

**INFIDELITY IN MUNRO'S "WHAT IS REMEMBERED" AND
LAHIRI'S "SEXY": A COMPARATIVE STUDY**

THESIS



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Devita Tri Artika Sari

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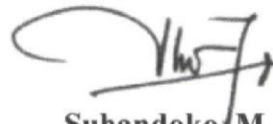
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infidelity. Although their works have the same issue, in their works, there are different characters and plots.

From the difference between the two authors' backgrounds, they create works with the same issue. The story is illustrated in infidelity story in the short story entitled "Sexy" by Lahiri and "What is Remembered" by Munro. In the literature world, many literary works discuss infidelity, such as "Light Years" by James Salter, "Written on the Body" by Jeanette Winterson, "The Days of Abandonment" by Elena Ferrante, "We Don't Live Here Anymore" by André Dubus, "The Man in the Wooden Hat" by Jane Gardam, etc. In life, the story of a relationship tells about the sweetness of life and the struggle of life, but a painful story that must occur in life, such as infidelity. According to Panca (2016), cheating can be interpreted as hiding something for your interests, not being straightforward, dishonest, cheating, and oblique. Infidelity is something that nobody wants to experience because it's a painful thing for anyone who feels it.

According to Syamsuri 2017 (cited in Pittman, 1989), infidelity is a violation of trust, betrayal of a relationship, termination of a deal. In a relationship, if one of the two betrays, it violates a trust they have built. In the end, if the betrayal is known, an agreement is terminated between continuing the relationship or ending the relationship. Infidelity can occur due to several factors: family life does not bring happiness, religious and moral motivation, low sexual activity with a partner, disorganized or problematic personal life, and good behavior. According to (Syamsuri, MV, 2017) happiness is something you can't buy. Happiness arises when we are with people we love, such as family or

cheating. It happens because there is no physical contact between him and his partner. But still, if it involves feelings when communicating with the opposite sex even though it is not in physical contact, it can be cheating. Especially when a partner finds out that it will cause heartache and damage to the relationship

In life, we cannot be separated from the name comparison, either comparing living things or things. Discussing comparisons, let us discuss the comparative study. The comparative study is comparing the similarities and differences as phenomena to find what factors can cause a certain event (Kresna, 2019). Here, the researcher compares two short stories, entitled “What is remembered” and “Sexy” as short stories, which have similarities and differences in both stories

The researcher tries to find several previous studies which discuss infidelity. First, Francesconi (2004) analyzed about “Writing Secrets as 'betraying the past' in Alice Munro's What is remembered”. The result of this study is the writer revealed the secret of Meriel's betrayal with Dr. Asher but it is unknown to Pierre, her husband. The writer said that the secret told by Munro, the author of “What is Remembered”, was a complex discursive procedure. Second, Muhaddast (2017) analyzed “Western Domination In Jhumpa Lahiri's Short Stories Sexy, This Blessed House, And When Mr. Pirzada Came To Dine (1999)”. The result of this study is to prove the dominance of Western powers in some fictional elements in the short story. Like the superior one, that always uses the West to express its power by providing imaginative creations as well as exclusion East through narrative and dialogue. Another previous study about Infidelity namely, Putri Utami (2017) this study analyzes “Love Affair Reflected in Paula Hawkins 'The

Girl on The Train (2015): A Psychoanalytic Study”. The last is Ashley Phillips (2011), *The Infidelity Issue in Brideshead Revisited and Journey into Fear*. The researcher believes that these works are definitive evidence that the affair exists by the evidence of infidelity in literary works. Nowadays, there are often breakups caused mainly by infidelity, and this topic is always interesting to read and discuss.

The researcher chooses this research because the research which analyzes these two short stories is different from the previous studies above. The gap from this research is because there is no research about comparing two short stories about infidelity as far as the researchers know. The researcher will use “Sexy” and “What is Remembered” as the object of this research. Both short stories are telling about infidelity but in a different plot. The difference of plot in both short stories makes the researcher is interested in doing this research. This research uses a new criticism theory and comparative approach to analyze both of the short stories.

Here, the researcher conducts this research with infidelity issues based on both of the short stories. The reason the researcher chooses this issue because nowadays, divorce cases are rampant due to infidelity. A study published in *The Journal of Sex Research* states that there is one factor that most people cheat.

