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**Literary Analysis of Female Repression in the Novel, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled
Hosseini through the Gender Approach**

Thesis Submitted to Obtain the Bachelor in English

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Dedication

For my family, mainly mother, Valderez Menezes Varela, for her unconditional love and support through my whole life.

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Abstract

The paper entitled “Literary Analysis of Female Repression in the Novel “A Thousand Splendid Suns” by Khaled Hosseini through the Gender Approach” is an investigation about the book A Thousand Splendid Suns written by Khaled Hosseini, a novel setting in Afghanistan in a period of four decades.

This investigation provided how the facts reflected in the book demonstrate how women are oppressed by men in different situations throughout the book.

Moreover, it presented information based on a triangulation among the Literary Theories seen in chapter two, the expert’s opinions, in this case, the quotes of the Khaled Hosseini, the author of the book analyzed, and finally the investigator analysis and explanations.

Resumen

El artículo titulado "Análisis literario de la represión femenina en la novela" A Thousand Splendid Suns "de Khaled Hosseini a través del enfoque de género" es una investigación sobre el libro A Thousand Splendid Suns escrito por Khaled Hosseini, una novela ambientada en Afganistán en un período de cuatro décadas.

Esta investigación proporcionó cómo los hechos reflejados en el libro demuestran cómo las mujeres son oprimidas por los hombres en diferentes situaciones a lo largo del libro.

Además, presentó información basada en una triangulación entre las Teorías Literarias vistas en el capítulo dos, las opiniones de los expertos, en este caso, las citas de Khaled Hosseini, autor del libro analizado, y finalmente el análisis y explicaciones del investigador.

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Chapter I

Introductory Framework

Over the last century, women have made incredible progress in their struggle to claim their equal rights and humanity; however, many issues are still prevalent in society nowadays. Our patriarchal economic systems have created the illusion that Women's Liberation has progressed when gender equality policies such as "equal salaries" and the "right to vote" were introduced. It has convinced the common women to believe that they are not socially restrained, that their accomplishments can be unlimited, and that they are in total charge and control of their lives.

However, in the XXI century, the statement above does not seem to be quite right. Hence, it is not difficult to see women still being oppressed by male chauvinists worldwide, therefore, the sense of powerfulness, and equality is still far from reality. For instance, an episode which occurred in Brazil a few years ago illustrates how easy it is for men to treat women the way they want, regardless of whether or not they deserve respect: in a speech at the parliament, Jair Bolsonaro, the current Brazilian president, who at this time was a congressman, stated that he would not "rape" his colleague Maria do Rosário, former Minister of Human Rights, because she did not "deserve it. ".

Scenes such as that one might make readers wonder, what Mr. Bolsonaro was trying to say when stating that. Was he saying that "there were" some women who "deserved" to be raped and some that did not? It showed that he not only disrespected a congress coworker, but also made apology towards the raping of women. This behavior permeates the Brazilian society, where women are blamed for their rape, and not the rapists.

It seems that for the equality of women to happen, men must get into an agreement. As the readers may see in the example of this report about the paying gap in the earnings of women and men, when the authors stated, “A man and a woman from the same university who majored in the same field. After one year, were working full time, the same number of hours each week, in the same occupation and sector. Despite all these similarities, the woman would earn about seven percent less than the man would earn.” (Corbett & Hill, 2012). Note that this is in the USA where gains in women's salaries have been much larger compared to other countries.

The cases pointed out above illustrate some examples of male power over women in their working areas. In both cases, the “victims” had the opportunity to report the “aggression”. The first action was condemned by the Brazilian congress, and two strong women who fight for women rights reported the second.

However, there is one kind of male assault that is much harder to catch and to report, for, at first, no one would think the person who would care for them, would take care of, and protect them would be their worst threatening enemy.

These people are their husbands. Those who are supposed to be the women's partners, lovers, friends and mainly, their family, that is, those who women trust, turn out to be their nightmare.

What can a woman do when her husband becomes the oppressor, when he is the enemy? This is the kind of male chauvinism this paper intends to present to the readers. Imagine, when a person is oppressed by her own husband. A setting where an individual has to endure, not only psychological oppression, but physical abuse as well.

In *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, Khaled Hosseini used the two main characters, Mariam and Laila, to illustrate diverse kinds of physical and psychological abuse the two characters had to go through, mostly when they had to marry the same man and eventual oppressor, Rasheed. One cultural facet of Afghanistan that really stood out was what controlling husbands did to their *unimportant* wives, however and whenever they wanted to.

One example of it is when Rasheed was so upset with Mariam's cooking, that he went out, brought some pebbles in, and forced her to chew on them until her molars cracked (Hosseini 94). This shows that husbands were in such control in nearly every household, that wives had no choice but to follow even self-harming orders.

Another example was, when Laila and Rasheed were having an argument about what to do with their daughter Aziza (because they had become poor and it was hard to support all of them as it was), Rasheed became extremely infuriated and put the barrel of his gun down Laila's throat (Hosseini 267). After reading this, one can easily infer that in a controlling relationship, especially in Afghanistan, the husband can literally do whatever he desires without any major legal consequences.

On the other hand, the novel incessantly brings to surface the prevalent theme of the inner strength of women, through Mariam and Laila, who continuously gathered the strength to persevere as they faced so much pain merely because of being women. However, even though Rasheed had mistreated both Mariam and Laila without any mercy, they struggled against their oppressor and overcame the obstacles which prevented them from living a dignified life.

1.1 Problem Statement

It is true that many women take control over their lives and have the power to do whatever they want in their society, something that was impossible to see so many years ago. Ranging from household to public life, women apparently have gained their own position. In households, for example, there are many women playing double roles as a wife and a career woman simultaneously.

In public life, the existence of women is proven by their achievement in many fields; some of them become the leader of an organization and even a president of a country. However, despite many successes of women to defend their existence, numerous issues of gender discrimination still exist in all aspects of life, ranging from cultural, political to economics.

In some societies, many women overcome adversity and oppression from the opposite sex. They are abused in and outside the confines of their own homes. In their homes, they are treated as an object: in childhood, by their father; in youth, by their husbands, and when their husbands pass, by their sons. Many of them are forced to serve their families and are forbidden from chasing careers outside their homes by their husbands. Meanwhile, those who succeed in careers outside their homes still experience unequal treatment because men still set the rules of engagement in the workplace. This discrimination can come in the form of different promotions based on gender, sexual harassment, different treatment and opportunities in job and training. Furthermore, at home, they should balance domestic duties and job responsibilities.

As if it was not enough, women continue to be underestimated in some societies. According to Scott and Cheetham (2010), gender discrimination is widespread in many countries. For instance, in India, there is a strong preference for having sons instead of daughters, for girls are considered as a financial burden for the family due to the small income contributions. Another example is in Afghanistan. Based on a 2011 survey by the Thomson Reuters Foundation (in

Khan, 2012:1-2), Afghanistan is identified as the most dangerous place for women. Many cases of violence and even humiliation happen to women; about 87% of women face abuse and violence. They also face high mortality rates, limitations on seeing doctors, and a lack of economic rights. Being alive is a nightmare to women in this kind of society. They are neither dead nor alive.

Gender discrimination obviously has a wide-ranging negative impact, not only to those being discriminated, but also to the discriminators. The impact of gender discrimination on women is often much greater indeed. It can affect a woman physically, emotionally, economically, socially, and it can also affect her career and academic performance or potential.

For the discriminator, engaging in discrimination can result in the feeling of being disconnected to the women they discriminate and the environment, being lonely and abandoned by others, and their lives will be full of hatred towards others and the circumstances.

Despite its negative impacts, gender discrimination still happens all the time because both women and men have been constructed in a patriarchal system, which instills the belief that men have power over women. It has become common sense that women are subordinate to men so that they should accept and obey men. As a result, many girls accept the marriage they do not desire, many wives become submissive and obey their husbands. Moreover, many discriminated women even accept the sufferings and consider them as the fate destined for them.

To struggle against discrimination, women need a tremendous courage. Yet, the courage to prevail against discrimination seems to come very hard for most women.

In the introduction of Simone de Beauvoir's, *The Second Sex's* 2009 edition, the writer Judith Thurman tells an anecdote about her maiden aunt, de Beauvoir contemporary, Judith says

that she was visiting the “one-day old” Judith, in the hospital nursery, and she saw in Judith’s a tag cradle that said; “It is a girl” ... not far from where she was there was a baby boy’s cradle in which tag was written, “I am a boy”. (de Beauvoir, 1949, p.8).

The quote above shows the implication of the objectification of women, as opposed to the subjectivization of men, happened subtly, and as soon as the two babies came to the world, seemingly in a harmless and innocuous manner. In addition, it shows that although de Beauvoir's book was written fifty-eight years before the book of Hosseini, the oppression of women still remains very much alive, despite all the changes which have happened in the current society around the world.

In his novel, Khaled Hosseini brings about the subject of women's oppression in Afghanistan along with the various other restrictions of education and familial subjugation. He has recreated the man-dominated patriarchal Muslim world of Afghanistan where women are deprived of equality and freedom. There, they treated women as if they were slaves of their men who ruled them, ordered them and owned them, and they warned them, “be women, stay women, become women,” with a religious ideological tool that “a woman’s face is her husband’s business only,” (Hosseini, 2007, p. 48).

Throughout the book it is common to see women being subjugated, threatened, oppressed; women without rights to education and even rights to go walk alone to and from their houses.

The different forms of oppression in the patriarchal authoritarianism of Afghanistan on Hosseini’s work show how men’s power works towards women, for the two main characters of *A Thousand Splendid Suns* Marian and Laila, are examples of women being treated as objects,

abused, beaten, and punished, by their own husband. Based on these important premises, we get to the research question. How does chauvinism and repression influence female lives before and after in the Afghan society represented in the book *A Thousand Splendid Suns*?

1.2 Objectives of the Investigation

For the purpose of outlining the theories and their application throughout the paper, it is necessary to establish a connection between the general and specific objectives of the work. The objective of a study is to summarize what the paper intends to demonstrate. Therefore, the objective of this analysis intends to collaborate with the readers in a process of a strong reflection about the issue of male chauvinism over women, how it occurs, and what are women's reactions to them are; furthermore, to analyze what are the improvements reached by this society.

The general objective serves as an introduction to the theme and the theory that will be applied to it, the gender-criticism approach; while the specific objectives present the theory in four ways, that is by using different instruments to exemplify, illustrate, compare, and examine the several issues setting in the novel by Khaled Hosseini. Moreover, it helps readers evaluate how the use of the theories helps to achieve a better understanding of women's roles in the Afghan society by the time setting in the book, and nowadays.

1.2.1 General Objective

To analyze women and men reactions towards chauvinism in the Afghan society represented in the book *A Thousand Splendid Suns*

1.2.2 Specific Objectives

To exemplify female characters' reactions towards chauvinism

To illustrate male repression towards women

To compare male and female characters' gender role before and after getting married

To examine social differentiation before and after getting married

1.3 Justification

Although many great authors have written about feminism and patriarchal chauvinism in human history, it is always important to call people's attention back to these subjects. Hence, the purpose of this paper is to identify, by analyzing the book *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, the different situations in which these two social issues are presented to the readers throughout the Khaled Hosseini's book.

In this novel, Hosseini exposes the country of Afghanistan possesses cruel and sexist laws that enable individuals to take a wrong and devious path. Women are classified as something lower than human, and men have the jurisdiction over them. At the same time, the most horrible treatment can bring about some of the best traits in victims, such as consideration, boldness, and protectiveness based in the lives of the two main characters, Mariam and Laila. This paper intends to call readers attention for these problems, which, despite all changes the world have been through, still affect many women.

To illustrate how the aforementioned issues influenced and changed the characters' lives, the writer is going to use the Gender Approach in the analysis. This approach examines how sexual identity influences the creation and reception of literary works; since the main plot is about two women who endured all sorts of discrimination and suffering from their husband as well as from the society of Afghanistan in the time setting in the book.

By analyzing it through the Gender Approach, the writer intends to instigate the reader's curiosity and interest in researching deeper about the topic of this paper and also to come up with suggestions on how society should treat women worldwide in nowadays and in the next generations. The writer hopes readers take into account that respect and equality are ways each human being should be treated, so that they will feel as equal and valorized.

1.4 Antecedents

In order to write a more reliable academic work, it is important to have some antecedents with the purpose of enriching the literary analysis, a foundation of prior works upon which further analysis can be conducted. The first antecedent is the book, *Concepts in the Social Sciences Feminism*, written by Jane Freedman.

Among the subjects, Jane Freedman's book examines aspects such as the policies about women's citizenship, paid and unpaid employment and the global economy, sexuality and power, and race and ethnicity. Finally, the book analyses the problem of essentialism for feminism and the challenge of postmodern and poststructuralist theories. This book presents a clear and concise introduction to a wide range of feminist thought. For this reason, it is going to help the writer of this work to become more familiar with the feminist theory, since it is one of the two main theories used in this analysis.

