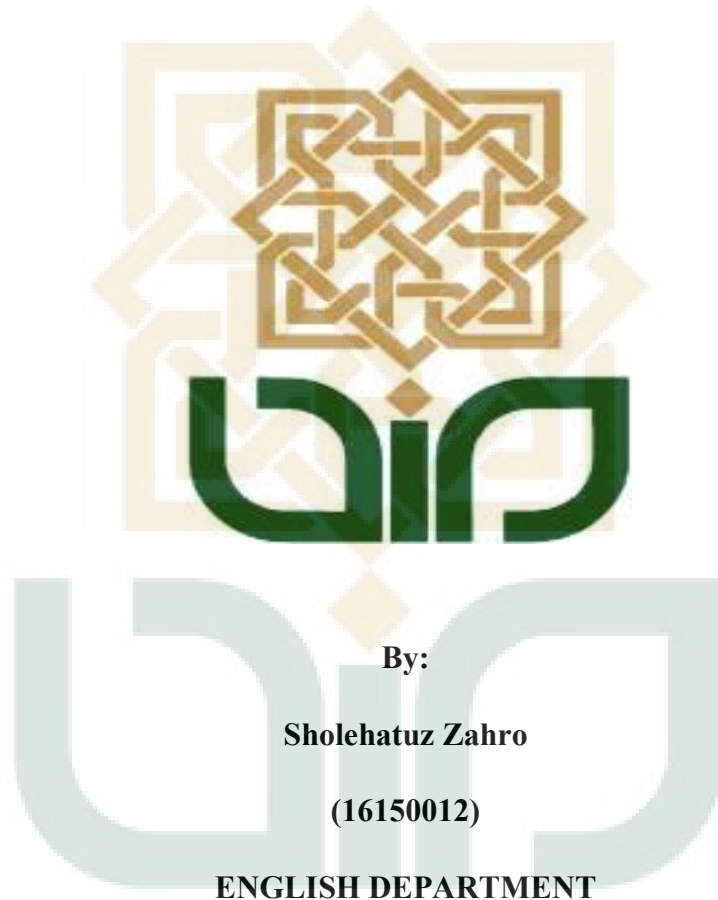


**THE PORTRAYAL OF POLYGAMY IN KHALEED HOSSEINI'S**

***A THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS***

A Graduating Paper

Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for Gaining the Bachelor  
Degree in English Literature



**FACULTY OF ADAB AND CULTURAL SCIENCES**  
**STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF SUNAN KALIJAGA**

**2020**

## FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT

### A FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT

I certify that this thesis is definitely my own work. I am completely responsible for the content of this thesis. Other writers' opinions or findings included in the thesis are quoted or cited in accordance with ethical standards.

Yogyakarta, 9 March 2020

The Writer,

METERAI  
DEMPAI  
KIPWAMF3218M117  
6000  
Sholehatus Zahro

Student No.: 16150012

# APPROVAL

**KEMENTERIAN AGAMA UNIVERSITAS ISLAM  
NEGERI SUNAN KALIJAGA FAKULTAS ADAB  
DAN ILMU BUDAYA**  
Jl. Merdeka Adisucipto Telp. (0274) 513949 Fax. (0274) 552883 Yogyakarta 55281

**PENGESAHAN TUGAS AKHIR**  
Nomor : 9-780/Un/IL/DA/PP.01/9-05/2020

Tugas Akhir dengan judul : **THE PORTRAYAL OF POLYGAMY IN KHALEED HOSSEINI'S *THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN***  
yang disesupkan dan disusun oleh:

Nama : **SHOLEHATUZ ZAHRO**  
Nomor Induk Mahasiswa : **1615012**  
Tetap diujikan pada : **Senin, 30 Maret 2020**  
Nilai ujian Tugas Akhir : **A/B**

dinyatakan telah diterima oleh Fakultas Adab dan Ilmu Budaya UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta

**TIMUJIAN TUGAS AKHIR**  
Kesa Siskang  
  
Dr. Wihario, S.S., M.Hum.  
NIP. 19720801 200904 1 002

Penguji I  
  
Ulyani Retno Sari, S.S., M.Hum.  
NIP. 19771113 200801 2 002

Penguji II  
  
David Hidayatullah, SS., M.Hum.  
NIP. 19780403 200901 1 016

Yogyakarta, 30 Maret 2020  
Deputi Dekan  
Fakultas Adab dan Ilmu Budaya Dekan  
  
Drs. Abdul Parok, M.Ag.  
NIP. 19570721 198003 1 062

1/1 04/06/2020

## NOTA DINAS



EMENTRIAN AGAMA REPUBLIK INDONESIA  
IVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI SUNAN KALIJAGA  
FAKULTAS ADAB DAN ILMU BUDAYA

arsda Adisucipto Yogyakarta 55281 Telp/Fax. (0274) 513949  
:b: <http://adab.uin-suka.ac.id> Email: [adab@uin-suka.ac.id](mailto:adab@uin-suka.ac.id)

