



Analysis of the Main Character's Inner Conflict in the Novel *Namaku Alam* by Leila S. Chudori: A Study of Literary Psychology

Anita Ardiansyah^{1*}, Daniar Sofeny², Bisarul Ihsan³

¹²³Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia, Universitas Islam Darul 'Ulum Lamongan, Jawa Timur, Indonesia

*E-mail: anita.2022@mhs.unisda.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Inner conflict is one of the psychological elements that plays an essential role in shaping character development in literary works. Leila S. Chudori's novel *Namaku Alam* portrays the psychological dynamics of the protagonist through traumatic experiences, family relationships, and social pressures. This study aims to describe the forms of inner conflict, the factors causing the conflict, and the psychological condition of the main character, Alam. The research employed a literary psychology approach based on Albertine Minderop's theory using a descriptive qualitative method. The data source was the novel *Namaku Alam* by Leila S. Chudori, while the research data consisted of textual quotations reflecting inner conflict, causal factors, and the character's psychological condition. Data were collected through library research, intensive reading, and note-taking techniques, and analyzed using an interactive model involving data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that Alam experiences various forms of inner conflict, including guilt, anger, anxiety, sadness, emotional distress, and self-acceptance. These conflicts are influenced by interconnected factors, namely family, social environment, identity, and traumatic experiences. Alam's psychological condition develops from prolonged emotional distress toward gradual self-reconciliation, characterized by increasing emotional tranquility and self-acceptance. This study demonstrates that the literary psychology approach effectively reveals the psychological dynamics of literary characters and contributes to the development of contemporary Indonesian literary studies.

Keywords: inner conflict, main character, literary psychology

Analisis Konflik Batin Tokoh Utama dalam Novel *Namaku Alam* Karya Leila S. Chudori: Kajian Psikologi Sastra

ABSTRAK

Konflik batin merupakan salah satu unsur psikologis yang berperan penting dalam membentuk perkembangan tokoh dalam karya sastra. Novel *Namaku Alam* karya Leila S. Chudori merepresentasikan dinamika konflik batin tokoh utama yang dipengaruhi oleh pengalaman traumatis, relasi keluarga, dan tekanan sosial. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan bentuk konflik batin, faktor-faktor penyebab konflik batin, serta kondisi psikologis tokoh Alam. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan psikologi sastra dengan teori Albertine Minderop dan metode penelitian deskriptif kualitatif. Sumber data berupa novel *Namaku Alam* karya Leila S. Chudori, sedangkan data penelitian berupa kutipan-kutipan yang menunjukkan konflik batin, faktor penyebab, dan kondisi psikologis tokoh. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui studi pustaka, teknik baca, dan teknik catat, sedangkan analisis data menggunakan model analisis interaktif yang meliputi reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan simpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa bentuk konflik batin tokoh Alam meliputi rasa bersalah, kemarahan, kecemasan, kesedihan, tekanan emosional, dan penerimaan diri. Konflik tersebut dipengaruhi oleh faktor keluarga, faktor sosial, faktor identitas, dan pengalaman traumatis yang saling berkaitan. Kondisi psikologis Alam menunjukkan adanya perkembangan dari tekanan psikologis menuju proses rekonsiliasi diri yang ditandai dengan munculnya ketenteraman dan penerimaan diri secara bertahap. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa pendekatan psikologi sastra mampu mengungkap dinamika psikologis tokoh secara komprehensif serta memberikan kontribusi terhadap pengembangan kajian sastra Indonesia kontemporer.

Kata kunci: konflik batin, tokoh utama, novel, psikologi sastra

Submitted
30/06/2026

Accepted
12/07/2026

Published
27/07/2026

Citation	Ardiansyah, A., Sofeny, D., & Ihsan, B. (2026). Analysis of the Main Character's Inner Conflict in the Novel <i>Namaku Alam</i> by Leila S. Chudori: A Study of Literary Psychology. <i>Jurnal Pembelajaran Bahasa dan Sastra</i> , Volume 5, Nomor 4, Juli 2026, 3231-3240. DOI: https://doi.org/10.55909/jpbs.v5i4.1679
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Publisher
Raja Zulkarnain Education Foundation

INTRODUCTION

Literature is a form of creative expression that represents human life through aesthetic language. Wellek & Warren (2016) explain that literature is a creative activity that reflects human life through the author's imagination. One of the most popular forms of literary work is the novel, due to its broad narrative space, capable of depicting various life issues in a more complex manner through characters, plot, setting, and conflict. According to Nurgiyantoro (2013), a novel is a work of fiction constructed from interconnected intrinsic elements, creating an imaginative world that represents the realities of life. Thus, novels are an effective medium for representing human psychological dynamics through the conflicts experienced by their characters.

Among the various elements that make up a novel, inner conflict is a psychological phenomenon that is important to study because it can reveal deeper meaning regarding the character's character and the realities of life represented in the literary work (Pratama, 2022). This conflict arises when a character experiences a conflict between opposing desires, values, beliefs, and feelings, which influence their way of thinking, behaving, and acting. In novels, inner conflict not only serves as a driving force for the plot, but also serves as a means for the author to demonstrate the dynamics of the characters' personalities and the psychological development they experience (Amanda & Suherman, 2024).

The phenomenon of inner conflict is frequently found in contemporary Indonesian novels that address issues of identity, trauma, family relationships, and social pressure. One novel that exemplifies this phenomenon is Leila S. Chudori's *Namaku Alam*. This novel tells the story of Alam, the main character, who grew up in a family set against the backdrop of Indonesian political history. This situation causes Alam to experience various inner struggles related to the search for self-identity, family relationships, and the social stigma attached to his family. These struggles give rise to psychological symptoms such

as anxiety, trauma, emotional stress, anger, and a process of self-acceptance that develops throughout the story.