The next antecedent is *I Am Malala*, by Malala Yousafzai with Christina Lamb. It is an autobiographical book, where Malala, a 15-year-old girl from Swat Valley, Pakistan, tells the story of how she was almost killed by a Taliban soldier, just because she wanted to have the right to get an education and go to school as all the boys of her country. According to the book, when she was born, few people in her community bothered to congratulate her parents, because the

birth of a girl is seen as a failure on the part of the parents. Malala explains more about her culture. She is a Pashtun, an ethnic group situated mostly in Afghanistan and Pakistan. She lives in the Swat Valley, a beautiful part of Northwestern Pakistan. She is also a devout Muslim, and has been all her life. Hence, in the very early age, Malala was conscious of the restrictions being placed on her because of her sex. In Malala's country, Pakistan, girls were and, in some small towns still are, not allowed to go to school and get education. The Taliban forbids girls, not only to go to school, but also to leave their houses and walk alone in the streets.

This book illustrates the male and religious power over women, this gender approach or criticism, where male power prevails over women. It is another example of the Male Criticism, one of the main theories used by the writer of this academic analysis.

The other one is an interview with Khaled Hosseini. Book Browse. 2007. In this interview, the author makes a comparison with *The Kite Runner*, his first novel, and explains the role of Afghan women in the society during the time period the book is set in.

In the interview there are some relevant questions for this paper that focus mainly on women and their roles in society. The interviewer asked if Hosseini considered that were common themes in both books. Hosseini answered that in both novels, characters were caught in a crossfire and had been overwhelmed by external forces. That their inner lives were influenced by an often brutal and unforgiving outside world, and the decisions they had made about their own lives were influenced by things over which they had no control: revolutions, wars, extremism, and oppression. The interviewer stated that women in Hosseini's story suffered deeply and personally from being oppressed because of their gender, in their homes and in the society. The interviewer asked whether that oppression particularly involved the Muslim world. What they could and should have been done about it. The author said that it was undeniable that the

treatment of women in some Muslim countries—including his own—had been dismal, and the evidence was simply overwhelming. In Afghanistan under the Taliban, women had been denied education, the right to work, the right to move freely, the access to adequate healthcare, and so forth.

Hosseini's answer to the question above, relates immensely to what this paper intends to illustrate, since it explains how the Afghan society treated and keeps treating its women. He said he believed change needed to come from within, from the Muslim society's own fabric. That he thought in Afghanistan, it was essential for its future that those more moderate elements who support women's rights should be able to be empowered. He further pointed out that without these elements, the prospects for success were grim. Also that he was always revolted when Islamic leaders, from Afghanistan or elsewhere, denied the very existence of female oppression, avoided the issue by pointing to examples of what they view as Western mistreatment of women, or even worse, justified the oppression of women on the basis of notions derived from Sharia law.

Another antecedent is an Award presentation called, A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini (Feminist Perspective), B Luz-Yen Ricketts, Melanie Siavichay, Johanna Navas.

In this presentation, the authors, Luz-Yen Ricketts, Melanie Siavichay, Johanna Navas, illustrated the role of the main characters in the novel written by Khaled Hosseini on the feminist perspective. At first they gave a historical and a philosophical background of the Afghan women; their rights to vote, to attend school, to dress the way they want, and the Taliban's rules toward them. Next, they presented the history of Feminism including how it began as well as the most important moments of this movement. Also, based on that, they analyzed the novel by Khaled Hosseini pointed out what the women had to endure, by the time set on the novel. Issues such as:

the lack of rights for women, gender inequalities (men worth more than women), the laws under which they must live they must live: Taliban, marriage rape, female characters being oppressed and having to endure a lot of pain and suffering. Many of these points are related to this paper, for it will focus on the role of women to empower the moderate elements that supported women's rights in the future.

Another antecedent is the New York Times article, "Woman's Lot in Kabul, Lower Than a House Cat's." about A Thousand Splendid Suns, by Michiko Kakutani. Among all the aspects that appear in Ms. Kakutani, article there is a moment where she talks about Afghan women's condition, specifically about Mariam, and she states, "Rasheed forces Mariam to wear a burqa and treats her with ill-disguised contempt, subjecting her to scorn, ridicule, insults, even "walking past her like she was nothing but a house cat." Mariam lives 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."

The next antecedent is *We Should All Be Feminists*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. In this essay, the author argues for the need to start a conversation around gender and to reclaim the word "feminist" through a series of vignettes drawn mostly from her childhood and life in Nigeria. This book relates to the analysis, because the author tries to explain what she understand that being feminist is. She just wants people to be equal, men and women, she just wants them to have the same rights and this is what this analysis is about. by analysing Hosseini's book, we want to call peoples attention to what is to be feminits.

The last antecedent found was a paper entitled: Literary Analysis of Kathryn Stockett's "The Help" through Black Feminism, written by Natasha Paola Fonseca Segura at Universidad

Internacional de Las Americas. Although this paper's focal point is the feminist approach, mainly the Black Feminism. This academic work used some other different approaches to explain the way women, especially black women were portrayed in the novel *The Help* by Katheryn Stockett. She used the following approaches: Existentialism Approach, the New Historicist Approach, the Socialist Realistic Approach, the Historical Criticism Approach, the Feminist Approach and the Black Feminist Approach.

This current paper is going to apply the feminist approach, cited by Ms. Fonseca, since its main subject is the male chauvinism toward women in the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. Both this analysis and Ms. Fonseca's have a lot in common, especially concerning the role of women in the plots of each book.

1.5 Scope

The relationship between Laila, Mariam, and Rasheed in Hosseini's novel, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, illustrates that themes such as women's rights and honor play an important role in the history of Afghanistan; this relationship between the main characters, characterizes the importance of the idea of inner strength, women's rights, and love. Mariam and Laila were victims of the chauvinism of Rasheed, when they suffered all sorts of oppression, physical and psychological violence, humiliation, and so forth, all of them are clear examples of male chauvinism.

This paper analyzes Hosseini's book, using the Gender Approach, and, great extent using the Feminist Literary Criticism to focus on the different kinds of male power over the female.

This work intends to contribute to the reflections about women in society and hopes that it could help to have a broader worldwide view of the women's situation.

The main goal of this work, in fact, is to help readers reflect about the women's roles in the present society. It attempts to imagine how they, as persons of a certain group, may help in different ways to make a better and more equal world for everyone. Unfortunately, changes do not come up all of a sudden, they need reflections, engagement, and most of all willingness.

Sadly, while writing, the author realized that there was also a major problem with female chauvinism. She found out that there was a large number of women who thought that intending to be equal to men in rights and duties would fight against the real role of women in society which would be, in their opinion, being a mother, taking care of children, and taking care of the family. The intention of this paper is to make readers think differently, especially in the case of motherhood, that would never deny women their full personhood rights.

Chapter II

Theoretical Framework

In order to back up the analysis, this chapter aims to present the theories, related to the problem stated by the researcher in the book *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, by Khaled Hosseini. According to the article “Organizing Academic Research papers” published by The Sacred Heart University, “Theoretical framework is the structure that can hold or support a theory of a research study.” The theoretical framework introduces and describes the theory which explains why the research problem under study exists.

In order to make the understanding of most literary works easier for the readers, the so called, literary theories were created. “Literary Theory,” sometimes called “Critical Theory,” can be understood as the set of concepts and intellectual assumptions on which the work of explaining or interpreting literary texts rests.

These are some examples of the most important, literary theories: Traditional Literary Criticism, New Criticism, Marxist literary theory, Gender Criticism. In this paper, the researcher will focus mainly on Gender Criticism, for it is the main theme of Hosseini’s book.

2.1 Gender Criticism Approach

This approach is of fundamental importance to this literary analysis, since it is through it, that the researcher aims to show the readers the objectives of this work, mainly by relating the theories with the character’s roles throughout the book *A Thousand Splendid Suns*.

To define the concept of Gender Approach or Gender Criticism, it is paramount to understand what gender is. Looking at two of the most important dictionaries, Oxford and

Cambridge, the writer found out that the main meaning of gender is, in simple words, the state or the condition of being either male or female. However, UNESCO's Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Framework's definition expands much more upon this concept. It states that gender refers to the roles and responsibilities of men and women that are created in our families, our societies, and our cultures.

When it comes to Gender Criticism, which is the main approach of this work, the writer actually focuses on how the author represents both female and male genders in the book. It is the interrelation of gender, that is, their relationship, their power dynamics, how male and female characters, interrelate.

The Gender Criticism: "examines however sexual identity influences the creation associate degree reception of literary works." Originally a branch of feminist movements, gender criticism these days includes variety of approaches, together with the supposed "masculinist" approach recently advocated by writer Robert Bly. The larger number of gender criticism, however, is feminist and takes as a central precept that the patriarchal attitudes that have dominated western thought have resulted, consciously or unconsciously, in literature "full of unexamined 'male-produced' assumptions." (Mississippi University ,1997)

2.2 Feminist Criticism

As the researcher mentioned above, the Feminist Criticism represents the bulk of gender criticism; therefore, it is crucial to learn more about this theory since it interrelates deeply with the research itself. Feminist Criticism is one of the divisions of Gender criticism that is concerned with "the ways in which literature (and other cultural productions) reinforce or undermine the economic, political, social, and psychological oppression of women" (Tyson 83)

Feminist Criticism or Feminist Theory is the extension of feminism into theoretical or philosophical discourse. It aims to understand the nature of gender inequality. With the purpose of aiming its goal, it has, in many ways, followed what some theorists call the three waves of feminism.

First Wave Feminism: it lasted from the 1700s-early 1900's. One of the representatives of this wave was Mary Wollstonecraft, who wrote *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, (1792) highlighted the inequalities between the sexes. Activists like Susan B. Anthony and Victoria Woodhull contribute to the women's suffrage movement, which leads to the National Universal Suffrage in 1920 with the passing of the Nineteenth Amendment.

Second Wave Feminism: it lasted from the early 1960s until the late 1970s. This second wave built conditions that were necessary in America during World War II. Movements such as the National Organization for Women (NOW), formed in 1966, cohered feminist political activism. Writers like Simone de Beauvoir (*Le Deuxième Sexe*, 1949) and Elaine Showalter established the groundwork for the dissemination of feminist theories dove-tailed with the American Civil Rights Movement.

Third Wave Feminism: it lasted from the early 1990s until the present. This wave resisted the perceived essentialist (over generalized, over simplified) ideologies and a white, heterosexual, middle class focus of second wave feminism. Third wave feminism borrowed from the post-structural and contemporary gender and race theories to expand on marginalized populations' experiences. Writers like Alice Walker work to "...reconcile it [feminism] with the concerns of the black community...[and] the survival and wholeness of her people, both men and women, and for the promotion of dialog and community as well as for the valorization of women and of all the varieties of work women perform" (Tyson 107).

Feminist theory includes attempts to describe and explain how gender systems work, as well as a consideration of normative or ethical issues, such as whether a society's gender arrangements are fair. (International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences, 2001)

2.3. Gender Approach Literature

For the purpose of understanding and elucidating the theories referred above, the writer went through some Gender Approach literary works which relate in many ways to Khaled Hosseini's book. Here is the list of some of them.

2.3.1 *Feminist Theory: from Margin to Center*

In 1984, Bell Hooks or Gloria Jean Watkins, published *Feminist Theory: from Margin to Center*, a groundbreaking critique of the existing feminist discourses during her time. She observed that while feminist theorists were writing about being oppressed by virtue of their sex or by simply for being women. While the feminist movements were fighting for rights that only men had access. These same feminists neglected the plight of other women themselves. While feminists stressed the importance of including other groups in philosophizing and theorizing, they seemed to have deliberately neglected non-white, unprivileged women.

In the *Feminist Theory: from Margin to Center*, Hooks proposed a new definition of feminism, one that does not simply fight for the equality of women and men (of the same class), but of a movement that fights to end sexist oppression and exploitation without neglecting other forms of oppression such as, racism, classism, imperialism, and others. Each of these forms of oppression are interrelated and inseparably connected to each other through interlocking webs of oppression (hooks 1984, 31). In this book, Hooks questioned the existing feminist discourses

during her time by pointing out the lack of a solid definition of feminism and the predominance of white, privileged feminists in the movement.

Although several other feminist theorists have made the same criticisms, what set hooks apart was her invitation to a revolutionary feminist outlook, which used a pluralistic lens to recognize the absence of oppressed groups and the interrogation of cultural representations. Even before “intersectionality” became a buzzword in feminist circles, Hooks had already been talking about the interlocking webs of oppression, a concept that most feminists associate with intersectionality.

When Hooks started writing her own feminist theory in 1984, various feminists had been debating about the definition of feminism and what being part of the feminist movement meant. There was a question of what feminists fought for and ought to fight for. Contrasting interpretations of feminist theory sprung left and right, paving the way for a new brand of confusion in the movement (Hooks 2000, 6).

Misconceptions were prevalent, particularly, that feminism was all about women wanting to become men. At the same time, feminist women were believed to be man-haters who were always angry and vengeful, their primary goal, to eradicate men from the face of the earth! Bewilderingly, “real” feminists supposedly hate men but also want to be men (Hooks,2000, viii). Making this problem the core of her earlier writings, Hooks stated that without a well-grounded definition, feminism would lose what it stood for.