NOTA DINAS

Hal : Skripsi

a.n. Sholehatuz Zahro

Yth.  
Dekan Fakultas Adab dan Ilmu Budaya  
UIN Sunan Kalijaga  
Di Yogyakarta

*Assalamualaikum wr. wb.*

Setelah memeriksa, meneliti, dan memberikan arahan untuk perbaikan atas skripsi saudara:

Nama : Sholehatuz Zahro  
NIM : 16150012  
Prodi : Sastra Inggris  
Fakultas : Adab dan Ilmu Budaya  
Judul :

**THE PORTRAYAL OF POLYGAMY IN KHALEED HOSSEINI'S A THOUSAND  
SPLENDID SUNS.**

Saya menyatakan bahwa skripsi tersebut sudah dapat diajukan pada sidang Munaqasyah untuk memenuhi salah satu syarat memperoleh gelar Sarjana Sastra Inggris.

Atas perhatiannya, saya ucapkan terima kasih

*Wassalamualaikum wr. wb.*

Yogyakarta, 9 March 2020  
Pembimbing,

**Dr. Witriani, S.S., M.Hum.**  
197208012006042002

**MOTTO**

Allah is the only owner of justice.



## DEDICATION

I dedicate this graduating paper for

My beloved parents *Bapak Sulkhani* and *Ibu Rofiatun*,

My dearest Brothers and Sisters

My lecturers at English Department

My beloved friends in English Department, especially chapter 2016



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*Assalamualaikum Wr, Wb.*

Praise to Allah Almighty, the Cherisher and Sustainer for every human on earth. Without His mercy, I could never complete this paper. Allah always gives me health and strength. He makes my tears, prays, and struggles become successful to meet one of the condition and complete studies in order to obtain a Bachelor of Education Degree in English Department of State Islamic University of Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. I thank Him for never leaving me and always watching me.

Besides, this graduating paper is presented for English Department of State Islamic University of Sunan Kalijaga. Furthermore, there are so many people involved in my effort to finish this paper and I really thank them.

1. The Dean of Adab and Cultural Science Faculty, Prof Dr. Akhmad Patah, M.Ag.
2. The Head of English Department Dr Ubaidillah, M.Hum.
3. Dr. Witriani, M.Hum. as my thesis advisor. Thank you for becoming so patient and for your support to me to complete this graduating paper.
4. Aninda Aji Siwi S.Pd, M.Pd. as my academic advisor. Thanks for all your helps during four years.
5. All of my lecturers in English Department. Thank you for everything you taught to me.

6. My beloved mother Rofiatun and father Sulhkani who always love, encourage and support me.
7. My big family who always love me.
8. My future husband who I will spend the rest of my life with.
9. My beloved friends Roviatul Latifah, Nunung Shoimatun Nikhlah, Annisa Nur Karimah, Sofiah Aini Purba, and Muthmainnah Dwi Umayah who always became the reason of my laugh.
10. My beloved friends in the Library, Rielia Ayu Puapasari, Anis Khanza Qonita, Roviatul Latifah, and Khadid Syaifullah who always struggle with me.
11. My beloved reviewers, Siti Maulida, Aan Hukmana, Bangkit Tri Utomo, Roviatul Latifah, Anis Khanza Qonita, and Tutik Hidayati. Thanks for your help.
12. My English Literature 2016 friends. Thanks for the happiness and memories during four years.
13. All people who read and appreciate this paper.

I realize that this paper is not perfect one. Therefore all your critics and suggestion will improve this paper.

*Wassalamualaikum Wr, Wb.*



Yogyakarta. March 9<sup>th</sup> 2020

The Researcher,

Sholehatuz Zahro

16150012



## ABSTRACT

*A Thousand Splendid Suns* is a novel about women's oppression in polygamy. This novel tells about how the polygamy in the novel is practiced by Rasheed with his wives, Mariam and Laila. Mariam is the woman who was hurt by Laila's appearance in her and Rasheed's marriage. Mariam is always compared and oppressed by Rasheed. Meanwhile, Laila is a young and educated woman that benefits him. The researcher is interested to analyze the way polygamy is portrayed in the novel. The researcher also connects it to Islamic value because Rasheed and his two wives are Muslims and they live with Islamic law. It is essential to understand how polygamy is practiced in the novel. The researcher uses the theory of Polygamy by Mustafa Khan and supported by theory of gender equality by Ziba Mir Hosseini to analyze the data in the novel. The researcher uses qualitative method to examine the data. By this research, the researcher finds that Mariam's polygamy that happened in the novel does not run well. Rasheed cannot be fair to his wives.

