows the Nana's status as the illegitimate wife. Mariam as the illegitimate child become a scandal for Jalil. Then, Nana spent time to take care and educate Mariam in *Kolba*. The mother was more responsible about her children life.

Hosseini viewed the different society between the village and the city. Nana and Mariam's childhood stayed in *Kolbaor* village. While Mariam's teenager spent in the Herat and Kabul. Women in Kabul were more fashionable and progressive. There were many social activities in the city. Mariam also celebrated the great day *Eid-ul-Fitr* with her husband joyfully. Citizens of Daoud Khan regime shows the peacefulness life.

The social condition of people was influencing the children to get education. Mariam under her mother's monitoring was just permitted to learn from Mullah. The Mullah came to *Kolba* to teach Mariam about five daily prayers and Koran recitation. Nana forbade Mariam to study at school because the lesson of surviving life was more important. Different with Saideh and Naheed as the legitimate child of Jalil, both got the right in education from their parents. The condition of Jalil as the wealthy people was possible to give the educational need of his child to go to formal school.

The different story about the Nana's health while giving birth to baby Mariam. Jalil said that Nana had been taken care by doctor or midwife in hospital. But, Nana told that she gave birth alone in the *Kolba*. His husband did not come to help.

3.1.1.2 Soviets Union regime (1978-1992)

The Soviets Union changed the government became the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. They were promising the political issue which hold on islam and democratic principle. But it actually could not be realized. They did propaganda about communism even in education aspect. President of this regime, Najibullah, was just like a puppet president for Soviets Union.

Soviets regime gave the liberation for the women. The women were got the right to work. Laila's father was fired from his job to give space for women. They got the opportunity to learn at school or university. The freedom for women which never occur before. In

Kabul, this policy was acceptable by modern women because the city was more progressive. But, in the tribal area the citizen resisted it more because they believed in patriarchy and traditional perspective.

Afghanistan country available some jobs for citizen like employee in giant bread factory, taxi driver, barber and carpenter. The tradition of Hakim's family or the islamic religion did the azan recitation for baby which was just born. The kind of the Buddhist culture show in this regime. The Bamiyan Buddhist giant statue was the heritage history in Afghanistan.

The Laila's teacher named Shanzai was the progressive woman. She supported the Soviets regime and hated America. She did the communist propaganda through the education. She educated student to recognize the kindness of Soviets.

The facilities of health in the Soviets regime were shown by the modern medical technology. The X-ray found to detect the illness inside human body. The doctor used it to check up Laila's mother condition.

3.1.1.3 Mujahideen Regime (1992-1996)

The power under the Mujahideen regime was mentioned as the Islamic State of Afghanistan. The Mujahideen regime held the presidential election to involve the citizen in government. The election of Rabbani as the president brought up new problem for Afghanistan. The other faction saw that Massoud did the nepotism because Rabbani came from the same faction. Then, the conflict between fraction was occur. Afghanistan got new enemy from their selves. The other problem also came from the Hazara tribe which asked for justice because they were under the discrimination for long time.

Rasheed family believed in patriarchy culture. Mariam as the Rasheed's wife could not influence Rasheed decision. The women on social structure were lower than men. The Mujahideen regime created the prohibition for women to go without the men relative.

The polygamy become the tradition of the Afghan citizen. This old tradition occurred because it was permitted by their religion. In this regime, the citizen felt worry because of the conflict between Mujahideen faction. They attack one another, crimes like bandits' appearance and murder happened in every place. The rocket attacked public place. The social crisis was happened in Afghanistan. The emergence of food supplies which did not come into the city made the citizen difficult to obtain the foods. Some citizen decided to pack their things and went to secure place like Tehran, Islamabad and Iran.

School was the uncomfortable place for the learning processes. The war between Mujahideen fraction also destroyed the school by the rocket attack. The students were impossible to study at school because the outside home become the fear place which was insecure. The worries of the parents made Hakim dropped Laila out from the school.

At the beginning of the Mujahideen power, the medical service of the hospital was good. But, the conflict between Pashtuns and Hazaras influenced medical service of the hospital. The hospital was difficult to stock the medicine. Some hospital patients were amputated without using anesthesia. The slow medical handling gave the bad effect until the patient was death.