2.3.2 We Should All Be Feminists

In this essay, the author, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, argues for the need to start a conversation around gender and to reclaim the word "feminist" through a series of vignettes drawn mostly from her childhood and life in Nigeria.

In its introduction," the author explained that the following essay has been adapted from a public lecture she had delivered in a conference focused on Africa. She noted that "the word feminist, and the idea of feminism" has been "limited by stereotypes" (3), and expected her speech to be unpopular. Nonetheless, the author said she decided to focus her talk on feminism because she was passionate about the topic and hoped to start a "necessary conversation" (4).

The author began her essay with a memory of her friend Okoloma, who died in 2005 and who was the first person to call her a feminist. The author remembered that when she was 14 years old and while arguing with her friend about books, he accused her of being a feminist. The author noted that Okoloma said the word "feminist" like one might say the word "terrorist."

In 2003 the author was in a press tour in Nigeria during which a man told her that feminists were unhappy and unable to find husbands. Then, the author decides to call herself a "Happy Feminist" (9). Then a Nigerian academic informed the author that feminism was "un-African" (10). In response, the author decided to call herself a "Happy African Feminist" (10). So many people have given their definitions of feminism that eventually the author describes herself as "a Happy African Feminist who does not hate men and who likes to wear lip gloss and high heels for herself not for men".(10) The author used this example for herself and not for men" (10).

The author uses this example to show the extraordinary "baggage" (11) that the label "feminist" carries with it.

The author's next memory came from her childhood in Nsukka, Nigeria, when the position of class monitor was given to a boy, even though she had the top score on the test. The author connected this incident to a broader pattern in which it became seemingly "natural" to see men in positions of power.

The author mentioned many small incidents in Lagos, which are powerfully shaped by society's expectations of gender. For example, the author recalls a time when she was out with a male friend and the valet thanked the man for his tip instead of the author, who had been the one to actually tip him. The valet had assumed he was her husband, and any of her money came from him. To create a different world, the author explains, we must start with the way we raise children, boys and girls alike.

The author then points out the ways in which boys are taught to reject vulnerability, to eschew showing weakness, and to associate masculinity with money. In contrast, girls are taught to "shrink themselves, to make themselves smaller" (28), to pursue marriage over their professional careers, and to view themselves and their sexuality with shame.

The author notes that she, too, is still trying to "unlearn" (38) the gender norms she internalized from childhood, and is sometimes unsure of what it means for her to undo these gender norms. She recalls agonizing, on her first day teaching a writing class, over what outfit to wear and ultimately chose a severe, masculine outfit that she hoped would project authority and power; instead, the author felt uncomfortable and untrue to herself.

The author argues that we must have a conversation about gender that does not simply absorb feminism into a discussion of human rights and that is specific to issues of gender injustice. She writes we must all learn to think and talk about gender. She also writes that, rather

than pitting class, race, or gender oppressions against one another, we must keep the conversations about them distinct. The author then implies that a conversation about gender must also interrogate culture itself and even change culture if it does not serve gender justice.

The author returns to her opening anecdote about her friend Okoloma. After Okoloma called her a feminist, the 14-year-old Adichie looked up the definition in the dictionary, and read that a feminist is someone who “believes in the social, political, and economic equality of the sexes” (47). She realized that her grandmother, who never knew the word “feminist” was one, and she argues that more of us should adopt the word. Finally, the author gives her own definition of "feminist" as someone, male or female, who “says, ‘Yes, there’s a problem with gender as it is today, and we must fix it, we must do better’” (48).

2.3.3 *The Kite Runner*:

The Kite Runner is the first novel written by the Afghan-American author Khaled Hosseini. It tells the story of Amir, a young boy from the Wazir Akbar Khan district of Kabul, whose closest friend is Hassan. The story is set against a backdrop of tumultuous events, from the fall of Afghanistan's monarchy through the Soviet military intervention, the exodus of refugees to Pakistan and the United States, and the rise of the Taliban regime.

Hosseini has commented that he considers *The Kite Runner* to be a father–son relationship story, emphasizing the familial aspects of the narrative, an element that he continued to use in his later works. As the readers could see, both novels, *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, were developed in Afghanistan in an atmosphere full of violence and fights, which played an important role in the characters’ lives.

The Kite Runner, is an insightful novel that spans three decades of the life and customs of a people and a country that have tragically become synonymous with terrorism. The story opens in Afghanistan when its streets and people were not ravaged by the mania of religious extremism and war; when it was a country of prosperity and liberal thought.

Growing up in the midst of this is our narrator Amir with his odd family made up by his father Toghfan Aga, a man who is among the wealthiest and most respected public figures in Kabul. With them live their faithful servants, Ali and his young son Hassan, who have served the family for many generations, as well as Toghfan Aga's business partner and closest friend, Rahim Khan.

This is the tale of Amir and his friendship with Hassan, and how the tragic events of one fateful day drives these two motherless boys apart. Guilt-ridden Amir is destined from that day forth to carry the immense burden of his betrayal, all because he did not have the courage to stop what he saw was happening in a dirty alleyway.

2.4 Chauvinism

Even though Chauvinism has as first meaning, "excessive and unreasonable patriotism", and as a second meaning, "any kind of ultranationalist and was used generally to connote an undue partiality or attachment to a group or place to which one belong." (Encyclopaedia Britannica),. The meaning which relates to the researcher work is the third one: "Chauvinism also may describe an attitude of superiority toward members of the opposite sex, as in male chauvinism." (Encyclopaedia Britannica).

2.4.1 Male Chauvinism:

Male Chauvinism or “machismo” is, certainly, the most important theme of this research, since the author is trying to analyse the subject book through the lens of a gender focused approach. Machismo is characterised by exaggerated pride in masculinity, perceived as power, often coupled with a minimal sense of responsibility and disregard of consequences. In machismo, there is supreme valuation of characteristics culturally associated with the masculine and a denigration of characteristics associated with the feminine. It has, for centuries, been a strong current in Latin American politics and society. Caudillos (military dictators), prominent in the history of Latin America, have typified machismo with their bold and authoritarian approach to government and their willingness to employ violence to achieve their ends.

2.5 The plot of the book

The novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* takes place in Afghanistan. It covers about a 50-year time period from the 1950’s to the mid 2000’s. Hosseini uses allusions to actual Afghani events to describe the ever changing liberties that the women of Afghanistan endure with the lack of stability in the Afghanistan’s government.

From the 1950’s until around 1985, the Soviet Union controlled Afghanistan. This Soviet involvement in Afghanistan caused the ideologies of communism to spread into Afghanistan’s culture. One of the communist ideas that was assimilated was the thought that all people are equal. This idea made life a lot easier for the women of Afghanistan. One of the freedoms they were given under the Soviet control was the right of women to be educated, “The government had sponsored literacy classes for all women. Almost two-thirds of the students at Kabul University were women now... women who were studying law, medicine, engineering” (Hosseini, (2007)).

The novel tells the story of Mariam, and Laila and how their lives were connected due to common circumstances. Mariam lived in the small village of Gul Daman with her mother. She was the illegitimate daughter of Jalil, a wealthy businessman who lived in the nearby city of Herat. After her mother's suicide, she was sent to live with Jalil. Her father and his wives quickly married Mariam off to a shoemaker named Rasheed, and the newlyweds moved to Kabul, where Mariam became pregnant. Sadly, Mariam miscarried which caused Rasheed to get furious and become abusive.

The other main character, Laila, was born sometime after the marriage of Mariam and Rasheed. She lived in their neighborhood. Since she was born; Laila had a close male friend named Tariq, who lost one of his legs by a landmine. As Tariq and Laila grew up, she fell in love with him.

Ahmad and Noor, Laila's two older brothers, left to fight for the Mujahideen, guerrilla groups operating in Afghanistan during the Afghan War (1979–92) that opposed the invading Soviet forces, and eventually toppled the Afghan communist government, in the jihad. After they were killed, Laila's mother Fariba was never the same. As conflict turned to the war in Kabul, living conditions became difficult for everyone. Laila had the benefit of the communist ideas of “All the people are equal”, and her parents, mainly her father, wanted her to be educated.

Laila's father's wish could never be achieved; Laila had to quit school because the streets were too dangerous. She was tutored at home. Hakim wanted to leave Afghanistan, but Fariba did not want to leave the land for which her sons had died. Tariq's family; however, moved to Pakistan, and Laila felt devastated. Before Tariq left, he and Laila had sex. Tariq asked Laila to come with him and marry him, but Laila could not leave her father.

A few weeks after Tariq's family had left, Laila was almost hit by a bullet. This event woke up Fariba to the ongoing risks of living in Kabul, so she agreed to move. While packing, a bomb went off at Laila's home, and she was the only survivor of the blast. She was knocked unconscious.

Not knowing exactly what had happened, Laila awoke in Rasheed's and Mariam's house. They took care of her as she healed. After a few days, Abdul Sharif, a friend of Rasheed's, visited their house and gave the news that Tariq had been hospitalized and had died. Laila felt devastated again.

As Rasheed's daily behavior changed, Mariam perceived that Rasheed was courting Laila. She protested, but he did not care. So, some days after learning about Tariq's death, Mariam asked Laila if she would accept Rasheed's hand in marriage, and Laila answered affirmatively because she realized she was pregnant and wanted Rasheed to think that the baby was his. Later, Laila and Rasheed got married, and tension arose between Mariam and Laila. Rasheed put Laila on a pedestal and made fun of Mariam in order to impress Laila.

Mariam resented Laila at first, but she eventually became close to Laila and her new daughter, Aziza. After seeing Mariam being oppressed almost daily by Rasheed, and worrying about hers and her daughter's lives, Laila told Mariam about her plan to escape, and Mariam decided to join her. They eventually went through with the plan, but they were arrested before they could leave and were sent home to Rasheed. He was so furious that he almost killed them and Laila's daughter Aziza.

Later on, Laila and Rasheed had a son named Zalmai. After Rasheed's shop burnt to the ground and the family went broke, he forced Laila to send Aziza, her daughter, to a nearby

orphanage. One day, after visiting Aziza, Laila returned home to find a very surprising guest: Tariq. It turned out the man who had come by their house all those years ago was hired by Rasheed to trick Laila and made her believe Tariq had died. Laila told Tariq about Aziza and her marriage to Rasheed, and Tariq did not blame her for getting married; and he promised that he would meet her the following day.

Tariq kept visiting Laila and Zalmai, Laila and Rasheed's son, who was unhappy about the visits, told Rasheed that Laila had allowed Tariq to see her face, so Rasheed became enraged. He beat Laila and tried to suffocate her. Rasheed almost succeeded, but Mariam got to the room, hit him twice with a shovel, killing him.

After Rasheed's death, Laila was determined to leave Kabul. She asked Mariam to come with her and Tariq to Pakistan, but Mariam refused. If Mariam were to leave, the Taliban would search for both of them to find the murderer, and Mariam could not let the children live in such danger. She also could not look at Zalmai every day knowing she had killed his father. Laila and Zalmai picked up Aziza and left town. They never saw Mariam again. Mariam eventually was caught and put into a prison run by the Taliban. She tried to explain that she was defending herself when she killed Rasheed, but the judge sentenced Mariam to death. She was publicly executed.

Laila and Tariq got married and started a new life in Pakistan. They worked for the same hotel at which Tariq worked before, and they lived in a shack behind the hotel. Laila revealed to Aziza that Tariq was her father, and they bonded instantly. At first, Zalmai rejected Tariq, but he warmed up.

After the terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001 and the onset of President George Bush's "War on Terror," which had toppled the Taliban, Laila heard that the conditions in Kabul, her hometown, were improving. She wished to return and contribute to the improvement of the city. Tariq agreed with her. On her way to Kabul, Laila stopped in Herat, city of Mariam and visited Mullah Faizullah's son and the kolba, the place where Mariam and Nana, her mother, used to live when Mariam was a kid. Mullah Faizullah was Mariam's teacher when she lived with her mother, Nana in the kolba. His son gives Laila a box that Jalil, Mariam's father, left for Mariam.

The box contained a letter apologizing and providing an update for Mariam. The box also contained money in American dollars and a copy of Pinocchio on video. The video that Mariam wanted so hard to watch. This was a significant proof of his regret, for Mariam as a child always dreamed about seeing that movie, and it was because of Jalil's promise that Mariam escaped to Herat on her fifteenth birthday to see this movie, which Nana's suicide.

Laila, Tariq, Aziza, and Zalmai moved into a townhouse in Kabul. Laila taught at the orphanage. Tariq worked for an NGO (non-governmental organization) that fitted landmine victims with prosthetic limbs. Laila always felt Mariam close to her heart. As the novel ended, Laila was pregnant with her third child—if it were a girl, she would be named Mariam.

