

## DEFENSE MECHANISM OF THE MAIN CHARACTER IN KHALED HOSSEINI'S NOVEL A THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS

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### **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana Mariam sebagai tokoh utama dalam novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* dapat mempertahankan diri dari konflik yang dihadapinya. Khaled menciptakan karakter Mariam untuk mendukung jalan cerita yang sebenarnya berfokus dalam menampilkan kondisi perang di Afghanistan sekitar tahun 1970-an. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan psikoanalisis dan teori mekanisme pertahanan Freud untuk menganalisis kepribadian Mariam dan melihat bagaimana dia dapat bertahan dari semua konflik. Penelitian ini juga menggunakan metode kualitatif untuk menganalisis data. Data diambil dari novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* karya Khaled Hosseini dengan melihat teks, narasi, percakapan, plot dan setting dalam cerita. Dengan demikian, hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa ada beberapa konflik yang dihadapi Mariam, yaitu konflik sosial di mana dia tidak diterima di masyarakat karena statusnya sebagai anak haram, konflik dengan ibunya yang menyesal melahirkannya, konflik dengan suaminya yang melakukan kekerasan dalam rumah tangga dan juga menikah lagi dan berkonflik dengan dirinya sendiri dimana ia sering menyalahkan dirinya sendiri atas semua hal buruk yang terjadi dalam hidupnya. Dalam menghadapi konflik di atas, peneliti menemukan bahwa Mariam mengatasi masalah kecemasan dan ketakutannya dengan menggunakan mekanisme pertahanan diri yang meliputi: represi, pembentukan reaksi, penyangkalan, pelampiasan, proyeksi, rasionalisasi, *undoing*, dan fantasi. Mekanisme pertahanan diri itulah yang membuatnya tetap hidup dan menerima takdir yang Tuhan berikan kepadanya.

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### *Abstract*

*This research aims to see how Mariam as the main character in the novel A Thousand Splendid Suns can defend herself against the conflicts she faced. Khaled created the character of Mariam to support the storylines, which actually focuses on showing the war conditions in Afghanistan around the 1970s. The research uses psychoanalysis approach and Freud's defense mechanism theory to analyze Mariam's personality and see how she can survive all the conflicts. This is also use qualitative method to analyze the data. The data is taken from the novel A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini itself by looking at the text, narration, conversation, plot and setting in the story. Thus, the result of this research indicate that there are several conflicts faced by Mariam, namely social conflict where she is not accepted in the society because of her status as an illegitimate child, conflict with her mother who regrets giving birth to her, conflict with her husband who commits domestic violence and also remarry and conflict with herself where she often blamed herself for all the bad things in her life. In dealing with some of the conflicts above, the researcher found that Mariam overcomes her anxiety and fear problems using defense mechanisms including; repression, reaction formation, denial, displacement, projection, rationalization, undoing, and fantasy. Those defense mechanisms keep her alive and accept the fate that God had been gave to her.*

*Keywords: novel's, defense mechanisms, character*

## INTRODUCTION

Khaled Hosseini is an Afghan-American author who was born in Afghanistan in 1965 and immigrated to the United States in 1980 with his family. One of his best-selling novels is *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. The novel was published by Riverhead Books in United States 2007 with English as the native language used in the novel. It became a number one New York Times bestseller for fifteen weeks. (Emrich, 2013) Getting success in the first novel *The Kite Runner* in 2003, Khaled Hosseini become a UNHCR ambassador who visiting countries where conflict was occurring, one of which was Afghanistan. While visiting Afghanistan, Khaled Hosseini interviewed several women at the refugee camp. The interview served as the basis for this second novel. The novel has values that can be taken from the story. Seen from several reviews of this novel, this novel received a positive value because it tells about the situation of women in Afghanistan at that time, how they want affection, love, equality, freedom, and most importantly how they defend themselves from all of things. Having a background story when the war happened, this novel is irresistible to read and research. (Memcott, 2007)

In the previous study conducted by Murti (2018) with the title *Mariam struggles for her life in Khaled Hosseini's A Thousand Splendid Suns*, the researcher focused on the socio-historical approach that was used to see the outside situations that influenced Mariam in struggling for her life. She also saw how Mariam's character in the story. Meanwhile, this research focused on the internal defense mechanism that Mariam used to maintain her life. She faced external pressures that made her mentally disturbed by using defense mechanisms to maintain her sanity.

The research mainly focuses on Mariam, the novel's main character, despite the fact that the story covers the condition of all women in Afghanistan at the time. Mariam, who was born as *harami* (illegitimate child), who often bullied, then her father forced her to marry after the death of her mother, and often get tortured by her husband, even her husband

remarried. The explanation make the researcher assumed that there is something wrong with Mariam's mental, because Mariam became an insecure, anxious and timid person.

The researcher found several sentences which indicate that Mariam defends to survive her life from all the conflicts she faced in her life, such as the society who did not accept her because of her status, her family problems, and the domestic violence that her husband did. Those conflicts make the researcher interested to see how Mariam as the main character of this novel faces the problems along with the story and what choices she makes to stay alive. Seeing from Mariam's soft character she has no desire to fight with people around her who make her life messy. Therefore, whatever troubles she faces, she will follow it without any resistance, until at the end of her patience she chooses the brutal way to survive her life.

The character of Mariam described by the author in this novel depicts the situation of women in Afghanistan at that time. Where schools are not allowed for women, they are not allowed to leave the house without their husbands, accept all the mistreatment of their husbands without help from others, fear that never goes away from their minds, and the desire to be free which is never be happened. All those things disturb their psychology, but they choose to survive to save their life for their children and also for themselves.

This topic becomes interesting to analyze by using a psychological perspective. Using an approach in psychoanalysis to show how Mariam survived her life make this research more convenient to be analyzed. Through the defense mechanism theory of Sigmund Freud, this research analyzed the character of Mariam in A Thousand Splendid Suns novel by Khaled Hosseini, by proposing the title *Defense Mechanism of the Main Character in Khaled Hosseini's Novel "A Thousand Splendid Suns"*.

## **METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH**

Qualitative research method is used in collecting the data. Denzin & Lincoln in (Ospina, 2004), explained that interpretative and naturalistic approaches are connected through qualitative research. Researchers researching various phenomena in their natural

environments in order to comprehend and explicate events in relation to the meanings that people assign to them are said to be conducting this qualitative research. Thus, researcher used qualitative research methods to analyze, describe and understand the defense mechanisms of the Mariam character in the novel under research.

The novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini which was released in 2007 is the source of the data information. The information for this research was collected directly from the text of the novel, which reveals Mariam's personality and defense mechanisms that she used based on psychoanalysis theory by Sigmund Freud. Data Collection The following six stages were taken by the researcher when gathering the data and information: 1. Reading the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini repeatedly. 2. Keep the attention solely on the elements that help to develop Mariam's character while reading the novel. 3. Identifying and classifying the data about Mariam's character based on the theory of defense mechanisms. 4. Clarifying the data that has been categorized. 5. Marking the text indicating the defense mechanisms used by Mariam. 6. The final step is to write down the text that has been found that shows Mariam's defense mechanism.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **1. Mariam as the main character**

The storyline used a third person point of view with a plot built on the story of the main character. As known in Abrams (1999: 231) that using the third person point of view or "she/he/it" is a writing style where the author seems to be the outside of the story which then tells the story of the main character to the readers. In researching literary works such as characters, it cannot be separated from the plot structure that builds the story from beginning to the end. This is the story that took a theme of a heart-breaking story of an Afghan woman in the 1970s - 2000s with a patriarchy that's still very strong. It makes Mariam as the main character in the story showed how she defends her life with all the strength she had to face the pressure she received. Therefore, in this story the readers are immediately presented with the events of the main character, namely Mariam, a fifteen years old girl who lived under pressure. She is described as an Afghan woman. She, as the second sex did not get the freedom to go against her husband. She lived under pressure because she has been treated unfairly because of her status as a harami or illegitimate child that is not accepted in society. She also had no right to refuse when her father forced her to get married. She also could not forbid her husband to remarry. The readers are also introduced the supporting characters, such as Nana as Mariam's mother, Jalil as Mariam's father, Rasheed as Mariam's husband, and Laila as Rasheed's second wife, because they are the important characters who build the conflict in the story. This research also provides the information about how the situations and conditions in the story.

### **2. Mariam's character**

This part alluded how Mariam's character is described by the author to find out if there is a conflict caused by her appearance. She was insecure with herself and also felt that she was not beautiful. From the explanation, it must to know how Mariam looks that makes her insecure. Therefore, this part discussed about how is the physical appearance of Mariam.

### 3. Mariam's physical appearance

Physically, the author described Mariam as a simple girl who has a bad appearance, but with the shape of her round and pointed face that she thought was a little strange, her face look not pretty but still nice to look at either. It can be seen in the narration below:

*“A mirror was passed beneath the veil. In it, Mariam saw her own face first, the archless, unshapely eyebrows, the flat hair, the eyes, mirthless green and set so closely together that one might mistake her for being cross-eyed. Her skin was coarse and had a dull, spotty appearance. She thought her brow too wide, the chin too narrow, the lips too thin. The overall impression was of a long face, a triangular face, a bit houndlike. And yet Mariam saw that, oddly enough, the whole of these unmemorable parts made for a face that was not pretty but, somehow, not unpleasant to look at either” (A Thousand Splendid Suns, 2007. p. 48-49)*

The narration above made the researcher found that the author tried to describe Mariam's appearance as women in general. Women in general mean that they look not beautiful but there are parts of their self that make others still like to see them. In the data, Mariam also always felt insecure about her appearance such as her skin is dull and rough. Actually it was one form that she did not take care of herself. She did not get the chance to take care of herself, as her step sisters got. That is why she had an unattractive appearance. Besides that, Mariam was describing as a simple girl without luxurious appearance and also intelligence. As a harami who did not accepted in society who even lived in a solitary village with her mother, she did not have the intelligence because her mother did not allow her to go to school. Her mother was afraid if they find out that Mariam is a harami, she will be humiliated and also get bullied. Therefore, apart from looking bad, she was also not educated. However, she still had knowledge about religion, because her mother still allowed her to study about religion from an old man who lived nearby, namely Mullah Faizullah, one of people she loved.



#### 4. Mariam's characterization

##### **She is a kind, respectful, patient and loyal girl Mariam is a kind girl.**

She understands her mother and also respects to her father and step brothers. Even though she did not get the full love from her parents, she still grew up to be a good girl. Her father even admits it; Jalil said. *"You were a good daughter, Mariam jo. Even in birth you were a good daughter."* (A Thousand Splendid Suns, 2007. p. 11).

Mariam really respects and appreciates every hard work that her step brothers often did. Sometimes she felt sorry for them because they had worked so hard, but her mother used to curse at them and Mariam couldn't do anything to help them. Sometimes, Mariam even cursing at them and all of that was done because of her mother's request. She had to follow it to make her happy. She knew that her mother had done it to relieve herself from the pain that her father had done to her. It can be seen from this following data:

*Mariam felt sorry for the boys. How tired their arms and legs must be, she thought pityingly, pushing that heavy load. She wished she were allowed to offer them water. But she said nothing, and if they waved at her she didn't wave back. Once, to please Nana, Mariam even yelled at Muhsin, told him he had a mouth shaped like a lizard's ass-and was consumed later with guilt, shame, and fear that they would tell Jalil. Nana, though, laughed so hard, her rotting front tooth in full display, that Mariam thought she would lapse into one of her fits. She looked at Mariam when she was done and said, "You're a good daughter." When the barrow was empty, the boys scuffled back and pushed it away. Mariam would wait and watch them disappear into the tall grass and flowering weeds. "Are you coming?" "Yes, Nana." "They laugh at you. They do. I hear them." "I'm coming." "You don't believe me?" "Here I am." "You know I love you, Mariam jo." (A Thousand Splendid Suns, 2007. p. 14)*

From the data above, it can be seen that Mariam felt sympathy for her two step brothers. She really did not want to hurt anyone. However, her mother's feeling was more important because she knew that the only person she has is only her mother, even though she always



said bad words to her. She also knew that the bad things her mother said to them were just a form of defense to make her relieved.

### **5. She is aloner**

Since her mother's death, Mariam had become more loner. *"Except for "when she had to use the bathroom down the hall, Mariam stayed in the room."* (*A Thousand Splendid Suns*, 2007. p. 37). She merely remained in her room following the death of her mother. She was also not comfortable with her father's house situation. She had to adapt with her wives as well as her step-siblings. Everything seemed strange to her, even though she had wanted all that happiness before. Actually she becomes loner because she had no friends since childhood and did not get along with many people, but she becomes more introverted since she knew that the only person she had already passed away and left her forever. That's she preferred to be alone and besides that she was afraid that people will insult her if they find out that she is a harami. It can be seen from the data:

*In the tandoor line, Mariam caught sideways glances shot at her, heard whispers. Her hands began to sweat. She imagined they all knew that she'd been born a harami, a source of shame to her father and his family. (A Thousand Splendid Suns, 2007. p. 60)* Given the information above, it can be seen that when in a crowd Mariam will be filled with anxiety where she is worried that people will find out about her status and then mock her. The researcher looked in the story that when she was alone or at home she felt better because she did not bother thinking about what people would do if they found out about her status.

### **6. Mariam's conflicts**

As we know that conflict arises because of the differences in values, status, social condition, and power between two or more people. There is also a conflict caused by a clash between the mind and the heart/mental of oneself. Usually the effect of this can make a person feel insecure and also often blame their self. As Minnery (in Renita Br Saragih, 2019) said that conflict occurs because of the interaction between two or more parties who are dependent on each other, but they have different goals where one party realizes the differences and finally takes an action to fight. Further, this part described the conflicts that Mariam faces in her life, including social conflicts (society, her mother and husband), also her inner conflict.