According to Hestianingsih (2018), 77% of adult participants admit to have an affair because of reduced love. Then 70% of other respondents say that they cheat because they feel neglected, there were also 70 % of respondents say that an affair occur when they are drunk. Meanwhile, several other respondents admit to

the characters through an image place and environment of figures, dialogue between figures, actions, and the character's way of thinking, and the third is a combination of the two, or in other words, a character is portrayed directly by the author and also by being depicted through his actions, dialogue between characters, environment, etc.

2.1.2 Characterization

Characterization is the invention of these fantasy characters so that they exist for the reader, as is evident in fiction's restrictions (Holman, p. 84). This statement means that characterization is how the writer expresses the character of an imaginary person. According to Abrams (p. 34), there are two characterization methods, showing and telling. In showing or referred to as a 'dramatic method,' it is a method in which the writer only presents the characters speaking and acting and leaves the reader to deduce the motives and dispositions behind what they say and do. Whereas, in telling, the author intervenes authoritatively to describe and often evaluate the motives and qualities of character dispositions.

According to Lubis (cited Al-Maruf, A. I. & Nugrahani, F., 2017: 93) characteristics in the story are naturally acceptable if they can be accounted for from a psychological, physiological, and sociological perspective. The three angles still have various aspects. Al-Maruf, A. I. & Nugrahani, F. (2017: 93) explain that psychological aspects include ambition, ideals, disappointment, skills, temperament. Physiological aspects such as gender, appearance, body condition, skin color, and others. Sociological aspects consist of environment, rank, social status, religion, nationality, and so on. In fiction, these three aspects are

According to Asya (cited in Veyanti 2016: 21), she defines infidelity as the act of a husband or wife in the form of having a relationship with someone outside the marriage bond who, if the legal partner finds out, will be declared as an act of betraying, hurting, breaking the agreement, beyond commitment. In other words, cheating contains the meaning of dishonesty, distrust, disrespectful for each other the intention of enjoying relationships with other people so that it is fulfilled love needs, sympathy to sexual needs.

According to Psychologist Ariani, A. S (cited in Panca 2016: P. 4), infidelity has a meaning as a form of disloyalty to a partner and has an attraction to other people which can be created in various forms ranging from mild, just lyrical to those heavy like having sexual intercourse. In other words, infidelity is a partner's infidelity and has a sense of attraction to others, such as in light things, for example looking at each other, being consistent in communication or meetings, to tough things in the form of intimate relationships with other people who are not legal partners.

According to Rumondor, P. C (2019) Infidelity is a behavior that violates relationship commitments, which ultimately injures trust in a romantic relationship. Therefore, each partner has different boundaries, depending on their respective relationship commitments. If one of them violates the commitment, it will hurt feelings and loss of the partner's trust. Infidelity usually begins with physical attraction to the opposite gender who is not an official partner. It is normal to feel attracted to other people. For example, men are handsome, girls are

Third, the type of affair is romantic love affair. This type of infidelity involves a deep emotional connection. Cheaters often fall in love again and find a more satisfying relationship with the affair, both physically and emotionally. The relationship that is established is very important and has a big impact on the marriage. Often the perpetrator of cheating thinks of divorcing and marries his mistress. If divorce doesn't happen, the affair usually happens in secret. This type of infidelity occurs when he does not find comfort in the household or sexual satisfaction with his legal partner

Fourth, the fourth type is long-term affair. Long-term infidelity is a relationship that involves the most profound emotional involvement. Relationships from this type of infidelity can last for years or even throughout the marriage. This type of infidelity is very impactful if the partner is found out by his legal partner

2.2.1.2 The Cause of Infidelity

According to Quimila, A (2017), there are five factors which can cause infidelity. Among them are first, a lack of sexual satisfaction in marriage, and a desire for additional sexual intercourse. The second is the lack of emotional satisfaction in marriage. Then, the third is a desire to get a sense of appreciation from others. The fourth is no longer in love with their partners and find new love. The fifth is a revenge for hurting a cheating partner. These five factors are very likely to trigger of infidelity if it is not resolved immediately.

According to Satiadarma, 2001 (cited in Veyenty, 2016) the cause of an affair is based on several reasons, including: First, because of psychophysical

reasons which are divided into two, namely physical attachment and biological needs. Physical attachment is one of the things that can make a person approach someone. Humans have several certain biological needs such as eating, drinking, breathing, and sex. Some people can meet these biological needs both well and poorly. Second, psychological reasons, which are also divided into two. First, need, and second is pressure. The need is one of the most basic reasons for an adulterer to commit infidelity. Such as physical, social, or psychological reasons based on needs. Meanwhile, pressure is a condition that has a big influence on a person to carry out the impulses he craves for behaves certain to a particular object.