2.6 Facts about the History of Afghanistan

Afghanistan, a multiethnic country located in the heart of south-central Asia. Lying along important trade routes connecting southern and eastern Asia to Europe and the Middle East, Afghanistan has long been a prize sought by empire builders, and for millennia great armies have

attempted to subdue it, leaving traces of their efforts in great monuments now fallen to ruin. The country's forbidding landscape of deserts and mountains has laid many imperial ambitions to rest, as has the tireless resistance of its fiercely independent peoples—so independent that the country has failed to coalesce into a nation but has instead long endured as a patchwork of contending ethnic factions and ever-shifting alliances. (Encyclopædia Britannica – Afghanistan 2020)

2.6.1 Women's role in Afghanistan

Afghanistan has a tumultuous recent past. In the last three decades, the country has been occupied by communist Soviet troops and US-led international forces, and in the years in between has been ruled by militant groups and the infamous oppressive Islamic Taliban.

According to Amnesty International UK, throughout the changing political landscape of Afghanistan in the last fifty years, women's rights have been exploited by different groups for political gain, sometimes being improved but often being abused.

From the talibans to the actual days all the conflicts influenced women's lives. The taliban women used to have their rights very similar to men they even had the right to vote before the american women. By the time of the sovietic invasion, they had the right to go to school, to work and be professional such as doctors and other jobs which could help their country. However, after the Taliban, their lives went upside down they lost all the rights they had gained. Now after 2011, the country is in a civil war and women still are the ones who have to endure.

2.6.2 Men's role in the Afghan's society

In this research, the writer intends to show how crucial is the male role in the plot of the book. For this reason, it is necessary to refer to men's role in the Afghanistan society. According

to the book, *The Other Side of Gender Inequality: Men and Masculinities in Afghanistan*, (p.17), In the patriarchal context of Afghanistan, men are perceived to assume the major responsibilities in their families and communities. As the readers will notice, the main role of men in this country is to support the family, and in Hosseini's book, it is very clear that "family" is formed by the wife or wives and the kids of a legitimate marriage.

2.7 Khaled Hosseini's Biography

Hosseini was born on March 4, 1965 in Kabul, Afghanistan, and he was the eldest of five children. His father, Nasser worked as a diplomat for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kabul while his mother worked as a Persian language teacher at a girl's only high school; both were originally from Herat. Regarding his ethnicity, Hosseini stated, "I'm not pure anything ... There's a Pashtun part of me, a Tajik part of me." He spent a great part of his childhood in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Hosseini's "very fond memories of his childhood" in the peaceful pre-Soviet era Afghanistan, as well as his personal experiences with Afghanistan's Hazara people led to the writing of his first novel, *The Kite Runner*. One Hazara man, named Hossein Khan, worked for the Hosseini's when they were living in Iran. When Khaled Hosseini was in third grade, he taught Khan to read and write. Although his relationship with Hossein Khan was brief and rather formal, Hosseini's fond memories of this relationship served as an inspiration for the relationship between Hassan and Amir in *The Kite Runner*.

Hosseini draws on influences he gained while his family lived in exile in Paris, as well his experiences with children in Afghanistan. Hosseini does not recall his sister, Raya, ever suffering

discrimination for being a female. Kabul itself was "a growing, thriving, cosmopolitan city" where he regularly flew kites with a number of cousins.

In 1970, Hosseini and his family moved to Iran where his father worked for the Embassy of Afghanistan in Tehran. In 1973, Hosseini's family returned to Kabul, and Hosseini's youngest brother was born in July of that year. In 1976, when Hosseini was 11 years old, his father secured a job in Paris, France, and moved the family there. They were unable to return to Afghanistan because of the April 1978 Saur Revolution, in which the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) seized power.

In 1980, shortly after the start of the Soviet–Afghan War, they sought political asylum in the United States and made their residence in San Jose, California. There, he entered the University of California San Diego School of Medicine, where he earned his M.D. in 1993. He completed his residency in internal medicine at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles in 1997. He practiced medicine for over ten years, until a year and a half after the release of his first book *The Kite Runner*.

Hosseini's second novel, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, was published in 2007, and is also set in Afghanistan. The story addresses many of the same issues as Hosseini's first book, but takes a more feminine perspective. It follows the story of two women, Mariam and Laila, whose lives become entwined. The story is set during Afghanistan's tumultuous thirty-year transition from Soviet occupation to Taliban control and post-Taliban rebuilding.

Hosseini is one of the most widely read and beloved novelist in the world, with more than ten million copies of *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns* sold in The United States and thirty-eight million copies sold in more than seventy other countries worldwide; however, this

does not stop him from being a kind and simple family man. He is married to Roya Hosseini. The couple have two children, Haris and Farah. He lives in Northern California.

2.8 Literary Devices

Literary devices or literary techniques are specific structures that writers often use to add meaning or create more compelling stories for the reader. These techniques can give the reader a greater understanding and meaning of the writer's intent.

The writer will mainly make use of three literary devices: themes, symbols, and motifs. In this section of the chapter, the author will explain the various themes, symbols and motifs derived from the book which will be referenced again in subsequent chapters, when analysing the book itself in order to respond to this investigation's objectives.

2.8.1 Themes

The theme of any literary work is the base that acts as a foundation for the entire literary piece. The theme links all aspects of the literary work with one another and is basically the main subject. According to "Literary Devices": "Theme is the central topic or idea explored in a text. The theme is generally not stated explicitly in the text, but instead is expressed through the characters' actions, words, and thoughts. (Literary Devices (n.d))

Khaled Hosseini's books always have a great variety of themes. Below the writer presents the main themes of the book *A Thousand Splendid Suns* which are, gender relations, female friendship, suffering and perseverance, shame and reputation, love and loyalty.

2.8.1.1 Gender Relations

By telling the story of *A Thousand Splendid Suns* through the perspective of two Afghan women, Hosseini can emphasize certain aspects of Afghan life and history that differ from the established historical narrative. The novel, in fact, draws on the limitations imposed on women in Afghan's life in order to explore how women have lived, endured, and subverted these constraints.

Gender relations differ throughout the novel depending on the powers that govern the land and the laws that accompany them. Under the communist rule, for instance, girls were permitted to attend school and work outside home. Babi celebrates this status and encourages Laila to take advantage of it. At the same time, however, girls are discouraged from spending too much time with members of the opposite sex before they are married. Gender relations can also depend on specific traditional or regional norms—Mariam, for instance, is required by her husband to wear a burqa long before this becomes law. Men, like Laila's brothers, are the ones who go off to fight, while the women stay home and often must deal with the repercussions of war.

The relatively progressive gender norms under communism change drastically with the arrival of the Mujahideen and, eventually, the Taliban. For Laila, the restrictions have the effect of taking Kabul, the city that she always thought of as hers, away from her, limiting her freedom of speech and movement.

Even so, the characters find ways to subvert these norms: Laila sneaks across town to the orphanage, and she plans an escape with Mariam (though ultimately a thwarted one) from Rasheed. The Taliban may have legally sanctioned Rasheed's violent beatings, but Hosseini is clearly on the side of greater freedoms for women, and the reader is meant to cheer on Laila and Mariam as they struggle against these inequalities

2.8.1.2 Female Friendship

Though gender norms shift throughout the course of the novel as a result of changing occupations and laws, one constant theme is friendship among women.

The relationship between Mariam and Laila rests at the heart of the novel, as even its structure reveals: Part I takes Mariam's perspective, Part II takes Laila's, and Part III alternates between them. Laila also treasures her friendship with her classmates Giti and Hasina, with whom she shares laughs, plays games, and tells secrets about boys—forgetting for a time about the violence and dangers of their adolescence.

During the time the Mujahideen imposed their own restrictions on the place of women in Afghanistan, female friendship became one way to subvert these restrictions from within.

Mariam and Laila, for instance, joined forces against Rasheed, their husband and the source of much of their suffering. Most drastically, this takes the form of their plot to escape. But in subtler ways, the time they spent together drinking tea, joking, and laughing allows them to draw strength from each other and endure their oppression.

Even in a society where women cannot participate in the public sphere, the book suggests, that relationships among women serve, not only as a source of escape, but as a means to assert their own legitimacy and dignity.

2.8.1.3 Suffering and Perseverance

None of the characters in the novel is a stranger to pain and suffering, either physical or emotional. However, this suffering takes different forms. The loss of loved ones brings its own

kind of acute pain—often in a way that seems to lack any kind of redemption. On the other hand, there are other types of suffering that the characters willingly endure in the service of others.

A Thousand Splendid Suns focuses on creating a hierarchy of grief and suffering; is the loss of Laila's brothers, after Babi (or so Mammy accuses him) that allowed them to fight the Mujahideen, somehow worse than the random rocket that killed Laila's friend Giti?

The characters fight with such suffering in different ways. Mammy takes refuge in her dark bedroom following her sons' deaths and never quite seems to be able to overcome her grief. Laila is more pragmatic; she marries Rasheed not despite of, but because of her parents' death. She considers this as her only option.

The novel seems to promote this kind of perseverance over the immobilization and inaction that can stem from suffering. Though the suffering that the characters have experienced might be impossible to undo, there is value and strength to be drawn from their ability to endure.

This is especially the case when the characters willingly choose to suffer. Laila, for instance, willingly submits to beatings by the Taliban for traveling as a woman alone, it is the only way of seeing and spending time with her daughter Aziza at the orphanage. Mariam, of course, chooses to kill Rasheed, so as to give Laila a chance of a better life, knowing that she will be convicted and executed by the Taliban as a result.

This ability to suffer willingly for the benefit of others is portrayed as something women in particular excel at. From Laila's horrifically painful childbirth to Mariam's sacrifice, women endure their own suffering and even add to it themselves.

2.8.2 Symbols

A symbol is a literary device that contains several layers of meaning, often concealed at first sight, and is representative of several other aspects, concepts or traits than those that are visible in the literal translation alone. A symbol consists of using an object or action that means something more than its literal meaning. (Literary Devices,n.d.)

In this literary work, the researcher found a great quantity of symbols with many different functions, and meanings. Some of them are *Saib-e-Tabrizi's* poem, the films *Pinocchio* and *Titanic*, the burqa, the gun in the drawer.

2.8.2.1 *The Saib-e-Tabrizi's Poem*

This poem represents how powerfully fascinating Kabul was. Kabul was Laila's home and became a home for Mariam, especially once she became friends of Laila. "One could not count the moons that shimmer on her roofs, or the thousand splendid suns that hide behind her walls." (Hosseini, 2007) The poem's description of Kabul's beauty can be seen as sadly ironic, since for much of the novel Kabul is hardly splendid, but instead a bloody, bombarded shell; but the poem also evokes the "real" Kabul that remains beneath the destruction. Finally, the poem underlines the importance Babi places on literary and cultural heritage, and the necessity for Laila—as for women in general—to be educated and to be able to transmit this heritage.

2.8.2.2 *The films Pinocchio and Titanic*

Pinocchio is the 1940 film Jalil promised to take his daughter Mariam to in the beginning of the novel, but he never showed up. This led to Mariam defying her mother, Nana, to go looking for Jalil. Nana killed herself before Jalil's driver took Mariam home to her mother, against Mariam's will. The film symbolized everything Jalil could have given Mariam, but refused to because he was more concerned with avoiding public shame and other people's judgement.

At the end of the novel, the film was one of the items in the box that Mullah Faizullah's son saved for Mariam but ended up giving it to Laila. Laila didn't understand why there was a videotape of Pinocchio in the box, but the reader would know why it was there. Jalil wanted to give Mariam what he had denied her for so long, and the film became a symbol of his unconditional love for Mariam, unfortunately, given too late.

Titanic, which is an American film about a real ship that sank in 1912 after hitting an iceberg off the coast of Newfoundland, captured the attention of the people of Kabul even though it was forbidden by the Taliban to watch films.

People smuggled copies in from Pakistan, and for a while, the city was obsessed with the characters. Aziza always wanted to play Titanic with Mariam, and she insisted on being Jack, who saved people and died as a hero. Laila, who said, "Jack is dead," had a more realistic view of the disaster the Taliban had wrought on Kabul. Like the Titanic, Kabul felt doomed, and no one could save the city from the turmoil created by the warring factions. Vendors took over the dried riverbed during the drought that caused so much starvation and devastation, and they created a "Titanic City." The city was flooded when the drought ended and the river returned, but when the Taliban were ousted, Kabul had a screening of the film for its residents. It symbolizes freedom of information and the hope that someone would deliver the people of Kabul from disaster.

2.8.2.3 The Burqa

The burqa is a symbol of control of a woman by a man, especially a wife by her husband. Rasheed told Mariam that "a woman's face is her husband's business" and his business only, so she had to wear a burqa in public.

No one was allowed to see what Mariam looked like, although at funeral services, Laila did see Mariam's face. In those circumstances, Mariam was allowed to wear a headscarf, but in all other circumstances, she had to wear the burqa.

There are levels of covering that observant Muslim women use, and the burqa is the strictest of coverings. Its only opening is a screen in front of the woman's eyes so she's able to see. Both Mariam and Laila had trouble adjusting to the burqa because their range of vision was limited and they ended up tripping on its hem. Rasheed told Mariam that she may even grow to like the burqa, but he assumed that Mariam welcomed being invisible to the outside world.