3.1.1.4 Taliban Regime (1996-2002)

Taliban regime changed the government form of Afghanistan become the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan in 1996. Taliban authoritatively modify the state system and created the regulation. The government was ruled by people of the islamic extremism. Some decision of the government was based on the islamic law. The punishment for the citizen created based on the holy Koran. Taliban also give the sanctuary for Bin Laden based on the *Pashtunwali* code of ethics for a guest.

Taliban brought the tradition of the Pashtun tribal. The women ought to spend many times at home and to go with the men relative. If

they broke the rule, the government would give punishment. The women had limited social interaction to other people.

The Afghan citizen felt the euphoria while Taliban took over the Afghanistan government. They claimed that the Taliban was more purer and incorruptible because they were Muslim and had the unity. They created the regulation for all Afghan citizen from the boy, girl, women or men. The citizen were forbidden to sing, dance, play chess, gamble, fly kite, write books, watch films, and paint pictures. However, the citizen could find the television in the black market. In the summer of 2000, Afghanistan had a trend of *Titanic* fever. Many people hunted the branded of *Titanic*. in this period Taliban destroyed the Bamiyan giant buddhast statues.

Taliban gave limited attention for the child's education. The girls were forbidden to go to school. The education quality decreased because Universities as the place for educated student were shut down. Taliban believes that the books except the Holy *Koran* were not good to read by citizen. However, the orphanage was available for special children in Afghanistan. The teacher of orphanage taught the forbidden knowledge like geography, history or science for the children secretly.

The health service in Taliban regime was really bad, starting with the issue of women and men who did not take care at the same hospital until the empty of medications. The *RabiaBalkhi* hospital condition was dirty and unhealthy for people. Only two doctors were available in the hospital. The limit of X-ray, suction, oxygen and antibiotics obstructed doctor in helping people on surgical operation. Taliban unsupported the hospital medical need.

3.1.2 Depiction of the Regimes

3.1.2.1 Characters

Firstly, the Daoud Khan regime showed peacefulness and democratic than other. The citizen also did not get the certain oppression from the government. Daoud Khan allowed the Afghan communist party exist in

Afghanistan. Secondly, The Soviet Union regime was closer to communism. The communist sometimes did the massacre way inhumanely towards the rebellion targets. This regime liberated the women to get education and work. They claimed that man and women had equal right and freedom. So, the Soviets regime was more repressive on human liberation and state priority. Thirdly, the Mujahideen regime was inconsistent in building the regulation. The elected president, Rabbani, made the state mentioned as the premature government. Fourth, the Taliban regime was repressive on the religion. The evidence of that case, occurred on Taliban regulation for citizen. The women were forbidden to use the cosmetics, jewelry and ought to cover the body by burqa. They were forbidden to work and to be educated women. On the other side, Taliban also organized the men custom in Afghanistan like the live of Pashtun manner. This era more emphasized the citizen became the loyal Muslim.

3.1.2.2 Settings

The author of *A Thousand Splendid Suns* mentioned some city in Afghanistan and preferred to illustrate Kabul as the capital city of Afghanistan. The citizen live in Kabul was complex and various. There were universities, the presidential palace, foreign diplomats live, rich businessmen and member of the royal family. The capital city was identical with the view of progressive state, because many government activities occurred in Kabul.

Different from Kandahar, the south area of Afghanistan which more conservative, there was the biggest Pashtun, biggest ethnic of Afghanistan. They still believed in old tradition where forbade the women to go without being accompanied by men relative. the author also described the area named Shahr-e-Zohak or mentioned as The Red City which nine hundred years ago the city was used to be a fortress for protection from invader. Then, the author described about the valley

called *Bamiyan*, the place which was Buddhist culture center and where it was found two enormous Buddhas sculpture. But it was shattered by Taliban in 2001.

3.1.2.3 Events

Many events were happened during fifty years. Every regime changed over beginning the importance event as the indication of the new or the end of regime. The change of Daoud Khan regime was by the bloodless coup. Before Daoud Khan was fallen down, the citizen had done a large demonstration. After that, communist party did the murder to Daoud Khan inhumanely and took over the power. But, the engagement in Geneva became the indication of the Soviets collapse. The big event occurred in January 1994 in Mujahideen regime, Dostum joined Hekmatnyar to attack Massoud and Rabbani. That moment occurred in Kabul Capital city. It made citizen worry because of the raising of the intimidation, murder, looting and rape. Then, Taliban tried to enter Afghanistan, beginning with taking over some city like the Kandahar, Jalalabad, Sarobi and Kabul. After that, Taliban took over the power from Mujahideen Regime.

