

A Study on The Main Character's Personality Leading to His Betrayal in Khaled Hosseini's The Kite Runner

Tela'ah terhadap Kepribadian Karakter Utama yang Membawa pada Pengkhianatannya dalam Novel *The Kite Runner* karya Khaled Hosseini

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Abstract

The Kite Runner discusses about Amir's betrayal on his friend, Hassan. It focusses on the cause and the impacts of his betrayal. *The Kite Runner* is a novel written by Khaled Hosseini. It tells about the relationship between two boys, Amir and Hassan. The differences of their status are that Amir as a Pastun is the major ethnic in Afghanistan and Hassan as a Hazarah is the minor one. The purpose of this study is to know the main character's betrayal on his friend by applying Freud's personality theory. Descriptive and inductive methods are used in this research. The result of this study is Amir becomes as coward person and as the witness of Hassan's rape. His jealousy toward Hassan brings him dominant on Id, so he feels guilty of his mistake that he cannot control his Id rather than his Superego. This condition leads the research into a conclusion that Amir is influenced by Id and Superego that brings him to be an introvert person.

Keywords: Amir, Betrayal, Cause, Impacts, Personality, The Kite Runner.

Abstrak

The Kite Runner membahas tentang pengkhianatan Amir terhadap temannya, Hassan. Kajian ini memusatkan pada sebab dan akibat dari pengkhianatannya. *The Kite Runner* adalah novel yang ditulis oleh Khaled Hosseini yang menceritakan tentang hubungan antara dua anak laki-laki, Amir dan Hassan. Perbedaan status mereka adalah Amir dari suku Pastun merupakan suku mayoritas di Afghanistan sedangkan Hassan dari suku Hazarah merupakan suku minoritas. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui pengkhianatan pelaku utama yang dilakukan kepada temannya dengan menerapkan teori kepribadian Freud. Metode deskriptif dan induktif digunakan dalam kajian ini. Hasil dari kajian kasus ini membuktikan bahwa Amir menjadi seorang pengecut dan sebagai saksi dari pemerkosaan Hassan dan dia cemburu terhadap Hassan yang mana membawanya pada Id, jadi dia merasa bersalah atas kecemburuannya pada Hassan membuatnya tidak dapat mengendalikan Id nya daripada Superegonya. Dari hasil penelitian dapat disimpulkan bahwa Amir banyak dipengaruhi oleh Id daripada Superegonya yang menjadikannya sebagai seorang tertutup.

Kata kunci: Akibat-akibat, Amir, Kepribadian, Pengkhianatan, Sebab, The Kite Runner.

Introduction

“Betrayal means as the act of betraying and the fact of being betrayed” (Webster, 1966:209). The betrayal is shown in *The Kite Runner* that Amir as the main character in the novel betrays his friend, Hassan. *The Kite Runner* was published in 2003 to nearly unanimous praise. It is Said the first novel written in

English by an Afghan, the novel was instantly popular. *The Kite Runner* tells about betrayal and redemption. Amir is the main character in the novel who betrays his best friend, Hassan. He has wealth and privilege while living in Baba's household. After Hassan's rape, Amir cannot fight from his own betrayal and cowardice. Amir and Hassan do not know each other, because they are the victims of a lie. Their relationship

will be different if they know they are brothers. For a long time, Amir knows that he and Hassan are competitors for Baba's love. Amir's life changes but the past always accompanies his daily life. Amir cannot be separated from his last moment that brings him back to Afghanistan. Rakhim Khan tells the reality between Amir and Hassan. Amir is surprised of Rakhim Khan's pronouncement that Hassan is his step brother. He is sure that Baba tells Hassan that he is more than a friend in their childhood, in fact, Hassan is his step brother.

There are two reasons in choosing *The Kite Runner* is the object of this study. Firstly, this novel is a bestseller that talks about Amir's betrayal on his friend. Secondly, the author of this novel, Khaled Hosseini was the first Afghan novelist who proves the beautiful land of Afghanistan through his story in the novel.

In this research, personality theory by Freud is applied. This theory is appropriate to analyze Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*. The theory is used in order to explain the main character's personality to face his problem.

Research Methodology

This study tries to focus on the main character's betrayal in *The Kite Runner* novel, this research is a qualitative research. Blaxter *et al.* explain that a qualitative research is a research to use non experimental design in which data cannot be easily quantified and the analysis is interpretative or descriptive (2006:64).

This study applies documentary method as the technique of data collection. Blaxter *et al.*, (2006:154) state that documentary method is a method in collecting data using written materials as a basis for the research by reading. The data that we use for this research are information and facts found in books, journals, and websites.

The primary data of this research are the descriptions and inductive method is used as the consideration to solve the problems using the method. This research begins with the primary data to explain facts and phenomena.