At first, the notion that she was protected by her husband appealed to Mariam. She welcomed the protection it seemed to offer from the outside world. However, the reality of Rasheed's low opinion and violent treatment of women erased any positive effects of the burqa, which also became a symbol of her isolation both as a woman and as a victim of abuse.

2.8.2.4 The Kolba

The kolba where Mariam lived with Nana was a shack made of mud and clay, not much better than a shelter for livestock. It is a symbol of how low Nana's status was as a woman, a maid, and a mother of a child out of wedlock.

For Laila, it was also a symbol of Mariam's spirit. She went to visit the kolba on her way to Kabul with Tariq. In the kolba, Laila envisioned Mariam as a spirited, joyful girl who loved life and made the best of her surroundings. With the help of visits from Mullah Faizullah and Jalil's, Mariam's childhood in the kolba, indeed, had bright spots. Mariam used those moments of love and caring to keep herself happy and focused on the positive things her life had to offer. In this

way, the kolba symbolizes the duality of shameful deprivation and the love that Mariam was able to experience despite her circumstances.

2.8.3 Motifs

The literary device ‘motif’ is any element, subject, idea or concept that is constantly present through the entire body of literature. Using a motif refers to the repetition of a specific theme dominating the literary work. Motifs are very noticeable and play a significant role in defining the nature of the story, the course of events and the very fabric of the literary piece. (Literary device, n.d.) Some motifs presented in the book appear below:

2.8.3.1 Hatred

Hosseini’s book is marked for the presence of hate from the beginning to the end. Most of the hatred examples happened among the three main characters, Mariam, Rasheed and Laila. “Now you know what you've given me in this marriage. Bad food, and nothing else.” (Hosseini, 2007) Rasheed's anger at not having a son, and having a wife who can't sustain a pregnancy, turned into physical abuse. At the beginning of the marriage, he compliments Mariam on her cooking. Her cooking has not changed, but Rasheed's idea of her has because he doesn't get what he wants. He forces Mariam to chew pebbles, breaking her molars, and she does it because she is terrified of him.

2.8.3.2 Violence

Many kinds of violence: sexual, psychological and mainly physical, are represented in Hosseini's novel throughout the whole book. The quote below is an example of physical violence.

“Up close, his sneering face seemed impossibly large. Laila noticed how much puffier it was getting with age, how many more broken vessels charted tiny paths on his nose. Rasheed didn't say anything. And, really, what could be said, what needed saying, when you'd shoved the barrel of your gun into your wife's mouth? (Hosseini, 2007)

The situation above happened, because Rasheed asked his and laila's daughter, Aziza, to be a street beggar. When Laila confronts him, he threatened her with a gun.

2.8.3.3 Endurance and Submission

Since the beginning of the book, the readers can see examples of endurance and submission. The quote below is from the very beginning of the novel.

“It's our lot in life, Mariam. Women like us. We endure. It's all we have. Do you understand?”(hosseini, 2007)

Nana tells Mariam, she only needs to learn how to "endure." This advice is not only for Mariam: in using the first-person plural of "us" and "we," Nana lumps herself in this category as well. According to Nana, women like them are women who have been abandoned by society and are condemned to live at its fringes. Importantly, Nana does not include all marginalized people in this group, but only the women: as the group structurally prevented from attaining the same opportunities as men, women are doubly affected when they are also poor and exist outside of traditional family structures.

This chapter, aimed to tell the reader about the definitions related to the problems, the theories which are used, previous studies, and the background of the novel which is used in the research. Furthermore, the researcher intended to make readers have a view of how the lives of women portrayed by Hosseini in his novel are related to most of the theories and themes mentioned before.

Chapter III

Methodological Framework

This chapter explains indispensable aspects for the purpose of this research. It describes the methodology of the research study, and data analysis techniques, including collection of data. It is divided into seven main parts.

The first one will provide explanations of the different research methods that are used when performing investigations. Further, it will specify which of these methods will be used throughout this research by explaining the method and its characteristics.

The second one is the research design; this refers to the strategy the investigator uses to obtain the information or to solve the problem statement.

The third one is the information sources, that is, where the sources of the information have been taken from.

The fourth part is the analysis of the categories, which explains the type of analysis the investigator is using in the research.

The fifth part refers to the data collection instruments. The data collection is an important step in the research process. The instrument the researcher chooses to collect the data will depend on the type of data the researcher plans on collecting (qualitative or quantitative) and the process for collecting it.

The sixth part refers to the collection data process and data analysis. In this part the researcher explains the process by which the data are collected and how they are analyzed.

The last part of this chapter consists of the data collection instruments which in this specific case, are formed by four tables; each one of them will be divided into three columns. These columns will provide the quotes from the book, theories and an explanation which will relate the theories and the quotes.

3.1 Research Methods

In order to study, experiment, investigate, analyze, and compare different characteristics, facts, and studies from a topic, it is important for the researcher to understand what research and research methods are. According to Creswell (2002), “research is a process of steps used to collect and analyze information to increase our understanding of a topic or issue.”

The method or design according to Hernández et al. (2014), “refers to the plan or strategy conceived to obtain the information that is desired in order to solve the problem statement” (p.128). The method is selected based on the problem, objectives, time, and even the budget allocated for the research. It is essential to describe each step of the design and how it will be used in the investigation. Each approach has its own set designs or methods; it is wrong to mix them up.

There are different types of research approaches which use different tools for data collection; among them, it is important to highlight three of them: the quantitative, the qualitative, and the mixed approaches. They are commonly applied to investigations; however, only one of these three previously mentioned methods will be applied on this paper: it is the qualitative approach; the author will explain later why this method is the one that is going to be used. But first the investigator will provide the explanation of the three research methods previously mentioned.

The Quantitative Method is the research method where the research is based in numbers and measurements through the use of scales, ranges, and frequency of the different problems. In his article in the New York Times, Leedy states that: “Quantitative research methods are the ones dealing with numbers and anything that is measurable in a systematic way of investigation of phenomena and their relationships. It is used to answer questions, relationships within measurable variables with an intention to explain, predict, and control a phenomenon (Leedy, 1993).

The Mixed Method: the term “mixed method” refers to an emergent methodology of research that advances the systematic integration or “mixing,” of quantitative and qualitative data within a single investigation or sustained program of inquiry (Healthcare Research and Quality, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2013). Although both quantitative and mixed research methods can be applied in a literary analysis, based on the investigator focus the more appropriate research method for this analysis is the qualitative

Because this paper is a literary analysis the qualitative format and approach are the most suitable to obtain the results aimed. Creswell states that, qualitative research approach begins with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The multiple data sources of this research are words or images (Creswell,2007).

The Qualitative research is generally more explorative; it is a type of research that is dependent on the collection of verbal, behavioral or observational data that can be interpreted in a subjective manner. It has a wide scope and is typically used to explore the causes of potential problems that may exist. It focuses on describing, exploring, and discovering data that cannot be counted or measured. The qualitative method is used for identification, description, and

explanation. Therefore, it means that it explores meanings, variations, and experiences of phenomena. Consequently, the choice of using the method depends on the understanding of the topics of interest.

3.2 Research Design

A qualitative research design is concerned with establishing answers to the whys and hows of the phenomenon in question (unlike quantitative). Due to this, qualitative research is often defined as being subjective (not objective), and findings are gathered in a written format as opposed to numerical. This means that the data collected from a piece of qualitative research cannot usually be analyzed in a quantifiable way using statistical techniques because there may not be commonalities between the various collected findings. Qualitative research design should also not only account for what is said or done, but also the manner in which something is spoken or carried out by a participant.

In this study, the researcher uses content analysis from the book itself, and by contrasting it with other works on the topic as the method to analyze the data. According to Krippendorff (2003), content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inference from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their uses. Mayring (2000) also states that qualitative content analysis is an approach of empirical, methodological controlled analysis of texts within their context of communication, following content analytical rules and step by step models, without rash quantification. The object of (qualitative) content analysis can be all sorts of recorded communication (transcripts of interviews, discourses, protocols of observations, video tapes, documents, and so forth) (Mayring,2000).

3.3 Information Sources

This section explains who or what the source of the information is. It can be people or theoretical content. In the case of people, it must be indicated that they have informed consents and the type of sampling carried out.

In this particular analysis, the main source is the book *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, by Khaled Hosseini, 2007. Since it is qualitative research the data is going to be the phenomena the researcher is going to study from the novel, Vanderstoep and Johnston (2009) state that the data of qualitative research are described in a narrative fashion rather than in the forms of numbers.

The data from Hosseini's novel, mainly the most expressive quotes, will relate first, to male and female chauvinist attitudes in the book, second, to male repression towards Women in the book analyzed, third, to compare the gender roles of the three main characters before and after marriage and finally, to examine the social differentiation before and after marriage., which are the four specific objectives of this research.

A Thousand Splendid Suns was written by Khaled Hosseini, an Afghan American author. It was published for the first time in 2007 by Riverhead Books. Its touching story has made it gain popularity among people around the world, furthermore, it was one of the best selling books of the last decade. The novel has 367 pages which are divided into four parts and fifty-one chapters. Part one, which goes from chapter 1-15, tells about Nana and Mariam, the two protagonists of the novel; part two which goes from chapter 16 to 26, focuses on Laila; part three with goes from chapter 27 to 47, tells about Mariam and Laila, and part four which goes from chapter 48 to 51, and is mainly about Laila.

Moreover, in this study, the researcher uses books, journals, and websites which deals with feminism and gender discrimination. Those resources were taken to enrich the researcher's

knowledge and comprehension in conducting this study

3.4 Analysis Categories

Depending on the approach, variables (quantitative) or categories of analysis (qualitative) are defined. In the case of variables, a conceptual, operational and instrumental definition must appear. Hernández et al. (2014) explain that the conceptual definition is to provide the theoretical meaning; the operational are the activities or operations to measure variables, and the instrumental, indicate which items of the instrument are related to the variable. In the case of the categories of analysis, which are derived from the content of each specific objective, only a conceptual definition is made, in light of the theoretical line that has been assumed for the investigative action. Thanks to these definitions, the items of the instruments are elaborated with greater precision.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

This section indicates which instruments are used and why they were selected to collect the information. The instruments to be used are placed in the appendices of the document.

In this study, the researcher used the technique of analysis of documents and material culture since the source of the data was a written text (Vanderstoep and Jhonston,(2008). The process of data collecting technique consists of four steps, namely careful and comprehensive reading, note taking, data interpreting, and data categorizing.

Firstly, the researcher read Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* carefully and comprehensively. In order to get trustworthy of the data, the researcher read and reread the novel to get a more vivid understanding about it.

To obtain the necessary data, the researcher also took notes and highlighted the data related to male and female chauvinist attitudes, second, to male oppression towards women. The data gathered through note taking process are interpreted using Gender Literary Approach or criticism.

Finally, they are categorized into the units which are relevant to, and suit the four specific objectives mentioned previously. The researcher marks some sentences in bold which support and emphasize the categories she made to ease the analysis.

3.6 Data Collection Process and Data Analysis

In this part, specifically, the researcher explains how the data is collected and how it will be analyzed. Hoonard and Hoonard (2008) mention that data analysis is an integral part of qualitative research and constitutes an essential stepping-stone towards both gathering data and linking one's findings with higher order concepts.

According to Creswell (2009), data analysis in qualitative research involves six steps namely organizing and preparing the data, reading the whole data, coding the data, sorting the data, interrelating descriptions, and interpreting the meaning of descriptions. Below is the description of those six steps.

1. First, the researcher identifies the data taken from the novel by making some notes.
2. Second, the researcher reads and re-reads the whole data and arranges them into four major topics under the study. In this analysis the topics respond to the four objectives.
3. Third, the researcher categorizes the data into thematic categories related to gender criticism.

4. Fourth, the researcher sorted the data to get the more relevant data. Thus, the irrelevant data were excluded.

5. Fifth, the data analysis moves towards the process of making interrelation between the description of the data and the theories to get findings based on the objectives of the research.

6. Sixth, the researcher engages in interpretation of the findings based on her comprehension about the theories which have been used

3.7 Data Analysis Instruments

The instrument you choose to collect the data will depend on the type of data you plan on collecting (qualitative or quantitative) and how you plan to collect it. (Research for Construction Management “Data-collecting instruments” Coventry University)

The primary instrument in analyzing the data was the Book itself, and observations about the Author. The main method was the qualitative research method. As it is stated by Creswell (2007), in qualitative research, the researchers collect data themselves through examining documents, observing behavior, and interviewing participants. They use their own capacity to collect, interpret, and analyze the data.

In addition, the secondary instrument of this research is a set of data collected from the novel entitled *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini (2007). This instrument functions as a guide for the researcher in the process of identification and analysis.