3.1.2.4 Style

The narrator mentioned the Daoud Khan regime as the aristocracy, nepotism, and inequality era. The second regime was mentioned as communism regime. The belief of Soviets Union in communism became the reason of it. The third regime, the president election happened in Mujahideen regime and became the most different event than other. But this era was claimed as the government prematureness. The elected president, Rabbani, as the partner of Massoud brought up nepotism. Taliban had the character of repressive on religion. The children could not improve the knowledge except in the study about the religion. The Tajik as educated and modern people called Taliban was

more radical. Taliban regime also was mentioned had the traditional perspective.

3.1.3 Reason of the Addressing of the regime

The reason of the author addressing came from family life of the author. Khaled Hosseini was born in Afghanistan from the parents of Tajik and Pashtun. Pashtun was great tribe in Afghanistan and had long history in the government. Hosseini wanted to deliver about influencing of Pashtun in regime. Hosseini really understood that Afghanistan on seeking identity nation. the author used the novel as the tool for delivering to the world if Afghanistan needed the support to wake up.

3.2 Discussion

The discussion about *Afghanistan Under The Four Regimes Reflected in Khaled Hosseini's A Thousand Splendid Suns* used the perspective of sociology of literature because of that theory more relevant to criticize the social phenomena in the society.

The regime brought different ideology and tradition from their group. It influenced the social condition of Afghanistan in every shift of regime. The citizen must obey the policy of government. The regime changes usually influence some the aspects like political, culture, norm, religion, education, health, and citizen life style in society.

Afghanistan was the state on the seeking period of the nation identity. The various ethnic made the state rich about the culture. But the minimum unity of the society made Afghanistan easy to split. The long history of monarchy and led by the major ethnic made the discrimination of the minority ethnic.

The relation between *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and the sociology of literature perspective is as reflection of the social situational of the writer. Because some moment showed in the novel based on the experiences of Khaled Hosseini. The Daoud Khan regime was the

reflection of the government while the author childhood. Furthermore, Hosseini got the other information regime from the family and closest people.

Based on the perspective of the sociology of literature, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* written by the author as the social document. Because the Afghanistan regimes reflection in the novel based on the fact of the Afghanistan country in the past which written on fiction. Many events described in the Kabul. The regime activities often take place in the capital city. The presidential palace, the embassy building found in there. The rebels also create the government as the target to deliver aspiration, protest or assault.

This research explained how the four regimes illustrated in the novel. The first regime viewed the Daoud Khan regime with the Republic state. The Soviets union regime believed on communism, liberate and priority the women. The state mentioned as Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. Mujahideen and Taliban regime ruled the state based on the islamic laws.

4. CONCLUSION

After analyzing and discussing the topic on previous chapter, the writer gave the final conclusions as follows: Firstly, the characteristics of the regime showed through some aspect of political, culture, women, education and health. The power of the Daoud Khan regime was supported by United State of America to take over the power from King Zahir Shah. Then, Soviets Union regime taken over the power from Daoud Khan with blood coup. The Najibullah president only as puppet president of the communist. Soviets disseminated the communism propaganda, delivered the equal gender, liberated the women, and educated women become the priority. Next the Mujahideen regime, Afghanistan almost to stand up in independence of the Afghan people self. But the disunited of Mujahideen factions caused the problem and conflict in state. After that, the Taliban came from Pakistan bring the ideology based on the Islamic laws and Pashtun norm. The unity and purity became the strength of

the Taliban regime. Unfortunately, the Taliban was not respected to the women right, scientific education for student and the necessary of health for citizen.

The four regimes depicted in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* novel was grouped become some point as follows: characters, settings, events, and style. The character of Daoud Khan regime relative on peacefulness. The characters of Soviets Union more repressive on nationality and liberty. The Mujahideen regime relative mention as the premature government. Then, Taliban more repressive on islamic religion or islamic law. The setting more emphasized in capital city of Kabul because the political activity relatively happened in there. The revolution usually happened in the shift of regime. Some event of the coup, bloodless coup, demonstration, and rebellion always become the important thing of the historical moment.

Finally, the author addressed the novel as the tool for delivering to the world if Afghanistan needed the support to wake up. Khaled Hosseini showed the Afghanistan as the crisis state. He illustrated the fluctuation of the Afghan society condition through the regime power.

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