CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Literature is the particular kind of writing which is conceived with own style and which aims to inspire an imagination and creative thought rather than merely to convey information or express political or personal views (Goodman 7). Through a literary work, an author shows a portrait of experience in human's life that can be understood and utilized by readers who get inspiration after reading it. The authors has different way in writing literary works, he has his own style. Sometimes the author writes based on the life experience that is faced by himself. As like someone real stories or the historical problems that happened in a country.

Literary works conceive many manifestations of ideology and imaginary representation of actual historical existence (Claire 13). In a literary work some authors convey the event and condition that happen based on the period surrounding in composition of their literary work. So, every literary work has its own historical background when it is produced (Gillespie 83). The authors draw upon factual information in presenting scenes, events, and characters. They attached an event that happen in real life to make readers more affectionate and get profound knowledge about the historical event through it. Readers are easy to imagine and feel the story as real as in that time.

Khaled Hosseini is an author who set against the background of Afghanistan's recent story. His first novel entitled Kite Runner and the second novel is A Thousand Splendid Suns, his second novel story is adapted by details of the two Afghan women whose lives are brought together through a series of tragic events because of the patriarchal system, political issues and Islamic laws which settled by Taliban that was applied in Afghanistan at that time. He attached the political issues and war that was happened in 1960 to 2003 in Afghanistan (http://wsws.org).

Afghanistan is a country with Muslim majority. Eighty-four percent of Afghans practice the Sunni, fifteen percent are Shi'a and the rest are Hindus, Jews, etc (Skaine 7). The fact that majority people in Afghanistan are Muslim, it makes some factions have the desire to make rule of the country based on Islamic laws. The law is considered as influential things in women's life. There are many laws which consider as the discrimination form to women figure. Women are not allowed to go to school and work. They are also prohibited to leave the home without being accompanied by male relatives, all of those laws are called Taliban laws (www. asia.knoji.com). Instead of the Taliban laws, the discrimination form to women is patriarchal society which applied there.

In patriarchal society, woman has considered as weak person (Tyson 83). They do not have any power to struggle and solve any problem that appears in her life. These views make women become weaker and sometime also form their thought, character and behavior to be inferior to men.

Through the novel entitled A Thousand Splendid Suns which is a masterpiece of writer Khaled Hosseini an Afghan-United States, he writes the result of his interview to two Afghan women about the history and issues happen there. This novel was published on May 22, 2007 in the United States (www.wikipedia.org/A Thousand Splendid Suns). This novel tells the story of two Afghan women who lives under the Taliban laws, Mariam Jo and Laila. In the beginning of story, it tells about the struggles of woman named Mariam. Mariam is an illegitimate daughter or called *harami* of a rich man named Jalil. Mariam's mother is a former maid at the Jalil's house but because the public does not recognize the existence of harami children in a family, so Mariam and her mother have to step aside and have a life of its own. The various miseries of Mariam faced in her life, starting the fact that she is not recognized as a child by Jalil's family, her mother's death, arranged marriage with Rasheed by Jalil's wives, and continued with repeated miscarriage because of Jalil's cruel. In the midst of her anguish, happiness appears in her life through the figure of a girl named Laila who later will change Mariam's life. Rasheed entraps Laila into marriage. That becomes a big problem later is when Laila born a daughter not a son that like Rasheed wants. Because of it, Rasheed is extremely aggressive.

The similarity between Mariam and Laila's destiny makes their relationship closer, then it also makes them finally find the happiness of their life. Mariam needs someone to be loved and Laila needs a love. It inspires this research to analyze how a woman as victim to struggle in her life by using feminism. Based

on the explanation above, this research is interested in analyzing the issues raise in A Thousand Splendid Suns novel.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Based on the background of study above, the problem of the study are as follows:

- 1. How are Mariam and Laila portrayed as victims in the novel A Thousand Splendid Sun?
- 2. How do main characters struggle to reach their happiness depicted in the novel?

1.3 Objective of Study

In accordance with the statement of the problems, this study has two objectives that can be stated follows:

- 1. To explain the portrayal of Mariam and Laila as victims of patriarchal society.
- 2. To reveal the main characters struggle to reach their happiness depicted in the novel.

1.4 Scope and Limitation

This study will be limited to the novel A Thousand Splendid Suns. The study then focuses on the oppression and women's struggle to confront discrimination

of gender that is caused Taliban laws and patriarchal system in Afghanistan as depicted in the novel.

1.5 Significance of Study

The research is expected to be significant to the theoretical and practical functions. Theoretically, this research will enrich the readers' development of knowledge in the literary theory especially theory which related to woman. While practically, this research hopefully can give useful contribution for the readers in understanding the content of A Thousand Splendid Suns concerning in the feminist theory to help the reader in expressing the meaning of the feminist in the A Thousand Splendid Suns. The research can be a helpful reference for other researchers who are interested in the same theory and focus.

1.6 Method of Study

This research used library research and qualitative is applied. Instead of using library, this research also uses online researches in the process of collecting data for this study. In presenting the analysis, the research select the data in form of narration and conversation from the novel related to the problem, its also takes from books or articles from library or internet. The research follows the following steps:

- 1. Reading the novel to get the complete and well understanding on the whole story.
- 2. Selecting and collecting the data in form narration and conversation from the novel related to the problem.

- 3. Analyzing the data that is appropriated with statement of problems, then each point is analyzed using Feminism theory, which refers to the objectives of the study.
- 4. Making conclusion based on the result of data analysis.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

This allows readers to know exactly what this research is referring to and intending to investigate. There are some key terms used in this research, they are listed below:

- Anyone who is harmed by another, a person who suffers any 1. Victim other injury, loss, or damage as a result of a voluntary undertaking (http://www.definitions.net/definition/victim).
- 2. Oppression Exercise of authority or power in a burdensome, cruel, or unjust manner, it can also be defined as an act or instance of oppressing, the state of being oppressed, and the feeling of being heavily burdened, mentally or physically, by troubles, adverse conditions or people, and anxiety (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oppression).
- 3. Taliban : Taliban's meaning is seeker, religious student and in Persian, it means seeker of truth, that is association of university students and young man that brought up in war period at the evacuation camps. This association that determined laws based on Shari'a, Islamic laws used in Afghanistan (Romli 88).