The data collection instrument of this paper corresponds to tables divided into three columns each. The data were categorized into the units which were relevant with (TABLE 1): Female Characters’ Reactions Towards Chauvinism in the book *A Thousand Splendid Suns*; (TABLE 2):

Male Repression Towards Women in the book analyzed. (TABLE 3): Compare the gender roles of the three main characters before and after marriage, and finally, (TABLE 4) Examines the social differentiation before and after marriage. The researcher categorized each data set, related them with the theories studied and explained the way they were related to each other, based on the definitions of each of the theories mentioned. Below, is an example of the table that will be used in chapter 4.

Table 1 Male and Female Characters Reactions Towards Chauvinism in the book *A Thousand Splendid Suns*

THEORY	QUOTES	INTERPRETATION.
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The table above shows the data sources triangulation which are explained by gathering evidence taken from the book, relating them to the theories and then explaining them.

Chapter IV

Data Analysis

The information provided in this section is based on a triangulation of the literary theories seen in chapter two, the experts' opinions, in this case, the quotes of the Khaled Hosseini, the author of the book analyzed, and finally, the analysis and explanations of the researcher on these quotations. In order to do this, the researcher will present a definition of the approach and point out the relationship between the main approach of this work, that is the gender approach, and the book by Hosseini. This will help the readers to develop a better view and understanding of the book *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and what the author of the book meant to show to the readers when he wrote it.

Moreover, to close the chapter, the researcher will highlight the three literary devices: themes, symbols and motifs, using examples from the book, so that the readers will be able to distinguish them with clarity.

4.1 Approaches to the Investigation

As the researcher wrote above, in this section, it is imperative to explain the concept of an approach, and how the main approach studied previously throughout this work will help to analyze Hosseini's novel.

An approach is a theory about language learning or even a philosophy of how people learn in general. It can be psychologically focused, such as behaviorism or cognitivism. It can also be based on older philosophies such as idealism or realism. Concerning literature, there are different critical approaches; however, the researcher is going to focus on the Gender Criticism since it is the main approach of this work, and within gender criticism, mainly the feminist Criticism.

Feminist criticism is concerned with "the ways in which literature (and other cultural productions) reinforce or undermine the economic, political, social, and psychological oppression of women" (Tyson 83). Hosseini's book although written by a man, has an expressive feminist view throughout the whole book. First of all, the aspect of feminism in the novel and how the author has described his ideas about women and their miseries in a patriarchal society.

In the novel, the author presents two women, their love, emotions and sacrifices, how both of them struggle in their lives, and how they meet and build a great and unbreakable bond with each other.

Looking back at the history of Afghanistan, the country did not remain unchanged from the beginning. The feminist expression of the Afghan society is the outcome of Civil War. Before the Civil War, Afghan women enjoyed quite a liberal and good life. They were allowed to receive education and to work as a professional to serve their country. (Amnesty International UK- Women's rights in Afghanistan, 2014).

A Thousand splendid suns is the representation of women and their burning desires. There are thousands of desires in the hearts of Mariam and Laila of which mostly get burnt under the strong heat of patriarchy. In the light of the story a man always finds a woman to be blamed for every misfortune in life. As Nana said to Mariam; "Learn this now and learn it well, my daughter: "a man's accusing finger always finds a woman. Always. You remember that Mariam" (Hosseini 2007).

These words of her mother were in her mind long after she had experienced it and acknowledged that a woman must always endure all the sufferings coming from man's side.

4.2 Theories vs Literary Work

The following section will analyze different parts from the literary work including quotes from the novel *A Thousand Splendid Sun* selected by the researcher, which will be supported by a literary theory and its explanation. The researcher considers it would be easier for readers to understand the relationship among different paragraphs or quotes and the literary theories in a table, since in this way readers will have a better comprehension regarding certain fields. Furthermore there will be a small explanation of table three and four.

Table 1. Female characters reactions towards chauvinism

Theory – Gender Criticism	Quote	Explanation
Male chauvinism towards women and psychological violence	<p>“She grew up in a kolba. Her father put her there. Have you told her, Mariam, have you told her you are a harami.”Well, she is, But she is not without qualities, all things considered.” (Hosseini,2007,ch.31,p.199)</p>	<p>In this quote, Rasheed humiliates Mariam in front of Laila, saying that she was an unwanted child. He was trying to show that Laila was superior to Mariam, and he likes her much more.. Here Marian is exposed to shame and Psychological abuse and violence by Racheed, in a clear example of male chauvinism. And, despite all her suffering and shame, Mariam chose to remain quiet and say nothing. She accepted her fate and decided not to react but instead, endured.</p>

Table 2. Male characters' attitude towards women

Theory – Gender Criticism	Quote	Explanation
Psychological intimidation and physical violence towards women	<p>“You try this again and I will find you. I swear on the Prophet’s name that I will find you. And if I do, there isn’t a court in this godforsaken country that will hold me accountable for what I still do. To Mariam first, then to her, and you last. I’ll make you watch. You understand me? I’ll make you watch” (Hosseini , 2007,ch.36,p.243)</p>	<p>Laila and Marian had just failed escaping from Rasheed taking Aziza, Laila’s daughter with them,when Rasheed said these words to Laila. The three of them were locked in a room, without food or water for days. Before getting back to the house, Laila, Mariam were tortured by the taliban. This is a typical example of men’s oppression, not only from Rasheed, but also from the society represented here by the Taliban soldier, who, even seeing their suffering and willing to escape,</p>

		<p>showed no pity for them.</p> <p>Instead, he had fun.</p>
<p>Chauvinism - Physical Violence</p>	<p><i>“You can't help being what you are. And then he was on Laila, pummeling her chest, her head, her belly with fists, tearing at her hair, throwing her to the wall. Aziza was shrieking, pulling at his shirt; Zalmai was screaming too, trying to get him off his mother. Rasheed shoved the children aside, pushed Laila to the ground, and began kicking her. Mariam threw herself on Laila. He went on kicking, kicking Mariam now, spittle flying from his mouth, his eyes glittering with murderous intent, kicking until he couldn't anymore.</i></p> <p>(Hosseini,2007,ch41,p.272)</p>	<p>Because of a fire on the street his shop was,Rasheed lost his job. After that he sold everything he had, but still the money was not enough to support the family. So he had to work in a restaurant, but soon he was fired. In this part Laila is saying that he could not work right and this was the reason he was fired. He got furious and bet her without mercy. Typical reaction of a male chauvinist, who will never accept a woman talking to him this way.</p>

Table 3 - Male and Female Characters' Gender Role Before and After Getting Marriage

Theory - Feminist Criticism	Quote	Explanation
Women submission to men Endurance	<p>Mariam before marriage: “It’s our lot in life, Mariam. Women like us. We endure. It’s all we have. Do you understand?” (Hosseini, 2007, ch3, p19)</p>	<p>Nana’s advice was not only for Mariam: by using the first-person plural "us" and "we," Nana put herself in this category as well. "Women like us," according to Nana, are condemned to suffer, but their "success" will depend on how well they react to this suffering— how well they persevere.</p>

<p>Female Submission and resignation</p>	<p>Mariam After marriage: “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.” (Hosseini,2007, ch15, p89)</p>	<p>Mariam began to espouse some of the same beliefs that Nana had tried to impart on her when she was a child. She had learned to "tolerate" all that Rasheed hurled at her, rather than fight or challenge him. Fear prevented her from fighting against the shameful way he treated her, and fear was what ensured that she would simply take what he did to her to her. Marian and Nana felt insignificant in a patriarchal society, as many other women do. Marian's gender role did not change after she got married.</p>
	<p>Laila Before marriage “I know you’re still young, but I want you to understand and learn this now,” he said. “Marriage can</p>	<p>Babi (Laila’s father) wanted her to get an education. Here she recalled what he had repeated to her multiple times. Babi thought that the education of women was</p>

<p>Women empowering</p>	<p>wait, education cannot. You're a very, very bright girl. Truly, you are. You can be anything you want, Laila. I know this about you. And I also know that when this war is over, Afghanistan is going to need you as much as its men, maybe even more. Because a society has no chance of success if its women are uneducated, Laila. No chance.” (Hosseini, 2007, ch16, p103)</p>	<p>not just positive but necessary for Afghanistan to recover from its many wars and succeed in the future. He saw Laila as an example of how the next generation would repair the mistakes and failures of previous generations, and he understood that it can only take place if all citizens are educated. Babi thus made the education of women not just a private question, a question of giving women opportunities often denied to them, but a question that was directly linked to the national future of the country.</p>
<p>Female Struggle against chauvinism</p>	<p>Laila after marriage “I've always disliked that about you. Even when you were little, when you were running around with that cripple, you thought you were so clever, with your books and poems. What</p>	<p>This conversation happened right after Rasheed told Laila he could give Aziza (Laila's daughter) away if he ran out of money. Laila did not want to give her children away. This caused Rasheed to get angry about the way she talked, so</p>

	<p>good are your smarts to you now?” (Hosseini,2007, ch38, p252)</p>	<p>he decided to humiliate her saying that her studies were worth nothing to him. In this scene, Even though Laila knew Rasheed could have Aziza sent to an Orphanage, she was strong and fought back. She was not going to watch Rasheed taking her daughter away.</p>
<p>Chauvinism oppression towards women Dissimulation</p>	<p>Rasheed before marriage “I’m so sorry, ... I know you were very close ...friends...the two of you. Always together, since you were kids. It’s a terrible thing, what happened.to many young Afghan men dying this way.” (Hosseini,ch29, p189)</p>	<p>This is Rasheed pretending to be kind and gentle to Laila, after telling her that her “friend’ (in reality, the love of her life), had died in war. The reader will realize later in the novel that it was a lie; that at this exact moment he had already planned to marry her. But, Rasheed was acting as if he were a wonderful person to Laila, making her even believe that she could feel safe with him.</p>

Physical Violence	Rasheed after marriage: “She didn’t want to do it” she said. “I made her do it. She didn’t want to go... Laila did not see the punch coming. One moment she was talking and the next she was on all fours wide-eyed, and read –faced trying to draw a breath It was if a car had hit her at full speed...” (Hosseini, 2007, ch36, p.239).	These two passages refer to Rasheed and Laila. They show how Rasheed pretended to be before he got married to Laila and how he really was after that. At this moment he showed Laila, what she had endured since she got married to him: a violent, crazy, heartless oppressor. Rasheed remained the same, after getting married.
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Table 4. Male and Female Social Lives Before and After Marriage

Theory- Feminist Criticism	Quote	Explanation
Shame and endurance	<p>Mariam- Before marriage</p> <p>“She understood then what Nana meant, that a <i>harami</i> 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,.”</p> <p>(Hosseini,2007,ch1,p.4)</p>	<p>Mariam was considered a shame for her father's family, since she was what they called <i>harami</i>, an out of wedlock child. Her mother, Nana worked for Jalil, her father and she got pregnant. Nana was casted away pregnant and since then she became a shame for her family. When Mariam was born, she was marked for being a <i>harami</i>.</p>
Rise of women	<p>Marian after marriage</p> <p>“You’re Rasheed jan’s new wife...Mariam jan, isn’t it?My name is Fariba, I live on your street...My husband’s name is Hakin...You should come by sometime,</p>	<p>Although Fariba treated Mariam with kindness, here it was the first time Mariam had gone out. She felt afraid, she was only fifteen years old, she had just lost her</p>

<p>acceptance</p>	<p>we'll have a cup of ...”(Hosseini, 2007, ch10,p.60)</p>	<p>mother, and got married. But she could feel later they respected her.</p> <p>The social role of Mariam had changed, She went from being a harami, a shame to the family to being, Ms. Rasheed, well respected for the other wives.</p>
<p>Men’s love and kindness</p>	<p>Laila’s - before marriage</p> <p>“...So what is today?... day five, or six? What do I care? I don’t keep counting.Laila lied,loving him for remembering...Well, his flashlight will be going off before you know it, Babi said, referring to Laila and Tariq, signaling the game. They had played it for so long it had become a bed ritual, like brushing teeth.</p>	<p>This shows a loving act between Laila and Babi, her father. Here, Babi was showing Laila that he did not forget that her best friend, Tariq, had gone for a few days, and that he(Babi) knew how Laila missed her friend. He was trying to cheer her up.</p> <p>This was most of Laila’s life when she was a child. Surrounded by love and kindness of her father.</p>

<p>Male chauvinism violence against women</p>	<p>Laila after marriage “... She tried to breathe again and could only make a husky, choking sound. Dribble hung from her mouth. Then she was being dragged by the hair... Hair was ripped from laila’s scalp, and her eyes watered with pain. (Hosseini, 2007,ch36,p.240)</p>	<p>Laila Went from a loving life to a life without any love, kindness or respect. Here Rasheed is spanking her mercilessly. He did not even care about letting Aziza, her daughter leave.</p>
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4.2.1 Explanations of Table 3

About Mariam's quote: By using Nana's words and voice, Hosseini, traced Mariam's destiny in life. As a child she was submissive to her mother, who loved Mariam deeply, but had a very peculiar way of showing it, and always made her feel smaller facing society. Furthermore, when she got married to her husband, Rasheed, who as many men in the Afghan society, treated his wives as sub humans. In conclusion, based on what was previously said, Mariam gender rule was the same before and after marriage.