The primary data taken from the novel *The Kite Runner*. The behaviour and thoughts in the story are arranged to make the explanation sequenced. The data is explained from the personality that leads to his betrayal. The data are analyzed by the theory of personality. The secondary data are the description of the facts as the proofs that Amir's attitude is the sign on his jealousy as the cause of his betrayal. All the data about the personality are analyzed by Freud theory. The theory explains that personality divided

into three element they are: Id, Ego and Superego. Amir's jealousy as the dominant cause of his betrayal. Jealousy makes him do the betrayal because Amir is the witness of Hassan's rape and than he becomes a coward boy. According to Freud theory, it is found that he cannot control his Id and makes him become an introvert person. Then the impacts of his betrayal show that he can control his Id to Superego. Thus he comes back to Afghanistan to save Hassan's son as the redemption of his betrayal and makes him become an extrovert person.

Result

The result of the study shows that the main character's personality has led to his betrayal. His betrayal has close relationship with the personality theory especially the *Id and Superego*. Amir's betrayal is caused by his jealousy. He ignores his *Ego* because he tries to fulfill his ambition to get his father's love and attention. However, he sacrifices Hassan based on his *Id*. He tries to fulfill his *Id and Superego* to get his ambitions and to erase his guilt.

Discussion

Amir's jealousy is toward Hassan. He does bad attitude in his characters. Amir's negative characters create such of bad implication to the other characters as told in the novel. Amir's jealousy has the most important role as the cause of his betrayal toward Hassan. However, as it has been explained before, Hassan really cares him much. Amir's jealousy is really the prevailing part in this discussion. It gives much influence to the main character. Amir's jealousy toward his best friend is unreasonable. He wants his father to give everything just for him not to other. He wishes that the only special person is him, and Amir does not permit his father to divide his love and attention to someone else except himself. He thinks that his father will do everything for the kite. Unfortunately, his father gives him and Hassan the same thing. As he knows his father also pays much attention to Hassan and he does not like it. Amir's jealousy appears because his Id is dominant. His jealousy to achieve pleasure leads bad attitude towards Hassan. The second reason of Amir's jealousy is that Hassan is a good kite runner. Amir does not have the same ability with Hassan, but Amir is proud of Hassan. Amir confesses that Hassan is the best one.

In the theory of personality, the ego is as pre-conscious part of human mind. It is shown in Amir's optimistic in reaching the thing that he loves. He convinces himself that he is going to win the kite fighting competition. His bravery appears due to his

father who will be proud of him, if he wins the game and he will be easy to get the attention of his father. He believes that if he likes that game his father will love him like his own son. After he lost his mother, he thinks that he is the cause of his mother's death. He can erase his feeling although he does not know the reason.

Amir's Superego shows that his personality is emphasized on his moral principle which insists on doing what is right. The coward and loyalty take place in his soul. He realizes that Hassan always defends him but he is not able to do the same thing. That is how Amir pay the deed of Hassan. In spite of his friendship with Hassan is so solid, Amir still regards Hassan as his servant instead of a true friend. The thing that Hassan gets attention from his father, is the way of Hassan replaces what he never gets before.

Amir is looking for Hassan who does not come back from the running kite. In personality theory, Id is driven by the pleasure principle which unregulated search for gratification. It is governed by primary proces thinking, which is a form of thinking that is primitive, illogical, irrational and fantasy oriented (Anna&Steven, 1976:90). His irrational behaviour is shown when he finds Hassan who is surrounded by his villainous friend (Assef). He does not straightly go to them as Amir is a coward, he does not dare to defend his friend, Hassan. He sees all the things happen to Hassan but he just sees it. He has no bravery to interfere.

It is distincly described that Amir does not dare to defend Hassan who has been raped by Assef. He still watches what Assef does to Hassan, he does not even make a move, he hides from Hassan and Assef. He keeps silent and he does not care of the rape.

Amir does not have the courage to defend Hassan. He is confused to defend Hassan from his villainous friend but, he is not brave enough to do that. Amir just watches silently, he worries to come by on the location. When Hassan is tortured by Assef, Amir still watches without taking any action.

Amir is not able to close to the incident. Hassan is the victim of Assef. He just looks and feels sorry about what has happened to Hassan. If Amir considers Hassan as his friend he is supposed to protect Hassan, like Hassan does to him when he faces a problem. The character of Amir spontaneously changes without having any consideration on his friendship. He sees that Hassan is suffering. Indeed, he does nothing unless looking at the disgraceful action.

In fact, Amir is not able to see Assef who has treated Hassan badly. The tragedy makes his eyes glassy. He feels shocked until he has to turn his head to other direction in order to avoid witnessing what is

happening to Hassan. Finally, his heart is regretful that he is guilty as he does not defend Hassan.

Amir still remains silent on what has happened to Hassan. He even pretends that he does not witness the things on the scene. Surely, he becomes uncomfortable if Hassan knows that Amir has witnessed the violence on him. Besides of that, Amir also feels guilty, and unfair upon to Hassan. It is caused by his own cowardice. He feels that he has betrayed the friendship. A betrayal breaks his heart. He feels guilty on Hassan. He never tells his father about what he has seen. Every young boy does the same thing in order to get good shelter under their father, or mother's touch. Amir continues to live on, and his relation with his father is then becoming normal.