### **Social conflict**

According to Rahim (in Renita Br Saragih, 2019), social conflict is usually triggered by the choices and characteristics difference that brought by individuals in an interaction. Conflict will not be avoided if the differences are not resolved. This is one type of conflict that is triggered by differences, tensions, or disputes that occur between two or more parties in society. Usually these differences can be in the form of cultural differences, interests, and also individual differences that involve feelings that trigger disputes.

As previously explained, Mariam is a girl who lived in Afghanistan which is predominantly Muslim and still adheres to a patriarchal system. Women as the second sex after men are prohibited from leaving the house unless they are accompanied by male family members (father, husband, brothers). It can be seen from the announcement below: Attention women:

*You will stay inside your homes at all times. It is not proper for women to wander aimlessly about the streets. If you go outside, you must be accompanied by a mahram, a male relative. If you are caught alone on the street, you will be beaten and sent home. You will not, under any circumstance, show your face. You will cover with burqa when outside. If you do not, you will be severely beaten. Cosmetics are forbidden. Jewelry is forbidden. You will not wear charming clothes. You will not speak unless spoken to. You will not make eye contact with men. You will not laugh in public. If you do, you will be beaten. You will not paint your nails. If you do, you will lose a finger. Girls are forbidden from attending school All schools for girls will be closed immediately. Women are forbidden from working. If you are found guilty of adultery, you will be stoned to death Listen. Listen well. Obey. Allah-u-akbar. (A Thousand Splendid Suns, 2007. p. 248-249)*

It can be seen from the announcement above, that all the activities of women at that time were regulated by a guerrilla force called Taliban. They entered to Afghanistan in 1996 and they made a lot of changed. Therefore, being born as a harami in a country like that put a lot of pressure on Mariam. She was always worried about her identity. She was afraid that if people find out about her status she would be exiled and not respected. Unlike the American society, being harami is not a problem, they do not worry about it because they uphold human rights. Unfortunately, Mariam was born as a harami in Afghanistan who upholds Islamic values where adultery is considered as a sin and very despicable. That's why society did not

accept the illegitimate children. Apart from conflicts with society and the culture she faced, she also faced conflicts with her mother and husband.

### **Conflict with her mother**

Mariam thought it was her family who instilled a fear because of being harami. It was because she is the daughter of a servant in a wealthy merchant's house in Hera city in Afghanistan. Her father was that rich merchant. However, she and her mother were not welcome in her father's house because he had to keep his good name, so he kicked them out from the house and built a hut for them in a solitary village. As a harami, Mariam often get insults from her mother that made her insecure and even traumatized.

Mariam has been under pressure because of her mother since childhood because she was born as an illegitimate child. She was astonished with them. It should be the parents or those who commit adultery who should be blamed. Why do they blame innocent children just for their sins? It's very unfair. Her mother often said insulting words that made Mariam sad and hurt. Like in this snippet of the data, *"You are a clumsy little harami. This is my reward for everything I've endured. An heirloom-breaking, clumsy little harami."* (*A Thousand Splendid Suns*, 2007, p. 4). The aforementioned phrase was the first time Mariam had ever heard the word harami. She was not aware of the meaning of the word at the moment. However, when she saw the way her mother say it, she felt that the word had a bad meaning. At the end, when she becomes a teenager, she understood that it was a word that had a disgusting meaning, that harami like them were not accepted in society, and did not deserve justice, love, family, and home like the other legitimate children.

Being harami just like a curse for Mariam, she could not socialize and go to school. Her mother often said bad things that made her discouraged from going to school. Her mother said that women like them do not need to go to school, because it's pointless. It can be seen from this data:

*"Learn? Learn what, Mullah sahib?" Nana said sharply. "What is there to learn?" She snapped her eyes toward Mariam. Mariam looked down at her hands. "What's the sense schooling a girl like you? It's like shining a spittoon. And you'll*

*learn nothing of value in those schools. There is only one, only one skill a woman like you and me needs in life, and they don't teach it in school. Look at me." Mariam did. "Only one skill And it's this: tahamul. Endure." "Endure what, Nana?" "Oh, don't you fret about that," Nana said. "There won't be any shortage of things." "It's our lot in life, Mariam. Women like us. We endure. It's all we have. Do you understand? Besides, they'll laugh at you in school. They will. They'll call you haraml They'll say the most terrible things about you. I won't have it." Mariam nodded. "And no more talk about school. You're all I have. I won't lose you to them. Look at me. No more talk about school." (A Thousand Splendid Suns, 2007. p. 17-18).*

As seen in the data above, her mother strongly against Mariam's wishes to go to school. It can be seen from the sentence that her mother said that actually her mother was worried that she would get bad treatment at school because she was a harami. Despite of the way her mother's conveyed it, she was worried about Mariam. Therefore, she said that the only thing they could do at the time was to "survive". The researcher thought that the meaning of "survive" here is to stay in their current position by not doing anything that will harm them later. It was because her mother knew that having harami status would not gain acceptance in society. That's why her mother strictly forbade Mariam to socialize too much, because if they found out about her status they would insult and maybe even harass her.

### **Conflict with Rasheed (her husband)**

Mariam's new life began with a status as a wife. She did not expect that at the young age she would marry. She was even afraid to carry out her duties as a wife. She even trembled when she was with Rasheed (her husband). She also cried when she arrived to Rasheed's house. She was reminded of Nana and also Mullah Faizullah whom she missed so much. She felt that Kabul was not her place to be, she wanted to back to Herat. However, she realized later that it would never happen

Unfortunately, Mariam's happiness did not last long. She accepted the calamity that all mothers in this world did not want to get it. This also triggers a conflict between her and her husband. The incident was a miscarriage. She lost her first child, which she and her husband had been waiting for. It caused guilt arose in both of them. However, Rasheed took out his anger and disappointment on Mariam which then made Mariam tormented.

Since the incident, there have been several changes in Rasheed's attitude and behavior. He began to take issue with the little mistakes that Mariam had made unintentionally. If there were no mistakes he would even find an excuse to keep scolding Mariam. Mariam was confused about who was to blame in this incident, she or Rasheed? However, it wasn't right to make a fuss about this. She knew that God had already ordained her destiny like this.

The incident took place in the public bath where Rasheed had brought Mariam. When she bathed, she bleeds profusely. She continued to think positively that it was normal, just normal bleeding. But unfortunately it was a major bleeding that made her child died. A feeling of guilt enveloped Mariam, she shouldn't have bathed in that place, a dirty place filled with lots of people, or Rasheed shouldn't have brought her there. Thoughts like that kept popping up in her mind. She also remembered her mother's words, "*As a reminder of how women like us suffer, she'd said. How quietly we endure all that falls upon us.*" (*A Thousand Splendid Suns*, 2007. p. 82).

The sentence felt real when it happened. She felt that God did not want a woman like her to be happy, that she did not deserve this gift from God like other women. She felt jealous seeing the women out there with their children. When she saw their happiness, guilty would resurface in Mariam's mind. It can be seen from this following data:

*Mariam dreaded going outside. She was envious, suddenly, of the neighborhood women and their wealth of children. Some had seven or eight and didn't understand how fortunate they were, how blessed that their children had flourished in their wombs, lived to squirm in their arms and take the milk from their breasts. Children that they had not bled away with soapy water and the bodily filth of strangers down some bathhouse drain. Mariam resented them when she overheard them complaining about misbehaving sons and lazy daughters. (A Thousand Splendid Suns, 2007. p. 83)*

Nevertheless, she still thought that God would give her another child, "*You 'll have others, Inshallah. You're young. Surely you'll have many other chances.*" (*A Thousand Splendid Suns*, 2007. p. 84). Thinking like this calmed her. She was afraid to blaming God for what happened in her life, because blaming God for His destiny is an act of kofr (disbelief) or insult.