According to Gifari (cited in Muhajarah, 2016), there are four factors that cause infidelity. First, there is opportunity. For example, working in a well-known office in a promising position, accompanied by a beautiful and sexy secretary whose daily clothes are miniature and tight is the opportunity that most often causes a boss to have infidelity. The meeting that took place continues to make the relationship so intense. Secretary is generally accompanying the boss both in the office and outside the office, sometimes getting stuck in a routine that made her increasingly into a routine of harassment sex and leads to infidelity.

Second is a conflict with wife. A less harmonious relationship with a wife is the most often reason expressed by men to seek pleasure outside. Especially if the domestic conflict ends with a great quarrel, it will be difficult to reconcile it. Meanwhile, the need for sex comes unexpectedly. Gradually there is a desire to

A comparative study is to compare the similarities and differences as phenomena to find what factors can cause a certain event (Kresna, 2019). A comparative study can be used as a research method. According to Saufa, 2014 (cited in Nazir, 2005: 8) Comparative research is a type of descriptive research that is used to discover answers fundamentally about cause and effect, by analyzing the factors that cause the occurrence of a phenomenon or the emergence of a particular problem. This research shows to compare the similarities and differences between the two objects. In other word, the researcher wants to compare two objects to find the cause and effect of a problem.

This study uses a comparative approach to compare two short stories, “What is Remembered” by Alice Munro and “Sexy” by Jhumpa Lahiri, in infidelity character as an object. This study describes the infidelity of the characters in both short stories and some of the related characters. Analyzing the factors that influence the character to do the infidelity, and find the similarities and differences between the two short stories.

2.4 Review of Literature

First, Francesconi (2004) analyzed “Writing Secrets as 'betraying the past' in Alice Munro's “What is remembered”. The result of this study is the writer revealed the secret of Meriel's betrayal with Dr. Asher but it is unknown to Pierre, her husband. The writer said that the secret told by Munro, the author of “What is Remembered”, was a complex discursive procedure. Second, Muhaddast (2017) analyzed “Western Domination In Jhumpa Lahiri's Short Stories Sexy, This Blessed House, And When Mr. Pirzada Came To Dine (1999)”. The result of this

study is to prove the dominance of Western powers in some fictional elements in the short story. Like the superior one, that always uses the West to express its power by providing imaginative creations as well as exclusion East through narrative and dialogue.

Another previous study about Infidelity namely, Putri Utami (2017) the study analyzes “Love Affair Reflected in Paula Hawkins *The Girl on The Train* (2015): A Psychoanalytic Study”. The purpose of this research is to reveal the affair in the novel “*The Girl on the Train*”. This research explains how the psychological condition of the three main characters, and reveals infidelity case that is depicted in the novel “*The Girl on the Train*”. Her study uses a psychological analysis approach. This study shows the differences in the three main characters' psychological conditions, such as Rachel's Psychological Condition, Condition Psychology from Megan, and psychological condition from Anna. Besides, the researcher find infidelity between three characters, cases of infidelity, and the impact of the affair.

The last, Ashley Phillips (2011), stated that “The Infidelity Issue in *Brideshead Revisited* and *Journey into Fear*”. This study discusses the 1940s novels related to marriage, namely, affair, because infidelity seems to be a common topic in 1940's British literature. The affair is depicted on *Brideshead Revisited*, and *Journey Into Fear* differ in the reasons behind the adulterers involved. The difference comes from the start of World War II and the harm it causes. This study illustrates extramarital affairs are very different, critical

smiling inappropriately in front of the camera. In the fact Dr. Asher did not die on his plane, but he died in a helicopter crash on an emergency flight. That's the end of the relationship between Meriel and Dr. Asher

3.1.2 “Sexy”