Concerning Laila, although Laila before marriage was a loving, educated daughter, by getting marriage her life turned upside down. Her husband had no love for her or her daughter and despised her education. Before marriage she was a girl with so many dreams and after that she was an Afghan wife, with no rights at all.

About Rasheed: The passages refer to Rasheed and Laila. They show how Rasheed pretended to be before he got married to Laila and how he really was after that. At this moment he showed Laila, what she had endured since she got married to him: a violent, crazy, heartless oppressor. They showed that Rasheed had not changed his gender role. He started being a chauvinist and remained being that till after his death.

4.2.2 Explanation of Table 4

By examining the three previous quotations it is possible to infer the social role of each of the characters. Marian since her childhood, was prepared and raised to be a submissive woman, she always thought she deserved to endure in life. All dreams she had were taken from her so when she got married, it was just a continuation of this life. When she was a child, her father was a disappointment to her and after marriage her husband. And she just kept being the obedient and

oppressed woman she was then. Laila was a loving child, her father always wanted her to have an education, she was a strong kid. Although she got married to a terrible oppressor, Rasheed, she kept being strong, mainly because she wanted to show her child that women must fight in life. That one day, the world would be different so Aziza would be as strong as she is and make the difference. She had to stand up and fight. She did not change her essence.

Rasheed, he just kept the role of most afghan men in the time the novel was set, before and after marriage, he was the breadwinner of a patriarchal family and because of that, he felt he had the right to do whatever he wanted to with his wives. He did not change. He was raised to be that way.

4.3 Themes, Motifs and Symbols

These devices were already presented in chapter two, however in this section the researcher is going to analyze and explain how these three literary devices are used in the context of the book.

4.3.1. Themes

Gender relations:

From Nana and Jalil's relationship, Mariam and Rasheed's, then Laila and her father's, the theme of gender relationship is all around the novel.

Babi and Laila: Babi celebrates this status and encourages Laila to take advantage of it. At the same time, however, girls are discouraged from spending too much time with members of the opposite sex before they're married.

Mariam on the other hand is required by her husband to wear a burqa long before this becomes law.

The relatively progressive gender norms under communism change drastically with the arrival of the Mujahideen and, eventually, the Taliban. Even so, the characters find ways to subvert these norms.

Female friendship:

Though gender norms shift throughout the course of the novel as a result of changing occupations and laws, one constant theme is friendship between women. The relationship between Mariam and Laila rests at the heart of the novel.

“Laila examined Mariam’s drooping cheeks, the eyelids that sagged in tired folds, the deep lines that framed her mouth—she saw these things as though she too were looking at someone for the first time. And, for the first time, it was not an adversary’s face Laila saw but a face of grievances unspoken, burdens gone unprotested, a destiny submitted to and endured.”(Hosseini, 2007)

Laila and Mariam had so far accepted their position as natural enemies, competing wives. But later on, Mariam admitted that she was grateful for Laila’s attempt to stop Rasheed from hitting her, for sticking up for her as no one has done before. Mariam’s expression of gratefulness caused Laila to see her in a different light. Before, Laila had considered Mariam as simply another enemy to face, another unpleasant reality in her new life. But she grew to recognize that Mariam has struggled in similar ways that she has.

Love, Loyalty, and Belonging

In *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, love may not conquer all, but it is a stronger tie than many other social bonds, from social class to ethnic status. Love makes the novel's characters act in, sometimes, irrational ways, and their erratic behavior can often be explained by the strong loyalty that stems from love. Below, the readers may see the most beautiful and spontaneous love shown in the book.

“Why have you pinned your heart to an old, ugly hag like me?” Mariam would murmur into Aziza's hair. “Huh? I am nobody, don't you see? A dehati. What have I got to give you?”(Hosseini, 2007)

For the first time of her life, Marian felt she could be loved and love someone. Aziza simply loved her and Mariam felt this kind of love that she always dreamt of.

Shame and Reputation:

A particular kind of suffering in the novel has to do with shame, which comes up again and again as both a pain to be endured and as a tool to inflict on others.

“Mariam regretted her foolish, youthful pride now. She wished now that she had let him in. what would have been the harm to let him in, sit with him, let him say what he'd come to say? He was her father. He'd not been a good father, it was true, but how ordinary his faults seemed now how forgivable, when compared to Rasheed's malice, or to the brutality and violence that she had seen men inflict on one another.” (Hosseini, 2007)

4.3.2 Symbols

The Saib-e-Tabrizi's Poem:

This poem represents the powerful fascination of Kabul, which is Laila's home and becomes a home for Mariam, especially once she became friends of Laila. The poem's description of Kabul's beauty can be seen as sadly ironic, since for much of the novel Kabul is hardly splendid but instead a bombed-out bloody shell; but the poem also evokes the "real" Kabul that remains beneath the destruction. Finally, the poem underlines the importance Babi placed on literary and cultural heritage, and the necessity for Laila to be educated and to be able to transmit this heritage.

"One could not count the moons that shimmer on her roofs, Or the thousand splendid suns that hide behind her walls." (Hosseini, 2007)

The films *Pinocchio* and *Titanic*:

Pinocchio is the 1940 film Jalil promised to take his daughter Mariam to see in the beginning of the novel, but he never showed up. This led to Mariam defying her mother, Nana, to go looking for Jalil. Immersed in fear for what could have happened to her daughter, Nana killed herself before Jalil's driver was able to take Mariam back home to her mother, against Mariam's will. The film symbolizes everything Jalil could have given Mariam, but refused because he was more concerned with avoiding public shame.

Titanic, which is about a real ship that sank in 1912 after hitting an iceberg off the coast of Newfoundland, captured the attention of the people of Kabul even though it was forbidden by the Taliban to watch films.

People smuggled copies in from Pakistan, and for a while, the city was obsessed with the characters. Aziza always wanted to play *Titanic* with Mariam, and she insisted on being Jack, who saved people and died a hero. Laila, who said, "Jack is dead," had a more realistic view of

the disaster the Taliban had wreaked on Kabul. Like the Titanic, Kabul felt doomed, and no one could save the city from the turmoil created by the warring factions.

The burqa:

The burqa is a symbol of control of a woman by a man, especially a wife by her husband. Rasheed told Mariam that "a woman's face is her husband's business" and his business only, so she must wear a burqa in public.

No one was allowed to see what Mariam looked like, although at funeral services, Laila did see Mariam's face. In those circumstances, Mariam was allowed to wear a headscarf, but in all other circumstances, she had to wear the burqa.

Bamiyan Buddhas:

One of Laila's most treasured memories is the day trip she takes with Tariq and Babi to the Bamiyan Valley, where they look up at the magnificent Buddha statues carved into the cliffs, and climb up atop one of the statues to look over the valley at the Afghan landscape before them. Babi had wanted Laila and Tariq to understand their country's living, breathing heritage—a heritage quite apart from the violence and turmoil of the national wars. The Buddhas, testimony to an ancient community of monks that lived in caves within the cliffs, symbolize the cultural richness of this national heritage. The Taliban's destruction of these statues serves as only another testament to their disregard for the true Afghanistan. In addition, in remembering the day trip to the statues, Laila recalls a time when she was truly happy, surrounded by people she loved, and felt safe under the watchful eye of the statues. The Buddhas also come to stand for a sense of contentment and security for Laila, one that she will yearn for in the tumultuous years to come.

The reader can find it in part II chapter 21 “Half an hour later, they get out of the taxi and find themselves in front of two enormous Buddhas, chiseled into a rock cliff and flanked by caves. Babi says that Bamiyan had once been a thriving home of Buddhism before Islamic Arabs began to control it in the ninth century. Buddhist monks had lived in these sandstone cliffs, and had painted frescoes along the walls of their caves.”(Hosseini 2007)

4.3.3 Motif

A motif is an abstract idea that is repeated in a story. A motif is intangible: hatred, revenge, courage. *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is full of motifs, such as, love, hatred, endurance, submission, violence and so forth.

Example of hatred: “Rasheed says to Laila after she is brought back by the police, “You try this again and I will find you. I swear on the Prophet’s name that I will find you. And if I do, there isn’t a court in this godforsaken country that will hold me accountable for what I still do. To Mariam first, then to her, and you last. I’ll make you watch. You understand me? *I’ll make you watch.*” (Hosseini,2007)

Example of submission: “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.”(Hosseini, 2007)

Example of violence: “He let her sleep on the street. On the street.” Most of all the violence examples seen in this research was about Rashees and his oppression towards Mariam and Laila. For this reason, the researcher decided to show an example of a different kind of violence, one that can never be forgotten. Mariam's thought above, marks the moment when she realizes her

mother was right about her father's priorities. Up to this point, Mariam has idolized Jalil, but when she sees his face in the window and realizes he has let his own daughter sleep on the street, she knows he has chosen to protect his reputation even if it means treating his own daughter like a homeless beggar. The repetition of "on the street" shows how incredulous Mariam is that her father would treat her this way and how devastating it is to her sense of self. For her it was an explicit act of violence.

Chapter V

Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter will show the results obtained by the researcher after the analysis of the different theories and the novel, and will present the researcher's conclusions and recommendations according to those results. This section will demonstrate and explain how the researcher took many facts into account to determine how gender roles have changed, how women have reacted towards male oppression, in several situations found during the investigation. In addition, it explains how the research objectives were attained, as well as recommendations for further researches within the same area of study.

5.1 The Purpose of the Conclusion

The most important goal of this research is analyzing the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini, through the gender approach. The researcher uses this approach to examine, illustrate, exemplify, and compare the events and traits of the lives of the main characters of this novel.

After conducting the analysis, the gender approach proved to be most appropriate to analyze Mariam, Laila, and Rasheed's role in Khaled Hosseini's book, for the three main characters represent, through their role in the story, women oppression, women strength, and male chauvinism respectively.

5.2 Conclusions

An investigation conclusion should make your readers glad for reading your paper. Your conclusion gives your reader something to take away that will help them see things differently or

appreciate your topic in relevant ways. It can suggest broader implications that will, not only interest your reader, but also enrich your reader's life in some way. It is your gift to the reader. (The Writing Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2015).

The most important part of the conclusion is to demonstrate that the objectives of the research were achieved, for the objectives are the foundation which give purpose to a research. They establish the investigation's direction. Furthermore, they work as a guide that helps the researcher to stay focused on what to analyze, from the beginning till the end of the investigation.

5.2.1. The General Objective

The main objective of this research is to analyze women and men's reactions towards chauvinism in the Afghan society presented in the book *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. The investigator concludes the main objective was achieved, as the readers can see by some observations about the book that appear below.

At the beginning of the novel, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* Mariam is a teenager living with her mother, Nana, in a kolba, a small hut, outside of the city of Herat. The readers may learn that Mariam is the illegitimate child or harami ("bastard") of Nana and Jalil, a wealthy cinema owner in Herat. Here, just by the start, the reader can see women discrimination. Nana, and Marian live outside Herat, they represent shame for Jamil's family, since Nana used to work for Jamil's family, he had sex with her and she got pregnant. Because she got pregnant by a married man, she was not only fired, but also, she was the one to be blamed by the society, not Jamil. She was the one who deserved to endure all the pain in her life for her sin. Typical case of male and female chauvinism. which is one of the theories of the approach studied in this research.

Later on, the novel tells about Laila, and her life. At the beginning a loving daughter, whose father, although only men had the chance to study, always showed her the importance of education and educating women would make a difference in the future of their country. Here Hosseini, assumes a feminist attitude for he wants to show that women have the same rights and opportunity as men in the world.

Next, the readers meet the third main character, Rasheed, a typical Afghan man of the time set in the Hosseini work, who will turn to be Mariam's and later Laila's husband as well, a very common custom in Afghan culture. Before marrying Mariam, he had already been married once, but his wife and son had died—his son drowned while Rasheed was drunk and passed out. He is initially kind and solicitous to Mariam, but soon becomes a grunting, a man, who treats Mariam with scorn and beats her. He also married Laila. The readers may see the oppression, physical and psychological violence, abuse exerted, against women. This is an example of patriarchal culture and once again, the gender approach is presented here.

Finally, the readers will have the chance to notice that women combine their strength, they start retaliating to men's oppression. This is when Marian and Laila, united by the same pain, get together and start fighting Rasheed, literally, even leading to his death. This is a perfect example of feminist female empowerment in response to male oppression.

5.2.2 Specific Objectives

The following are the conclusions pertaining to the specific objectives of the research paper.

5.2.2.1 To exemplify female characters' reactions towards chauvinism

“She grew up in a kolba. Her father put her there. Have you told her, Mariam, have you told her you are a harami. Well, she is, but she is not without qualities, all things considered.”

(Hosseini, 2007)

In the example given, Rasheed humiliates Mariam in front of Laila, saying that she was an unwanted child, whose father cast her away to live in a “hut”. He is trying to show that Laila is superior to Mariam, and he likes her much better. In this case, Mariam feels psychologically humiliated, for she was not only changed for a younger and more beautiful woman, but also her husband despises. Even though she is deeply hurt, she just remains quiet and says nothing. She accepts her fate.