However, in the four years since they got married there had been six times in the cycle of soaring hopes of having children, but all of them failing. This made Rasheed more changed. He became more brutal. Mariam even got scared when she met Rasheed. Rasheed couldn't take a control of his anger, the slightest mistake would make him hit or even kick Mariam. It really tormented Mariam. Every day Mariam did her daily activity with anxiety. She was afraid that what she was doing was not like what her husband wanted. As seen in the data below:

*Rasheed made a ball of rice with his fingers. He put it in his mouth, chewed once, then twice, before grimacing and spitting it out on the sofrah. "What's the matter?" Mariam asked, hating the apologetic tone of her voice. She could feel her pulse quickening, her skin shrinking. "What's the matter?" he mewled, mimicking her. "What's the matter is that you've done it again." "But I boiled it five minutes more than usual." "That's a bold lie." "I swear-" He shook the rice angrily from his fingers and pushed the plate away, spilling sauce and rice on the sofrah. Mariam watched as he stormed out of the living room, then out of the house, slamming the door on his way out. Mariam kneeled to the ground and tried to pick up the grains of rice and put them back on the plate, but her hands were shaking badly, and she had to wait for them to stop. Dread pressed down on her chest. She tried taking a few deep breaths. She caught her pale reflection in the darkened living-room window and looked away. (A Thousand Splendid Suns, 2007. p. 93)*

### **Inner conflict**

Within a person, they must have a conflict with their self. Usually someone has a problem with their way of thinking and also what is in their heart. Sometimes the two parts didn't match up and leave a person in a dilemma. Therefore, a conflict arises from the difference between the mind and the heart. It is hard to deal with the conflict of yourself. It is often attacks a person's mentality and can make the person traumatized or insecure. Lack of self-confident and often self-blame becomes the conflict between Mariam and herself. Confidence is a milestone for someone to be brave in doing anything. However, it did not exist for Mariam due to her status as a harami. When her mother mentioned that word, she felt like she was a trash that her mother did not want. As seen in the data:



*Later, when she was older, Mariam did understand. It was the way Nana uttered the word-not so much saying it as spitting it at her-that made Mariam feel the full sting of it. She understood then what Nana meant, that a harami was an unwanted thing; that she, Mariam, was an illegitimate person who would never have legitimate claim to the things other people had, things such as love, family, home, acceptance. (A Thousand Splendid Suns, 2007. p. 4).*

Seen from the data above, Mariam felt unwanted from the way her mother treated her. At first she did not understand what the word harami was. However, after she becomes a teenage girl, she was aware that being a harami was undesirable. She will not be treated fairly and will get scolded if people find out about her status. Here is the data where she first heard the word harami, “You are a clumsy little harami. This is my reward for everything I’ve endured. An heirloom-breaking, clumsy little harami.” (A Thousand Splendid Suns, 2007. p. 4). It was the words her mother said with the word harami in it.

Mariam was not mature enough to understand the meaning of the word harami, therefore she did not know what it meant. Until the day when she understood what harami is, she realized that the word had another meaning that was not good. She finally understood that judging by the way of her mother said the word, it was like spitting at her and it hurts. She was increasingly aware that harami meant disgusting. She knew that an illegitimate child like her was not wanted by anyone and will not get the same treatment and justice as other legitimate children get.

Mariam cannot accept the same treatment and rights because of her status as harami and the majority of society in Afghanistan is Muslim. Why it is said that they cannot receive the same treatment and rights as other legitimate children because in Islam when a child is born without a father or not legally in religion, the relationship between the child and the father is severed, for example, lineage and maintenance for the child. Actually the child is not illegitimate, but it is the parents who commit adultery which is forbidden in religion who get a sin. That's why children born from adultery are called illegitimate children, even though the child did not ask to be born as an illegitimate child. They were born because of God's will. That's why from the way Mariam's mother said the word harami to her made Mariam think that she could not accept the right to have a family, home, love and acceptance in

society. However, it was not like what is in her mind. She can still get married, have a family, home and also love. Even though she could not get all of that from her parents, she could form it in her new family with her husband and children.

The data above also showed that since childhood, Mariam has tried to accept that she is a harami. She made herself understand that it was not her fault to be born in this world, and it should be her parents to blame. As showed in the narration:

*“At the time, Mariam did not understand. She did not know what this word harami-bastard-meant Nor was she old enough to appreciate the injustice, to see that it is the creators of the harami who are culpable, not the harami, whose only sin is being born. Mariam did surmise, by the way Nana said the word, that it was an ugly, loath-some thing to be a harami, like an insect, like the scurrying cockroaches Nana was always cursing and sweeping out of the kolba. Later, when she was older, Mariam did understand. It was the way Nana uttered the word-not so much saying it as spitting it at her-that made Mariam feel the full sting of it. She understood then what Nana meant, that a harami was an unwanted thing; that she, Mariam, was an illegitimate person who would never have legitimate claim to the things other people had, things such as love, family, home, acceptance.” (A Thousand splendid Suns, 2007. p. 4).*

The fact that fate brought her to this status, she had to bury her desire for school and she did not even think about getting married. She also did not have the confidence to socialize because of her status. It can be said that she gave up on her life. She just lives with the flow, has no plans and the courage to fight back.

## **DEFENSE MECHANISMS**

### **1. Reaction Formation**

Reaction formation worked to exchange feelings that cause anxiety in consciousness. This defense mechanism converts unacceptable impulses into acceptable ones. Usually, people feel anxious and depressed but they show the opposite way to others. This was done to protect their self from becoming more anxious or hurt. Like Mariam did. There are three conflicts where she did reaction formation.

The first conflict is with her mother. She hated the bad words that her mother often said, because she felt tight and hurt when her mother said those words. She felt like she

wanted to reply to all of her mother's words, and said that becoming a harami was neither her fault nor her choice. However, she chose to remain silent and did nothing. Sometimes she often avoided her mother when she started saying bad words to her. *“You are a clumsy little harami. This is my reward for everything I’ve endured. An heirloom-breaking, clumsy little harami.”* (*A Thousand Splendid Suns*, 2007. p. 4).

This data is the first sentence when Mariam know the word harami. She didn’t understand what the word meant, but when she was a teenager she slowly understood that the word had a bad meaning. Therefore, the researcher found that when her mother said those words, Mariam realized that it would not be better if she argued with her mother. All she will get is pain. Therefore, she prefers to avoid that. As in the data, *“Mariam said she was going for a walk. She feared she might say hurtful things if she stayed.”* (*A Thousand Splendid Suns*, 2007. p. 26). The data showed that Mariam used to defend herself by distancing herself from her mother. She did not like her mother's words, but she was still kind. Instead of arguing and getting angry with her mother, she acted the opposite by staying away from her mother. Her ego controls her id to fight against her mother.