Dev is a married man, “He explained that he couldn’t spend the whole night at her place, because his wife called every day at six in the morning...” (p. 50). That proof shows that Dev is married, he can't stay over at Miranda's place because his wife always calls at six in the morning, and he has a relationship with another woman named Miranda. Miranda is an unmarried woman. She is a woman who is twenty years old. She works at a public radio station in the fund-raising department. ‘A cream,’ Miranda said eventually. ‘How old are you?’ ‘Twenty-two’ (p. 49). This conversation shows that Miranda is twenty-two years old. It happened when she was buying cosmetics, and the saleswoman asked her how old she was. She lives in an apartment. She is in a relationship with a married man. The man is named Dev. “They worked for a public radio station, in the fund-raising department” (p. 48). The evidence shows that Miranda works in a public radio station in the fund-raising department with her close friend named Laxmi, and she lives in an apartment. Dev is a man born in India in Bengali city, “Dev was Bengali, too” (p. 48). He is a married man. But he is in a relationship with another woman. The woman's name is Miranda. “He didn't wear a wedding ring.” (p. 49), the quote shows that Dev is not wearing his wedding ring. He does this to cover up other people's suspicions about him being married and having relationships with other women. Almost every night they spend together. Like the

Table 3.3.3.2 Differences

| Alice Munro's "What is Remembered" | Jhumpa Lahiri's "Sexy" |
|---|--|
| In this story, their infidelity was not accompanied by sex, only kissed | In this story, their infidelity was accompanied by sex |

In these two short stories, there are similarities and differences the two stories such as characterization, factors of the occurrence of infidelity, and the type of infidelity. In addition, similarities can exist between the two stories because they were written by female authors, namely Alice Munro and Jhumpa Lahiri. They make the character who is having infidelity have selfish nature in their infidelity. The difference is that the characters in "What is Remembered" short story tells the story with a character who is not far from Munro's birthplace, Canada. Meanwhile, Jhumpa Lahiri in "Sexy" short story tells about the characters from two different countries. Like Dev, a native of Bengali, India, and Miranda who is from America. Like the author's story, Lahiri was born of Indian descent but her nationality is American.

The differences in the two stories are possible to happen because the two writers come from different countries, which can cause many customs in the two stories. In addition, the writer made the ending of the story, which at the end of infidelity between the two of them was not known by their respective partners. In "What is Remembered" Meriel who was in a relationship with Dr. Asher was not recognized by her husband even after her husband died. In "Sexy" story, Dev, who is very likely to have infidelity because he is in a long-distance relationship

aunt's place. This circumstance occurs because Pierre cannot take Meriel to her aunt's place because he has business. Dr. Asher is near them when they talk that Meriel is going to visit her aunt, and immediately Dr. Asher offers to escort Meriel and is approved by Pierre. In the "Sexy" story, Dev, a married man in a relationship with a beautiful and sexy woman, Miranda. The cause of infidelity in this story is because Dev who was in a long-distance relationship with his wife and he met Miranda. An accidental meeting made them closer and they even often spent time together at Miranda's apartment

In addition, this study also explains the type of infidelity in both stories. As explained by Shackelford, Buss, Bennett (2002). In "What is Remembered", the story has the type of non-sexual infidelity. Meriel and Dr. Asher just kiss in the open, namely on the sidewalk. In "Sexy" story has sexual infidelity. Miranda and Dev often meet and spend time together at Miranda's apartment. They also spend their time eating, traveling, going to flower shops, watching movies, etc. The last, Similarities and differences in both of the stories, which are analyzed in terms of characterization, the cause of infidelity, types of infidelity, and from the point of view of the authors.

The result of this study shows that infidelity in "What is Remembered" story is caused by circumstances. Pierre is Meriel's husband who cannot take Meriel to her aunt's place. So, Meriel is delivered by Dr. Asher, the man she had just met, and Pierre agreed. After they finish visiting Muriel's aunt, they don't go home right away, but they go to Stanley Park. That's where they kiss in the open, namely on the sidewalk. When Meriel wants to go to another place, then directly,

Dr. Asher kisses her. Dev being away from his wife, infidelity in “Sexy” story is caused by a kind of long-distance relationship. Dev finally meets a sexy woman named Miranda. They often meet and spend time together at Miranda's apartment. They also spend their time eating, traveling, going to flower shops, watching movies, etc.

The researcher does this analysis because this kind of study is never examined before. Several researchers analyzed infidelity in short stories, but all of them only analyze and reveal infidelity. In this research, the researcher analyzes the characters who are having infidelity, the characters related to the characters who are having infidelity, the factors causing the infidelity, the types of infidelity, and comparing the two stories by analyzing the similarities and differences in both of the stories.

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