“...Rasheed raised the belt again and this time came at Mariam. Then an astonishing thing happened: The girl lunged at him. She grabbed his arm with both hands and tried to drag him down, but she could do no more than dangle from it..."You win. You win. Don't do this. Please, Rasheed, no beating! Please don't do this"(Hosseini 2007).

This quote is analyzed from the feminist criticism point of view. According to this, the reaction to male chauvinism is inevitable. Women's strength grows as they suffer until there is a moment when they finally show how strong they are. Rasheed was about to beat up Mariam when Laila, against all odds, came to her defense, cried at Rasheed, and ordered him to stop. In that moment, she found a strength which came from the fear she felt because Rasheed was going to hurt Mariam once again. Then she fought him.

The objective is achieved throughout most of the novel; it is analyzed through the feminist approach. The researcher concludes that there is a complete bond between the theory and the parts of the book that have been quoted.

5.2.2.2 To illustrate male repression towards women

“Soon, Rasheed returns with a handful of pebbles and forces Mariam’s mouth open and stuffs them in. He then orders her to chew the pebbles. In her fear, she does as he asks, breaking the molars in the back of her mouth. He tells her, “Now you know what your rice tastes like. Now you know what you’ve given me in this marriage. Bad food, and nothing else.” (Hosseini 2007) This quotation represents physical and psychological humiliation. Once again, Mariam just endures and accepts her faith.

“You try this again and I will find you. I swear on the Prophet’s name that I will find you. And if I do, there isn’t a court in this godforsaken country that will hold me accountable for what I still do. To Mariam first, then to her, and you last. I’ll make you watch. You understand me? I’ll make you watch” (Hosseini,2007).

These two quotes above are examples of male oppression towards women. In both situations the readers can see the use of male strength as a means of violence and intimidation of women. In the first one, Marian has been forced to chew pebbles by Rasheed and she was so afraid of him that she would rather break her teeth than to react. In the second one, It was right after Laila and Marian tried to run away from Rasheed, but were caught by the Taliban, Rasheed was possessed by hate and threatened to kill Marian and Azaiza, Laila's daughter, in front of her, and kill her right after that. When Laila heard that he would kill her daughter and Marian, she panicked.

5.2.2.3 To compare male and female characters’ gender role before and after getting married

Mariam (before marriage), "It's our lot in life, Mariam. Women like us. We endure. It's all we have. Do you understand?" (Hosseini, 2007)

This quote is about Nana, Mariam's mother's reaction when Mariam told her that she would appreciate the chance to go to school. Nana does not think that Mariam needs the kinds of skills that are learned in school. Instead, Nana tells Mariam, she only needs to learn how to "endure. "Women like them," according to Nana, are condemned to suffer, but their "success" will depend on how well they react to this suffering, that is, how well they persevere.

Mariam (after marriage) "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." (Hosseini,2007)

Rasheed treats Mariam as an animal or a possession, something hardly worthy of attention. Mariam begins to espouse some of the same beliefs that Nana had tried to equip her with when Mariam was a child.

Laila (before marriage), "I know you're still young, but I want you to understand and learn this now," he said. "Marriage can wait, education cannot. You're a very, very bright girl. Truly, you are. You can be anything you want, Laila. I know this about you. And I also know that when this war is over, Afghanistan is going to need you as much as its men, maybe even more. Because a society has no chance of success if its women are uneducated, Laila. No chance." (Hosseini, 2007)

Babi, Laila's father, wants her to receive an education. Here she recalls what he has repeated to her multiple times. Babi thinks that the education of women is not only positive, but also necessary for Afghanistan to recover from its many wars and succeed in the future.

Laila (after marriage), I've always dislike that about you. Even when you were little, when you were running around with that cripple, you thought you were so clever, with your books and poems. What good are your smarts to you now?" (Hosseini,2007)

This conversation happened right after Rasheed told Laila he could give Aziza (Laila's daughter) away if he ran out of money. Laila did not even want to hear about it. Rasheed got angry about the way she talked to him and decided to humiliate her saying that her studies were not worth anything to him, and that he was the one who made decisions.

Although Laila before marriage was a loving, educated daughter, after getting married, her life turned upside down. Her husband had no love for her or her daughter and despised her education. Before marriage she was a girl with so many dreams, but after, she was an afghan wife, with no rights at all.

Rasheed (before marriage) "I'm so sorry, ... I know you were very close ...friends...the two of you. Always together, since you were kids. It's a terrible thing, what happened to many young Afghan men are dying this way." (Hosseini, 2007).

This is Rasheed pretending to be kind and gentle to Laila, after telling her that her "friend" (in reality, the love of her life), had died at war. At this exact moment he had already planned to marry her. The reader will realize further in the novel that it was a lie. But at this moment he was a wonderful person to Laila, making her even believe that she could feel safe with him.

Rasheed (after marriage)

“She didn’t want to do it” she said. “I made her do it. She didn’t want to go... Laila did not see the punch coming. One moment she was talking and the next she was on all fours wide-eyed, and red –faced trying to draw a breath It was if a car had hit her at full speed...” (Hosseini, 2007).

This happened right after Rasheed brought Laila and Marian back home after they had tried to escape from him. He was furious, and the only thing he wanted was revenge.

These two passages referred to how Rasheed pretended to be before getting married to Laila and how he really was after that. At that moment he showed Laila, what she had endured since she got married to him, a violent, crazy, heartless oppressor.

Examining the three previous paragraphs it is easy to infer the social and gender role of each character. Since her childhood, Marian was prepared to be a submissive woman; she always thought she deserved to endure in life. All the dreams she had were taken from her so her marriage was just a continuation of this life. When she was a child, her father was a disappointment to her and after getting married, her husband became another, so she just kept being the obedient and oppressed person she has always been.

Laila was a strong and loving child. Her father always wanted her to receive an education.. Although she got married to Rasheed, a terrible oppressor, she kept being strong, mainly because she wanted to show her baby that women must fight in life. She thought that one day the world would be different, so Aziza would be as strong as she was, and that would make the difference. She had to stand up and fight. She did not change her essence.

Rasheed, just kept the role of most Afghan men in the time the novel was set, before and after marriage. He was the breadwinner of a patriarchal family and by being so, he felt he had the right to do whatever he wanted to with his wives. He had not changed. He was raised to be that way.

5.2.2.4 To examine social differentiation before and after getting marriage

Mariam (before marriage) “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 things other people had, things such as love, family, home, acceptance.” (Hosseini, 2007)

Mariam (after marriage) “You’re Rasheed Jan’s new wife, aren’t you? ... the one from Herat. You’re so young! Mariam Jan, isn’t it? My name is Fariba. I live on your street, five houses to your left... This is my son Noor. Noor is ten. I have an older son too, Ahmad...my husband’s name is Hakin. He is a teacher here in Deh Mazang. You should come by sometime, we will have a cup... (Hosseini, 2007)

Before getting married, Mariam was an unwanted person, an illegitimate child, a shame for her father's family. She lived with her mother Nana, in a Kolba away from Herat, the city where her father lived. She had no friends, except for Mullah Faizullah, who taught her the Quran, and how to read a little bit. After getting married, she was respected by the other married women because she was Rasheed’s wife; she represented no shame anymore, she was treated as equal by her neighbors. It was an enormous change of social role for Mariam.

Laila (before marriage) “By the time we’re twenty,” Hasina used to say, “Giti and I, we’ll have pushed out four, five kids each. But you, Laila, you’ll make us two dummies proud. You’re

going to be somebody. I know one day I'll pick up a newspaper and find your picture on the front page." (Hosseini, 2007)

In this passage, Laila was with her friends, Hasina and Giti. They were talking about how powerful Laila was. They were saying that they knew Laila was going to be a very important person for their country. This shows how important and empowered Laila was. Her family, mainly her father, and her friends were proud of her.

Laila (after marriage), "You try this again and I will find you. [...] And, when I do, there isn't a court in this godforsaken country that will hold me accountable for what I will do." (Hosseini,2007)

This was Rasheed threatening Laila right after he brought her, Mariam, and Aziza back home, after they tried to run away from him. He said he would kill Mariam and Aziza in front of her and then he would kill her.

Laila's social role also has changed after getting married. She went from a strong, empowered and proud person, to a weak, ashamed, person, with nothing to be proud of. In this particular case, her plan of escaping, not only had not worked, but also had put Aziza's, Mariam's, and her own life in jeopardy.

Rasheed (before marriage), "Nargis places the veil on Mariam's head, and Rasheed enters the room, smelling cigarette smoke and thick cologne. The man is tall, with broad shoulders and a thick belly, and Mariam's heart starts to beat quickly." (Hosseini,2007).

This part refers to Rasheed's and Mariam's marriage. Rasheed is first described through sensory clues, which are unfamiliar, overpowering, and distasteful just the way Rasheed's personality would turn out to be.

Rasheed (after marriage), “But I’m a different breed of man, Mariam. Where I come from, one wrong look, one improper word, and blood is spilled. Where I come from, a woman’s face is her husband’s business only. I want you to remember that. Do you understand?” (Hosseini,2007).

This quote demonstrated Rasheed’s way of thinking and being after getting married to Mariam. The readers may see he has not changed, in fact he remained disgusting; furthermore, he showed his chauvinist side to Mariam. In this episode, when he forced her to wear the burqa and gave his reasons why she must wear it.

5.3 Restatement of the Research Question

The research question is: “How does chauvinism and repression influence female lives before and after in the Afghan society represented in the book *A Thousand Splendid Suns*?”

After analyzing the writer quotes then relating them to the theories, and the objectives of the analysis previously mentioned, and explaining them above, the investigator gets to the conclusion that through all male characters’, mainly Rasheed’s actions, the oppression over women definitely presented in the book. And through all the examples given, the readers may see how all those actions influenced Mariam’s, Laila’s, and Nana’s lives throughout the whole novel. Thus, the analysis suits the research question.

5.4 Unexpected Results:

The investigator did not expect the presence of so many of the different idioms used in Afghanistan, such as Persian, Pashto, and so forth. Later she realized it happened because Afghanistan is a multilingual country. Some examples of these words are: *harami* which means

illegitimate child, *nikka*, which means a wedding ceremony *Mullah*, a religious leader, (Quizlet- *A Thousand Splendid Suns* vocabulary Nd).

5.5 Recommendations

At the end of any research, it is crucial to leave some guidance, for future researchers. Thus, here are some recommendations for them.

About reading the book:

The first step the researcher recommends is to read the book once, twice, three times and as many times as it takes you so that the book becomes part of your life. In fact, one could even become a new character in the streets of Herat and other places in Afghanistan. Moreover, when reading the book, try to highlight the historical periods mentioned, in order to understand the character's way of living and acting.

Furthermore, it is very important to understand the vocabulary of the book. It is good to take into account that there are many words in the novel that are from the languages spoken in Afghanistan. For instance, *mullah*, a "religious leader" and there are many other words that can be found throughout the book

It is better to read it much longer before starting the research, for it will make the analysis of the problems stated in the book easier.

Moreover, it is crucial to choose a book that brings you joy, and with which you feel identified.

To Use Different Approaches

Khaled Hosseini's book is one of the greatest best sellers of the last decade. This novel is so rich in historical, social, and psychological aspects. The researcher suggests that those interested in the analysis of this novel, may choose another approach to literary criticisms, such as the historical, sociological, and psychological approaches.

More aspects that can be analyzed

To read Hosseini's novel, is to enter Afghan history. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, the joint U.S. and British invasion of Afghanistan in late 2001 was preceded by over two decades of war in Afghanistan (Encyclopedia Britannica – Afghanistan War - 2001-2014, 2014). These wars were mentioned in the book, and a study of how they influenced the characters' lives would be a different and rich point of view.

Another aspect to be analyzed is the religion: How Afghan people's beliefs influence male and female roles in their society. What people can and cannot do based on their religion. How gender roles differ from each other according to religion?

Finally, the most important focus of our analysis, the role of women in the society. No matter which approach the new researcher chooses, it is fundamental to take women into account, for in the wars, in the religions, in the societies in Afghanistan or in many countries in the world, women are still treated as a second best.

Throughout the world, it is common to watch women's achievements in many fields of life; some of them become leaders of organizations and even presidents, as in Brazil, for instance, with president, Dilma Rousseff. However, despite all this, it seems that women's lives do not matter in many countries. Violence against women in the world is still very prevalent, according to the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean: In Latin American

countries, the highest rates of femicide per 100,000 women are observed in the case of Honduras (6.2), El Salvador (3.3), the Dominican Republic (2.7) and the Pluractional State of Bolivia (2.1).

In the Caribbean, six countries recorded a total of 26 women victims of gender-based violence in 2019, which has marked a downturn from the 36 cases reported in 2018. Thus, the investigator's main recommendation is that, if any other researcher is going to analyze, even applying a different approach, women and their plight must not be neglected from the analysis. There still is a lot to be done, and there is still a need to call society's attention to this issue. Many women in the world will thank you for that.

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