The second conflict is with her husband. Since Mariam's failure to have children, she has often been abused by Rasheed. She has been depressed since the incident. Rasheed often beat her, kicked her, scolded her, and commented on every little thing she did. She became frightened when she met her husband. However, she always behaved well in front of her husband. She accepted all the harsh treatment that Rasheed did to her. The anxiety and fear she felt was hidden. It can be seen from this data:

*It wasn't easy tolerating him talking this way to her, to bear his scorn, his ridicule, his insults, his walking past her like she was nothing but a house cat. But after four years of marriage, Mariam saw clearly how much a woman could tolerate when she was afraid And Mariam was afraid She lived in fear of his shifting moods, his volatile temperament, his insistence on steering even mundane exchanges down a confrontational path that, on occasion, he would resolve with punches, slaps, kicks, and sometimes try to make amends for with polluted apologies and sometimes not. In the four years since the day at the bathhouse, there had been six more cycles of hopes raised then dashed, each loss, each collapse, each trip to the doctor more crushing for Mariam than the last. With each disappointment, Rasheed had grown more remote and resentful Now nothing she did*

*pleased him. She cleaned the house, made sure he always had a supply of clean shirts, cooked him his favorite dishes. Once, disastrously, she even bought makeup and put it on for him. But when he came home, he took one look at her and winced with such distaste that she rushed to the bathroom and washed it all off, tears of shame mixing with soapy water, rouge, and mascara. Now Mariam dreaded the sound of him coming home in the evening. The key rattling, the creak of the door- these were sounds that set her heart racing. From her bed, she listened to the click-clack of his heels, to the muffled shuffling of his feet after he'd shed his shoes. (A Thousand Splendid Suns, 2007. p. 89-90)*

The data above make the researcher found the reason why she was hiding all these things. It was because Mariam only had her husband in her life, whether she wanted it or not she had to do her duty as his wife, she also knew that running away was also not the right choice because the situation outside the home was scarier than at home. She also knew that the failure to have children was not Rasheed's fault alone, but perhaps because Allah had not trusted her to have a child.

The third conflict is when Rasheed almost killed Laila. Laila is Rasheed's second wife who Mariam considers as her own daughter due to their age difference. They did not get along at first, but over time they became like mother and daughter. Due to Laila's desire to run away from home and also Mariam's desire to follow Laila, they were almost killed by Rasheed, but they still fought back. However, looking at Laila made Mariam was frightened because he was strangling Laila's neck tightly like he had been possessed by a jinn. However, she could not stand watching the person she loved was tortured too hard by her husband. She ventured to fight her husband so that Laila was saved, unfortunately she killed her husband. She didn't mean it, but Rasheed was already unconscious. She had tried various ways to his hands off Laila's neck, but it failed. Instantly she snatched a shovel and struck him on the head and he passed away as a result of it. As seen from the data:

*Mariam clawed at him. She beat at his chest. She hurled herself against him. She struggled to uncurl his fingers from Laila's neck. She bit them. But they remained tightly clamped around Laila's wind-pipe, and Mariam saw that he meant to carry this through. He meant to suffocate her, and there was nothing either of them could do about it. In the toolshed, Mariam grabbed the shovel. Rasheed didn't notice her coming back into the room. He was still on top of Laila, his eyes wide and crazy, his hands wrapped around her neck. Laila's face was turning blue now, and her eyes had rolled back. Mariam saw*

*that she was no longer struggling. He's going to kill her, she thought. He really means to. And Mariam could not, would not, allow that to happen. He'd taken so much from her in twenty-seven years of marriage. She would not watch him take Laila too. Mariam steadied her feet and tightened her grip around the shovel's handle. She raised it. She said his name. She wanted him to see. "Rasheed." He looked up. Mariam swung. She hit him across the temple. The blow knocked him off Laila. Rasheed touched his head with the palm of his hand. He looked at the blood on his fingertips, then at Mariam. (A Thousand Splendid Suns, 2007. p. 310)*

The snippet of the story above showed that Rasheed had a strong desire to murder Laila. Mariam hoped that Rasheed would soften up after she hit him, but he didn't show his leniency, it causing Mariam to hit him again. Mariam thought that now was the right time for her to choose her path in life and make Laila live happily with her children. After the incident, she told Laila that they would run away with Laila's children. She told Laila to sleep and not think about anything, because she would figure out the way. However, it was only a sedative. Mariam did not really want to run away with Laila, she planned to stay and accept all the punishment for her actions. She felt anxious and scared, but she showed the opposite side to make Laila felt calm and protected.

## **2. Repression**

Suppressing pain or traumatic memories is how repression works to help people in dealing with their pressure. This defense mechanism can subconsciously eliminate things that threaten and minimize pain and traumatic feelings stored in memory. Repression can makes people forget the painful experience that happened. People choose to suppress their traumatic memory with the hope that everything will be fine in the future. Just like Mariam did. She suppressed all her painful feelings and traumatic memories with the hopes that she would be okay. Although, it left a trauma when she did the same thing that was like in her memory.

In dealing with Mariam's pain and traumatic memories, the researcher found that she used repression to help her survive. There was a situation where she should fight or argue with her mother but she chose to remain silent and distance herself from her mother. As seen from the data, *"Mariam would listen dutifully to this. She never dared say to Nana how much she disliked her talking this way about Jalil. The truth was that around Jalil, Mariam did not feel*



*at all like a harami.*” (*A Thousand Splendid Suns*, 2007. p. 5). The data showed that when her mother said bad things about her father or herself, she would remain silent and listen to her mother even though she actually objected.

Mariam's ego made her to keep quiet because she knew that her mother was just saying that bad words just to make her feel better. Even though, she really wanted to argue with her mother. Her ego understood that her mother had problems too and Mariam had to understand it. Every time her mother said bad things she would stay away for the mutual comfort. It can be seen from this snippet of narration; *“Mariam said she was going for a walk. She feared she might say hurtful things if she stayed”* (*A Thousand Splendid Suns*, 2007. p. 26).

In facing the conflict with her mother, Mariam did repression to face the painful reality of her life. Unfortunately, her habit of harboring feelings traumatized her. She became afraid of meeting people because of her status as a harami. As seen from this narration:

*“Mariam backed away. She was hyperventilating. Her ears buzzed, her pulse fluttered, her eyes darted from one face to another. She backed away again, but there was nowhere to go to-she was in the center of a circle. She spotted Fariba, who was frowning, who saw that she was in distress.”* (*A Thousand Splendid Suns*, 2007. p. 61).

As described in the narration above, Mariam becomes afraid when she met strangers. She would be remembered her mother's words, *“As a reminder of how women like us suffer, she'd said. How quietly we endure all that falls upon us.”* (*A Thousand Splendid Suns*, 2007. p. 82). The words that her mother said were always in Mariam's memory. Her mother said that women like them would not be accepted in society, would not receive justice and would be treated harshly, so being anti-social was the best way for women like them.