**Keywords:** *Polygamy, gender equality, discrimination, violence, domination.*

## ABSTRAK

*A Thousand Splendid Suns* adalah novel tentang penindasan terhadap perempuan dalam poligami. Novel ini menceritakan tentang berjalannya poligami dalam novel yang dilakukan oleh Rasheed dengan istrinya Mariam dan Laila. Mariam adalah wanita yang terluka oleh penampilan Laila di rumah tangganya dengan Rasheed. Mariam selalu dibandingkan dan direndahkan oleh Rasheed. Hal tersebut terjadi karena Mariam berasal dari keluarga yang tidak jelas, sementara Laila adalah wanita muda dan berpendidikan yang kedangannya menguntungkan Rasheed. Peneliti tertarik untuk menganalisis cara poligami digambarkan. Peneliti juga terhubung dengan nilai-nilai Islam karena Rasheed dan dua istrinya adalah Muslim sehingga mereka harus berjalan di atas hukum Islam. Sangat penting untuk memahami bagaimana poligami dilakukan dalam novel. Peneliti menggunakan teori Polygamy oleh Mustafa Khan dan didukung oleh teori *Gender Equality* oleh Ziba Mir Hosseini untuk menganalisis data dalam novel. Peneliti menggunakan metode kualitatif untuk menganalisis data. Dengan penelitian ini, peneliti menemukan bahwa poligami yang terjadi dalam novel tidak berjalan dengan baik. Rasheed tidak bisa adil kepada istrinya.

**Keywords:** Poligami, kesetaraan gender, diskriminasi, kekerasan, dominasi.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1. Background of Study

Marriage is a natural thing desired by all humans on earth. Getting a good, established, and loyal partner will be everyone's main desire. According to Ziba (2015: 39), marriage is a contract of exchange and patterned on the contract of sale (*bay'*), which serves as a model for most contracts in *fiqh*. The contract is called '*aqd al-nikah* (the contract of marriage). There are three types of marriage; monogamy, polygamy, polygyny and polyandry, but the researcher will only focus on polygamy. Polygamy is the condition when a husband has more than one wife. Polygamy may become a necessity under some certain circumstances, yet it can only be done under special conditions and with certain restrictions (2009:19-20).

Beside the practice in real life, many literature works also discuss polygamy. Literature is overflowing of human experience in accordance with social and personal conditions at the time. Literature is not merely about human's overflowing feeling in which the feeling is not only imaginative but also corresponding to real life society. Sometimes, literature shows a real social condition according to the author's view which is expressed into a literature work. Khaled Hosseini took Afghanistan as the setting of his novel because he was an Afghan, and most Afghans are Muslims that allow polygamy. Although polygamy is allowed in Islam, but in the practice, there many cases of polygamy which are against the Islamic laws, because it sometimes hurt and victimize women.

*A Thousand Splendid Suns* novel by Khaleed Hosseini tells about polygamy happening in the social life. In this novel, Hosseini describes polygamy practice that occurred in Afghanistan many years ago. The polygamy practice described in this novel is a deviation from the proper polygamy practice. The polygamy practice is described by Hosseini through the character in this novel. The first marriage presented by Hosseini is the relationship between Nana and Jalil (Mariam's parents). Jalil has three wives and Nana is only his servant who got pregnant with his child, (although both of them is not actually married) Hosseini depicts the importance of marriage and the shame of pre-marital relationships in Afghani culture. Hosseini then presents Mariam, Laila, and Rasheed's marriage to show another polygamy practice in the novel.

Qur'an surah Al Hujarat: 49.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

Means: O people! Indeed, we have created you from a man and a woman, then We made you nationalities and tribes so that you know each other. Surely the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most pious. Truly, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Exact. (Qur'an.com translation)



The Qur'an says that everyone is equal, but the problem in the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is the way Rasheed treats his wives badly as if he wants to show that women are in a lower caste than men. He always compares his wives to each other and beats them. However, between Mariam and Laila, Mariam is the one who suffers more in their marriage. He does not treat his wives in the equal position. Therefore, the researcher wants to analyze the injustice of polygamous behavior in the novel by using theory of polygamy and supported by gender equality theory. Equality means the right to get the same treatment and position as the other people do. The researcher is going to focus on Mariam's point of view to see the polygamous behavior in the novel. Therefore, the role of Islam as religion in polygamy becomes the object of this research.