Amir has very delightful day since he and his father become closer. He does not feel the ignorance from his father and his life is more enjoyable. The winning of the game has brought him to the warm embrace of his father, that's all he hopes. He has now regarded that he has a great father in his side. Every single day will be bright as his father cares of him. Each of a young boy will feel the same way. Although he has been good with his father, he still feels guilty upon Hassan, he wants to tell his problem.

He wants every body's wake up and listen to his words. The words can relieve his pain, he does not want to lie any more. Lies that make him feel uncomfortable. He is confused to face his problem. He wants reducing and tells the truth of his false. His cowardice on the problem is due to he is affraid that Baba will hate him. Amir still feels guilty to Hassan. But Hassan really does not know that Amir sees the rape. Amir remembers his bad attitude towards Hassan. Though the rape is not done by Amir, but it is done by Assef, Amir feels guilty because he does not help Hassan. The guilt delivers him to the loose relation between him and Hassan.

Amir's character tends to be bad, he hopes Hassan and his father leave from his house. It is because Hassan attracts Amir's father attention. How can Amir have the willing to trap Hassan. He never considers Hassan becomes his friend. Amir wants Hassan to leave his house.

He makes a plan that Hassan takes his watch which was given by his father. He puts a watch and some money under Hassan's bedroom. He does it when Baba is in his office. Amir does his plans to erase his false in order that Baba always takes care of him. He does not care that Hassan is his friend. Hassan and his father become uncomfortable staying in his house and hope that they will leave Amir's house.

He uses his Id just to fulfill his need to erase his pain in the past moment. Eventhough his attitude is

illogical, he wants the ambition in his mind to become true. His effort to make Hassan leave his house comes true. His plan is successful, Hassan leaves him. When he knows that Hassan asks a permission to Baba, he feels lonely and remembers of Hassan's preparation for his breakfast.

Amir does not know how to atone for his sins towards Hassan then he does his redemption. Amir's willing to see Rakhim Khan is not the only reason to go to Pakistan. Rahim Khan says that he knows a way for Amir to be good again and as the second reason of his coming back to Afghanistan. Amir hopes that he will find a way to correct the false that lingered four years ago. Amir has found out the truth of who Hassan was. Amir does not know that Hassan has the same blood with him but different mother. Luckily, Amir grows up and he can accept the truth that Hassan is his step brother. In Freud theory, his character is prevailing on Superego. Superego is moral attitudes learned from society and parents. The superego is driven by the morality principle which insists on doing what is right. He is almost unwilling to find his nephew (Hassan's son). On the other hand, he remembers his family that worries him. He decides to erase his mistake as Hassan used to care and keep him in the past. He is conscious of his guilt that he made a mistake and has hurt Hassan by his action. The emotional feeling is rising up. He thinks that Hassan is alive but unfortunately Hassan has gone. A regretful feeling is combined with his spirit in finding the son of Hassan. It is not about friend again but the blood connection between him and Hassan. He wants to find out his nephew. Besides his confidence in finding Hassan's son.

Amir arrives in the orphanage. He is looking for his half nephew but he cannot find him. He has a strong love to Sohrab, therefore he is willing to take the serious risk. He flies from California just to pay back the deed to Hassan. As an adult, Amir pays strongly attention to the unlucky children in his country, Afghanistan. By seeing the destiny of other children, he intends to seek Sohrab (the son of Hassan). Amir does not want Sohrab to have the same condition such as other children that he sees along the road of Afghanistan. His superego appears and strong. He will find Sohrab. He thinks it is the way to pay of his sin to him. Whereas he knows that Baba lies to himself and Hassan.

Conclusion

The Kite Runner proves that the main character's personality leads his betrayal to his friend. He can not control his Id because of his jealousy towards his

friend, Hassan. Then he tries to drive out him. In short, this novel also gives the readers a message that jealousy is not good. Being realistic for everything that happens in life is necessary because friendship is everything in his life. Say the truth eventhough it will hurt you. Honesty is a very important part in our life. It brings people to a good way. We can do nothing without other person especially friend.

The analysis of this thesis gives a moral lesson that strong desire or ambition is not always good. Sometimes it can produce problems in our life. Jealousy can become something that is very dangerous if we cannot control it. Finally, we hope this paper is useful for others as the reference of their study in personality theory and also support the further analysis in the same study.

Acknowledgement

Thanks to my beloved parents Abdul Halim and Misri'ah for their support and spirit until finishing my jurnal, Prof. Dr. H. Sutarto, M.A., as my academic supervisor who has given me advices during my academic years, Hat Pujiati, S.S., M.A., for her approval to publish this journal, Drs. Hadiri, M.A and Agung Tri Wahyuningsih, S.S, M.Pd., the Examination Committee who have given me the opportunity to present my thesis. The librarians of Faculty of Letters, and the central library of Jember University who have helped me in finding materials.

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