Therefore, she became frightened, anxious and congested when people crowded around her. Although they did not treat Mariam harshly, she was worried that if they found out about her status, they would change their attitude towards her. She was not even allowed to go to school because of her status. Her mother said that, *“It's our lot in life, Mariam. Women like us. We endure. It's all we have. Do you understand? Besides, they'll laugh at*



you in school. They will. They'll call you harami. *They'll say the most terrible things about you. I won't have it.*" Mariam nodded. (*A Thousand Splendid Suns*, 2007. p. 18) The few sentences her mother said had traumatized in Mariam's memory. At the end, she became anti-social and anxious when walking alone. Mariam also did a little repression to deal with the harshness of her domestic life. Her husband's rude behavior towards her made her anxious and scared when she had to do all the housework as her husband wanted. Every day she did her housework meticulously, but Rasheed was always looking for small mistakes to make him hit Mariam. She suppressed her anger towards her husband. Why is she the only one who gets bad impact from the incident? She wanted to blame her husband, but it was also her fault. As seen in this following narration:

*Other days, Mariam was besieged with anger. It was Rasheed's fault for his premature celebration. For his foolhardy faith that she was carrying a boy. Naming the baby as he had. Taking God's will for granted. His fault, for making her go to the bathhouse. Something there, the steam, the dirty water, the soap, something there had caused this to happen. No. Not Rasheed. She was to blame. She became furious with herself for sleeping in the wrong position, for eating meals that were too spicy, for not eating enough fruit, for drinking too much tea. (*A Thousand Splendid Suns*, 2007. p. 84)*

The narration above is a form of repression of things that hurt Mariam. She blamed herself for what happened. She also accepted everything her husband did to her. She suppressed her own fear, anxiety, and anger. Her husband did not know that Mariam was actually tormented by his behavior. It also traumatized her and made her tremble and worry every time she would meet her husband.

### **3. Denial**

As explained in Ewen's book, denial is one of defense mechanism that people often use in facing the bad reality. People do this mechanism to deny the truth of an event because they cannot accept the fact. As a result, people who use this often lied to their self and to others. Like Mariam did towards her mother and husband attitude. The fact that her life was not like

the other children and also her marriage that did not match with what she imagined made her depressed, but she did denial to what was happening in her life. She continued to carry out her duties as a filial daughter and also a good wife.

Further, in dealing the conflict with her mother, the researcher found that Mariam used a bit of denial as her defense mechanism. Her mother's attitude towards her by saying bad words described that her mother actually regretted giving birth to her because of her mother's hatred for her father. As seen in the snippet of the following conversation:

*"What a stupid girl you are! You think you matter to him, that you're wanted in his house? You think you're a daughter to him? That he's going to take you in? Let me tell you something- A man's heart is a wretched, wretched thing, Mariam. It isn't like a mother's womb. It won't bleed, it won't stretch to make room for you. I'm the only one who loves you. I'm all you have in this world, Mariam, and when I'm gone you'll have nothing. You'll have nothing. You are nothing!" (A Thousand Splendid Suns, 2007. p. 26)*

The data above showed that her mother tried to make Mariam do not want her father. Her mother said bad things about her father so that Mariam would not meet him. Mariam really hated those words, because basically her father was still nice to her. Therefore, Mariam made a denial of her mother's behavior. As seen from the data, "You 're afraid, Nana, she might have said *"You 're afraid that I might find the happiness you never had. And you don 't want me to be happy. You don't want a good life for me. You 're the one with the wretched heart"* (A Thousand Splendid Suns, 2007. p. 27)

The narration above showed that Mariam denied her mother's behavior towards her with thought that her mother did not want her to be happy. Even though she hated her mother's bad words that she often says, she still obeyed her mother well, as seen in the data "Mariam would listen dutifully to this. She never dared say to Nana how much she disliked her talking this way about Jalil." (A Thousand Splendid Suns, 2007. p. 5). It is because she knows that the only family she has is her mother. She did denial by running away from reality because the fact that her father is still being nice to her.

The conflict where her husband often abused her became one of Mariam's worries. In dealing with this conflict, the researcher found that Mariam also did a little denial. A

harmonious marriage only takes place at the beginning of the marriage. Mariam had not imagined that her husband's good behavior would turn into violent. As seen in the data below:

*"It wasn't easy tolerating him talking this way to her, to bear his scorn, his ridicule, his insults, his walking past her like she was nothing but a house cat. But after four years of marriage, Mariam saw clearly how much a woman could tolerate when she was afraid And Mariam was afraid She lived in fear of his shifting moods, his volatile temperament, his insistence on steering even mundane exchanges down a confrontational path that, on occasion, he would resolve with punches, slaps, kicks, and sometimes try to make amends for with polluted apologies and sometimes not."*  
(*A Thousand Splendid Suns*, 2007. p. 89)

The data above described how Mariam felt about what her husband did. Accepting all the harsh actions caused a wound to Mariam both in physically and mentally. However, she denied the truth that her husband did not want her anymore. Even when her husband remarried, Mariam remained in the house and still did her duty as a good wife. As seen in the data; "...*She cleaned the house, made sure he always had a supply of clean shirts, cooked him his favorite dishes. Once, disastrously, she even bought makeup and put it on for him...*" (A *Thousand Splendid Suns*, 2007. p. 90). The data showed that Mariam did a little bit denial to the conflict, in fact she was lying to herself by looking fine.

#### **4. Projection**

Projection worked with facing a conflict by projecting they own feelings towards others. Projection reverses the attitude as a means of supporting preexisting suspicions. This is due to the fact that it can occasionally be unsettling to have sentiments or preconceptions about other people. It also influences a person's mind that what they suspects are true. In this research, there are some data showing that Mariam uses this defense mechanism to overcome her conflict.

*"You may be the palace malika and me a dehati, but I won't take orders from you. You can complain to him and he can slit my throat, but I won't do it. Do you hear me? I won't be your servant." "And if you think you can use your looks to get rid of me, you're wrong. I was here first. I won't be thrown out. I won't have you cast me out."*  
(*A Thousand Splendid Suns*, 2007. p. 202).

The snippet of the conversation above showed that Mariam who came up with that thought. She made it seems like Laila did not like her, whereas she was the one who did not like Laila.

Her ego told her to describe her feelings like that to Laila. This made her relieved, her anxiety and fear faded, but turning the situation like that made her feel guilty towards Laila. Mariam's projection made the readers think as if Laila did not like her, but the truth was the opposite. Besides that, Mariam also did a projection towards her father. She also made the readers think that her father did not love her. Even though the truth was not like that. She was disappointed and hurt by her father's treatment of her. As seen from the data;

*"I used to worship you," she said. "On Thursdays, I sat for hours waiting for you. I worried myself sick that you wouldn't show up." "I thought about you all the time. I used to pray that you'd live to be a hundred years old. I didn't know. I didn't know that you were ashamed of me." "You were ashamed of me." (A Thousand Splendid Suns, 2007. p. 50)*

The statement above showed that Mariam claimed that her father was ashamed of her and did not want her. Her father forced her to get married and he also did not allow Mariam to enter his house until her mother died, because of his pity he told Mariam to live at his house. These were all Mariam's thoughts. The truth was that her father only followed what his wives wanted. Her father loves Mariam but he cannot do anything when it comes to dealing with his wives. Even when Mariam was forced into marriage, her father could not help her. This event made Mariam was disappointed and hurt with her father. That's why to cover up her disappointment and pain she did a projection as her defense.