### **1.2 Research Question**

How is the portrayal of polygamy described in Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*?

### **1.3 Objectives of Study**

The objective of the study based on the research question above is to explain how polygamy is depicted in Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*.

### **1.4 Significances of Study**

The researcher agrees that polygamy still happens, yet some polygamy practices are not done properly. This research is useful for the readers who are studying polygamy. It will give the readers more information for other researches to conduct the further research about polygamy and gender equality.

### **1.5 Literature Review**

The researcher found many researches using *A Thousand Splendid Suns* novel as the object. Therefore, the researcher only selects and presents the most relevant ones to this research.

The first research was written in 2015 by Nurul Istikomah from Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University. Her thesis was titled *Women's Attitudes towards Gender Discrimination in Khaled Hosseini's "A Thousand Splendid Suns"*. [Istikomah](#) analyzed women's attitudes towards gender discrimination in the novel using feminist literary criticism theory. She analyzed Mariam and Laila's attitude in facing discrimination in their lives. Her conclusion talks about the result of their attitude in facing gender discrimination.

The second researcher is Sumiati from Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University. Her research was written in 2015 and titled *Mariam Personality in Facing External Conflict as Seen in "A Thousand Splendid Suns" Novel*. This research uses theory of psychoanalysis by Sigmund Freud which focuses on *id*, *ego*, and *superego*. Sumiati focuses on Mariam's character. Sumiati's research is different from this research. The researcher uses the different theory and different problem.

The third researcher is Pitoyo Miyono from Surakarta Muhammadiyah University. His article was written in 2016 under the title *Women's Rebellion in Khaled Hosseini's "A Thousand Splendid Suns": A Marxist Approach*. The research describes the rebellion of the female characters that are subordinated by the male characters. Miyono views and shows the oppression by using Marxist theory.

The last is Ni Wayan Agustini from English Department, Faculty of Letters and Culture Feminism. Written in 2014, her research was titled *The Cases Of Mariam And Laila in "A Thousand Splendid Suns"*. Her research focuses on the description of Mariam and Laila's characters that are based on three dimensions: physical, personality, and social life and she describes the types of feminism experienced by the main character as a result of women's struggle against oppression by men.

The researcher thinks that this research is different from those prior researches. It is because the researcher focuses on the injustice in polygamy that is portrayed in the novel. The researcher uses polygamy and gender and equality theory by Ziba Mir Hosseini which is connected-with Islamic jurisprudence.

## **1.6 Theoretical Approach**

In this research, the researcher uses by of Polygamy by Mustafa Khan supported by theory of gender equality by Ziba Mir-Hosseini to analyze Khaleed Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*.

### **1.6.1 Polygamy Theory**

The researcher also uses the theory of polygamy by Mustafa Khan which focuses on the law of polygamy in Islam. This theory explains the concept of polygamy seen by the purpose and the benefit of polygamy in Islam. According to Mustafa, the law of polygamy is divided into three; *Sunnah*, *makruh* and *haram*.

It is true that the Prophet did polygamy in his marriage long time ago, but it does not directly mean that polygamy is *Sunnah*. According to Mustafa Khan, there are three laws of polygamy. The first is *Sunnah*. Polygamy can be *Sunnah* if a husband is allowed to do polygamy by the first wife, or the wife is chronically ill that cannot give a better generation to the husband. The second is *Makruh*. Polygamy becomes *Makruh* if the husband who does polygamy is just doing it for fun. The last is *Haram*. The law of polygamy becomes *Haram* if a husband who wants to do polygamy is weak to give the basic necessities of life or weak to be fair to his wives (1979;409).

### **1.6.2 Gender and Equality Theory**

The researcher uses the theory of gender and quality by Ziba Mir-Hosseini which focuses on Muslim family law. This theory is a contemporary concept of justice. It is

constructed from the ideals of human rights, equality, and personal freedom that depart substantially from those that follow the rules of classical *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) and *shari'a*. This division is the central problem that initiates the debates regarding egalitarian family law in Islamic context.