## **5. Displacement**

This defense mechanism works against anxiety, anger and pain by transferring these feelings to someone else who feels harmless. The purpose of this movement is to make the feelings can still be delivered, but no consequences will be accepted. In dealing with her conflict because of her husband, Mariam used this defense mechanism to reduce her anxiety, pain and anger towards Laila. As seen from this data:

*"It had happened a few days earlier. Laila had gone to the kitchen and found Mariam yanking drawers and slamming them shut. She was looking, Mariam said, for the long wooden spoon she used to stir rice. "Where did you put it?" she said, wheeling around*

*to face Laila. "Me?" Laila said "I didn't take it. I hardly come in here." "I've noticed." "So you're saying it grew little legs and walked out. Teep, teep, teep, teep. Is that what happened, degeh?" "I'm saying..." Laila said, trying to maintain control. "I am saying that maybe you've misplaced it." "Misplaced it?" Mariam pulled a drawer. The spatulas and knives inside it clanked. "How long have you been here, a few months? I've lived in this house for nineteen years, dokhiarjo. I have kept that spoon in this drawer since you were shitting your diapers." "Still," Laila said, on the brink now, teeth clenched, "it's possible you put it somewhere and forgot." "And it's possible you hid it somewhere, to aggravate me." "You're a sad, miserable woman," Laila said. Mariam flinched, then recovered, pursed her lips. "And you're a whore. A whore and a dozd. A thieving whore, that's what you are!" Then there was shouting Pots raised though not hurled. They'd called each other names, names that made Laila blush now. They hadn't spoken since." (A Thousand Splendid Suns, 2007. p. 209)*

Seen from the conversation above, Mariam accused Laila of losing the long wooden spoon that she often used. In fact, Mariam was always in the kitchen. They even cursed at each other. Mariam felt better by taking her anger out on Laila. However, she felt sorry for Laila because of her behavior. She was angry at her husband because he always comparing her and Laila. Rasheed did not treat them fairly either. Rasheed even planned to make Mariam as Laila's servant. This made Mariam angry. However, because of her powerlessness against her husband, she chose to take it out on Laila. Once again, Mariam's ego helped her to overcome the conflict.

## **6. Rationalization**

Rationalization is a defense mechanism that people did by hiding the truth of a problem by providing a logical or acceptable reason. This mechanism can reduce the anxiety of the user. People who use this mechanism will feel comfortable with their choice even though they realize that they actually made a mistake. Mariam used this mechanism in situation where her and Laila's life was in danger. It can be seen from the data:

*They crashed to the ground, Rasheed and Laila, thrashing about. He ended up on top, his hands already wrapped around Laila's neck. Mariam clawed at him. She beat at his chest. She hurled herself against him. She struggled to uncurl his fingers from Laila's neck. She bit them. But they remained tightly clamped around Laila's windpipe, and Mariam saw that he meant to carry this through. He meant to suffocate her,*



*and there was nothing either of them could do about it. Mariam backed away and left the room. She was aware of a thumping sound from upstairs, aware that tiny palms were slapping against a locked door. She ran down the hallway. She burst through the front door. Crossed the yard. In the toolshed, Mariam grabbed the shovel. Rasheed didn't notice her coming back into the room. He was still on top of Laila, his eyes wide and crazy, his hands wrapped around her neck. Laila's face was turning blue now, and her eyes had rolled back. Mariam saw that she was no longer struggling. He's going to kill her, she thought. He really means to. And Mariam could not, would not, allow that to happen. He'd taken so much from her in twenty-seven years of marriage. She would not watch him take Laila too. Mariam steadied her feet and tightened her grip around the shovel's handle. She raised it. She said his name. She wanted him to see. "Rasheed." He looked up. Mariam swung. She hit him across the temple. The blow knocked him off Laila. Rasheed touched his head with the palm of his hand. He looked at the blood on his fingertips, then at Mariam. (A Thousand Splendid Suns, 2007. p. 310).*

The data above showed that Rasheed tortured them mercilessly. Actually, when they fled from Rasheed's house, they were caught by the Taliban and returned to Rasheed's house. It made Rasheed so angry and made him beat Mariam and Laila in turn. Rasheed beat them mercilessly even he almost killed Laila as seen from the data above. Mariam gave a chance to Rasheed, after she hit him she looked Rasheed's eyes if there was any regret. However, after seeing his gaze, he smirked and looked like he would not take his hand off from Laila's neck. He choked her even tighter. Mariam thought logically that there was no more reasonable reason than to hit him again to save herself and Laila's life.

## **7. Undoing**

This mechanism is one of defense mechanisms that a person did to follow their ego. This mechanism compensates for actions that are considered bad by did rituals or actions symbolically. People who used this mechanism would hide their bad deeds by replacing them with something good so that their mistakes are not known. Usually this is done by someone to make their image is still maintained.

This mechanism is used by Mariam to confront Zalmai (Rasheed's son from Laila). Her mistake which resulted in her husband's death made her feel guilty towards Zalmai.



However, she did not want Zalmai to know what she was doing. Therefore, she remained kind to him. It can be seen from the data:

*LATER THAT MORNING, Mariam packed Zalmai a small lunch of bread and dried figs. She hunkered down to eye level with Zalmai. "You be a good, strong boy, now," she said. "You treat your mother well." She cupped his face. He pulled back but she held on. (A Thousand Splendid Suns, 2007. p. 320). At the time her ego told her to keep quiet and did not tell anything to Zalmai. She could not live by seeing Zalmai who had lost his father because of her. Therefore, Mariam told Laila to take Zalmai so that she would not see him again. There is also a data that stated; "It is fair, "I'll never escape your son's grief. How do I look at him? How do I ever bring myself to look at him, Laila jo?" (A Thousand Splendid Suns, 2007. p. 319).*

The data above showed that Mariam did not want to see Zalmai again, she felt unworthy to live with him. Treating Zalmai well before asking Laila to take him away was one of Mariam's actions to prevent Zalmai from knowing what she was doing. She was being selfish, but that was for their best. However, in exchange, she turned herself into the police and was later imprisoned. She thought it was the best way to lessen her guilt towards Zalmai and to protect Laila.

## **8. Fantasy**

Fantasy is one of defense mechanisms carried out by people when they needs are not fulfilled and replaced by imagination. Apart from the suppression and rejection that are usually used to reduce anxiety and fear, fantasy is often used by people to replace their bad thoughts and worries with imaginations that make them happy. People who use this mechanism will often daydream about many things and sometimes found that their daydreams are much better than the reality. However, if people fantasize time after time and it is not within normal limits or under the control of consciousness properly, then fantasy will not be good for their self. On the other hand, if the fantasy is under good control and within normal limits, it can help to reduce the pressure in their mind.

In some situations, Mariam faced her life's conflicts by imagining something good to reduce her feelings of anxiety, bad thoughts and fears. The situations included when she imagined good things would come to her after a long time and imagined the presence of her

father that she left a long time ago. When she imagined good years would come to her after a long time ago, she felt better. As seen in the data:

*The years had not been kind to Mariam. But perhaps, she thought, there were kinder years waiting still. A new life, a life in which she would find the blessings that Nana had said a harami like her would never see. Two new flowers had unexpectedly sprouted in her life, and, as Mariam watched the snow coming down, she pictured Mullah Faizullah twirling his iasbeh beads, leaning in and whispering to her in his soft, tremulous voice, But it is God Who has planted them, Mariam jo. And it is His will that you tend to them. It is His will, my girl. (A Thousand Splendid Suns, 2007. p. 229)*

It can be seen from the data that Mariam felt better when she imagined something good will come to her life. It was because as long as she lived, she never got the happiness, justice and self-confidence that she deserved. Her life was filled with pain, fear, anxiety, and trauma that made her tormented. She imagined harami like her could live the same as women in general. Women who is free to express their self, gets the happiness and confidence she had always dreamed of. Mariam's subconscious showed beautiful things that made her happy compared to the reality. However, the researcher found that the imagination she created was still within the normal limits of a person.

The situation where Rasheed tortured Mariam and Laila for their desire to run away from the house made it difficult for them. Rasheed seemed like to kill Laila and Mariam took the initiative to help Laila. She threw a punch that caused her husband died. Actually she did not want to do that but she had to help Laila from their husband stranglehold. They were scared and worried about what had happened, because they did not mean it that way. However, Mariam's ego controlled her emotions. She was silent and thought about what she was doing and what she should do. Laila who was panicking was finally calmed by Mariam with beautiful words she said to Laila. The situation where she also created fantasy is when her father died. Her delay in knowing her father's death made her feel guilty and sad. To relieve her guilt and sadness, the researcher found that Mariam also created an imagination to calm her. As seen in the data; *“She pictured Jalil smiling, reaching into his pocket. Ah. Of course. Well Here then. Without Juriher ado... A leaf-shaped pendant, tiny coins etched with*

*moons and stars hanging from it. Try it on, Mariam jo. What do you think? I think you look like a queen.” (A Thousand Splendid Suns, 2007. p. 276).*

The data above showed that Mariam created an imagination about her father to reduce her guilt and to remember her father. The researcher found that she felt better by wishing she was still with her father. Mariam found that her fantasy was better than the fact that she cannot see her father again since she got married, until her father's death.

Thus, out of twelve defense mechanisms that Freud developed based on the seventh edition of Ewen's book, An Introduction to Theories of Personality, only eight mechanisms that Mariam used to deal with her life conflicts, including reaction formation, repression, denial, projection, displacement, rationalization, undoing, and fantasy. Most of the conflicts come from outside of herself. However, external support from other characters also helped her in dealing with conflicts.

The defense mechanisms that Mariam applied helped her to escape or avoid all conflicts that made her hurt. Unfortunately, all the decisions she made to defend herself only made her run away from those painful events that she should have finished. At the end, her decision sometimes also made effects on herself. Further, the characters who influence the psychological condition of Mariam’s character are Nana (mother), Rasheed (husband), Jalil (father), and Laila. These characters become the determining factor of how Mariam's ego defense throughout the story. However, the fact is all the characters in the story are fictional characters that the author created to support the story he wanted to convey through his novel. To be more easily to see the defense mechanisms that Mariam used to deal with her conflicts, it can be seen in the table below:

No.	Types of Defense Mechanisms	Description
1.	Repression	✓
2.	Reaction Formation	✓
3.	Displacement	✓
4.	Projection	✓

5.	Denial	✓
6.	Rationalization	✓
7.	Undoing	✓
8.	Identification	✗
9.	Regression	✗
10.	Sublimation	✗
11.	Fantasy	✓
12.	Intellectualization	✗

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

### Conclusion

Psychological research is always related to the condition of the human psyche, while literature is a work created by the authors as an intermediary in conveying the intent of their writing. For literary works such as novels and dramas, usually the characters and situations in the story are the determinants. However, psychology and literature can be connected to examine the psychological condition of the characters in the literary work and of course with the plot as a complement that proves all the assumptions about the psychological condition of the characters studied.

As in this research, the researcher examined the psychological condition of the main character in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* novel by Khaled Hosseini. After discussing about her psychological condition using the psychoanalytic theory of Freud and defense mechanisms through the plot structure that builds conflict in the novel. It was found that Mariam's conflict stemmed from her status as harami as well as the domestic violence she received. The conflict she received from her mother because she was a harami and the violence her husband did make her traumatized and it made her difficult to socialize.

Facing her conflict, Mariam decided to survive by forming defense in herself. She decided not to socialize since childhood so that her status as harami was not known by the society. She also decided to stay with her husband instead of being outside the house which the situation was worse for women. Even though she was depressed and afraid every day, she continued to live her life because this is the destiny that God has given her, she is afraid to

become kofr (an infidel) if she blamed God. At the end of the story she met with Laila who was like a gift from God to make her feel peace, love as a mother, friend, and protector at the same time. She felt that her life was fulfilled even though she had to be sentenced to death, but it did not make her regret.

Mariam who just an ordinary woman who has a miserable life since she was young because she did not have a support system, she even feels that God does not allow her to be happy. At the end she was able to endure until she met someone who made her feel that she was someone who has a value. After facing various conflicts and as time goes on in the story, Mariam's character becomes stronger in living her life and also brave in making decisions. She also unconsciously used defense mechanisms throughout the story such as repression, reaction formation, denial, displacement, projection, rationalization, undoing, and fantasy in dealing with the conflicts in her life.

All the defense mechanisms that she used affect her decision, including; she accepts that God has destined her to be harami, she accepted that her husband used violence was a form of his defense because of his disappointment over seven failures in getting children, she also ends up accepting that Laila was very important to her and helped her from their husband rudeness, and accepting the sentence death because of her inadvertence in killing her husband because to helped Laila was the right decision, because she cannot face Zalmai and she had sinned to God.

## **Recommendation**

After completing this research, the researcher realized that there were still many shortcomings in this research. However, the researcher learned one important thing when researching this novel. That all humans have been determined by God, even though they are born as harami or illegitimate children does not mean they have to give up on their lives. They have to find the little things that can make them survive, because all humans were created by God for a reason, no humans were created in vain. Being a legitimate child also

does not guarantee a happy life, basically God gives calamities not for no reason, but to make us grateful and learn to be stronger. All humans in this world must believe that they are valuable and special.

In addition, the shortcoming in this research only focuses on one character, namely Mariam as the main character of the novel, while there are many interesting characters to analyze psychologically. For the next researcher, the researcher hopes that there are those who are interested in researching the personality of Rasheed and Laila use the same theory. Then, the next researcher can review more about the contents of this novel to find other problems that can be studied. This is to make a research with the same novel more developed. This research can also be studied with structuralism or other theories in literature. The field of linguistics, namely on grammar and the use of language in novels can also be studied.



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