The theory of gender and equality by Ziba Mir Hosseini is focusing on the concept of marriage and gender equality between husband and wife. It begins with the questions about the concept of justice and equality in Islam's sacred texts, for example, the same portion of husband and wife in their position in the family, whether in control, in authority, in opportunity or in other matters. This theory discussed the basic concept of justice and gender equality based on classical *fiqh* rulings and constructed a foundation or basic structure of an egalitarian family law. There are two statements from Ziba regarding equality.

“The fundamentals of the Shari'a are rooted in wisdom and promotion of the welfare of human beings in this life and the hereafter. Shari'a embraces Justice, Kindness, the Common Good, and Wisdom. Any rule that departs from justice to injustice, from kindness to harshness, from the common good to harm, or from rationality to absurdity cannot be part of Shari'a”. Extracted by Ziba Mir Hosseini in Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (1292–1350).

“The wife is her husband's prisoner, a prisoner being akin to a slave. The Prophet directed men to support their wives by feeding them with their own food and clothing them with their own clothes; he said the same about maintaining a slave”. Extracted by Ziba Mir Hosseini in Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (1292–1350).

According to Ziba, the first statement speaks to all Muslims nowadays. Both the advocates of gender equality and their opponents often use it as an epigraph. The second statement, which reflects classical *fiqh* conceptions of marriage, goes against the very grain of what many Muslims today considered as Justice, Kindness, the Common Good, and Wisdom. Ziba describes equality before the law for women by understanding the sources of the Shari'a (Qur'an and Hadith) that appear to treat men and women as equals (2002:6).

## **1.7 Method of Research**

Method of research consists of type of research, data sources, data collection technique, and data analysis technique.

### **1.7.1 Type of Research**

This research uses qualitative research. The data of this research is described by reviewing discourse. This research does not need any observation to collect the data, but the data are taken from referential books, website, and other data sources.

### **1.7.2 Data Sources**

The data sources are divided into two categories, primary data and secondary data. The primary data are taken from the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and the secondary data are taken from journal and internet related to the novel analysis.

### **1.7.3 Data Collection Technique**

The researcher uses library research in collecting data. The library research is done by reading the novel to get the data in the form of dialogues, sentences, discourses, and even words. After reading the novel, the researcher takes some notes to make database, then the researcher writes down the data on the paper.

### **1.7.4 Data Analysis Technique**

In this research, the researcher uses descriptive qualitative method which collects the data from written sources. According to Susan, qualitative method is a primarily exploratory research. It is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations (www.snapsurvey.com). The researcher uses this method because it is suitable and useful to identify the problems.

## **1.8 Paper Organization**

This research is divided into four chapters. The first chapter consists of background of the study which tells about the object and the reason of choosing it. The chapter also explains the research question, objectives of the study, significances of the study, literature review, theoretical approach, and methods of research. The second chapter focuses on the intrinsic elements of the novel. The third chapter explains the analysis of the object using theory. The last chapter consists of the conclusion and suggestions.



## CHAPTER IV

### 1. Conclusion

Based on the discussion, the researcher summarizes that theory of polygamy by Mustafa and theory of gender and equality by Ziba can answer the research question. In the polygamy behavior that happens in the novel, gender inequality is really exist. The researcher finds discrimination, violence, and domination that happens in Rasheed's polygamous marriage. The practice of polygamy here is against what is supposed to be according to Islamic value and Islamic jurisprudence, so the polygamy that happens in the novel becomes *haram*. Islam allows polygamy with one condition. It should be fair in all aspects for all wives. If it cannot be agreed to, it is enough to have just one wife. The Qur'an verse below explains that polygamy is better not being done because there are so many *mudharat* (harm) in it.

### 2. Suggestion

The researcher suggests the readers to reconsider and observe before doing this *sunnah* to ensure that it runs as well as what the Prophet did.

Al-Qur'an 4: 129

A. وَلَنْ تَسْتَطِيعُوا أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا بَيْنَ النِّسَاءِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتُمْ فَلَا تَمِيلُوا كُلَّ الْمَيْلِ

فَتَذَرُوهُنَّ كَالْمُعَلَّقَةِ وَإِنْ تُصْلِحُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

Means: And you will never be able to be equal [in feeling] between wives, even if you should strive [to do so]. So do not incline completely [toward one] and leave another hanging. And if you amend [your affairs] and fear Allah - then indeed, Allah is ever Forgiving and Merciful (Qur'an.com translation).

From the Qur'an verse above, it can be concluded that polygamy takes much risk in it. No one in the world can be as fair as God, not even the Prophet. There is a lot of *sunnah* that Muslims in the world can follow, and people have to consider thoroughly before doing this one.



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