To understand the dynamics of these characters' psyches, this study uses a literary psychology approach, an approach that utilizes psychological concepts to examine the psychological aspects of characters as reflected through their behavior, thoughts, dialogue, emotions, and actions in literary works (Minderop, 2016). In line with this, Novita (2025) explains that literary psychology is an approach used to uncover psychological symptoms reflected through the behavior, emotions, thoughts, and personalities of characters in literary works. This approach allows researchers to explain the relationship between a character's life experiences and the psychological conditions that underlie each action and decision they make (Wati et al., 2025).

One important aspect studied in literary psychology is inner conflict, namely the conflict that occurs within a person due to differences in desires, values, feelings, and beliefs (Minderop, 2016). This study specifically uses Albertine Minderop's theory because it provides a more detailed classification of a character's psychological state, including trauma, anxiety, emotional distress, guilt, frustration, and various other psychological conflicts (Minderop, 2016). This theory is considered appropriate for analyzing Alam's inner conflict because it explains the relationship between traumatic experiences and the development of the character's psychological state throughout the story.

Previous research on inner conflict and the psychological state of characters in literary works can serve as a foundation for this study. Khoirunnisa & Nugroho (2023) in their study entitled "Self-Defense Mechanisms and Stress Coping of the Main Characters in the Short Story Anthology 'Malam Terakhir' by Leila S. Chudori: A Study of Literary Psychology" found that the main characters in Leila S. Chudori's works display various self-defense mechanisms, such as repression, rationalization, reaction formation, and



denial, in response to the conflicts and pressures they face. This study shows that Leila S. Chudori's works consistently highlight the complex psychological dynamics of their characters, making them relevant as a reference in examining the novel *Namaku Alam* by the same author.

Furthermore, Lestari et al. (2023) in their study entitled "The Inner Conflict of the Main Characters in the Novel *Rindu* by Tere Liye: A Literary Psychology Approach" describe the forms of inner conflict of the main characters and the factors underlying them using a literary psychology approach. This study shows that the inner conflict of the characters in the novel generally stems from the conflict between personal expectations and the reality faced, both in family relationships and in the social environment.

These three studies demonstrate that a literary psychology approach is effective in uncovering the psychological dynamics of characters in literary works, both short stories and novels, and effectively explains the relationship between inner conflict, defense mechanisms, and psychological trauma. However, these three studies used different subjects, and none have specifically analyzed Leila S. Chudori's novel, *Namaku Alam*. In addition, these studies generally use Freud's psychoanalytic theoretical framework or the theory of self-defense mechanisms in general, while studies that specifically apply Albertine Minderop's literary psychology theory with a more detailed classification of psychological conditions, including trauma, anxiety, emotional stress, and self-acceptance in the novel *Namaku Alam* are still relatively limited. Therefore, this study was conducted to fill the gap in these studies while also contributing to the development of literary psychology studies in contemporary Indonesian novels.

Based on this background, the research questions are as follows: (1) What are the forms of inner conflict experienced by the main character, Alam, in Leila S. Chudori's novel *Namaku Alam*? (2) What factors contribute to the emergence of the main character's inner conflict in Leila S. Chudori's novel *Namaku Alam*? (3) What is the

psychological state of the main character, Alam, based on Albertine Minderop's literary psychology theory?

In line with these research questions, this research aims to describe the forms of inner conflict experienced by the main character, Alam, identify the factors underlying this inner conflict, and analyze the psychological state of the main character in Leila S. Chudori's novel *Namaku Alam* based on Albertine Minderop's literary psychology theory. Theoretically, the results of this research are expected to contribute to the development of literary psychology studies, particularly those related to the analysis of inner conflict and the psychological states of characters in contemporary Indonesian novels. Practically, this research is expected to serve as a reference for students, researchers, and readers in understanding the application of Albertine Minderop's literary psychology theory to literary analysis, as well as serve as a reference for further research examining similar objects and approaches.

METHOD

This research uses a textual approach with a qualitative descriptive method. Abubakar (2021), Razak (2017), Yuliani (2018), stated that qualitative descriptive methods are commonly used in various social research, including in the field of literary studies. The textual approach is used to examine the psychological aspects of characters as reflected in the literary text through dialogue, narration, actions, and the conflicts experienced by the characters. The qualitative descriptive method was chosen because the research data consists of words, sentences, and quotations contained in the novel, allowing for in-depth analysis without the use of statistical calculations.

The research data source is the novel *Namaku Alam* by Leila S. Chudori, published by Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia in 2022. The data in this study consist of words, phrases, sentences, and dialogue in the novel that indicate inner conflict, the factors causing that inner conflict, and the psychological state of the main character, Alam. Data collection was conducted through a literature

review using a reading-notetaking technique. This involved intensive and repeated reading of the novel, identifying data relevant to the research focus, and then noting quotations that indicate inner conflict, the factors causing that inner conflict, and the psychological state of the main character, Alam. The primary instrument in this research was the researcher herself, who acted as the key instrument (human instrument), assisted by data cards and an analysis guide based on Albertine Minderop's literary psychology theory as tools for data collection and classification.

Data analysis was conducted qualitatively through five stages. First, intensive reading and comprehension of the entire novel to gain a comprehensive understanding of the plot and characterization. Second, identifying data related to the main character's inner conflict. Third, classifying the data based on the research focus, namely the form of inner conflict, the factors causing it, and the character's psychological state. Fourth, analyzing the data using Albertine Minderop's literary psychology theory, which encompasses psychological symptoms such as trauma, anxiety, emotional distress, frustration, and guilt. Fifth, drawing conclusions based on the results of the comprehensive and systematic analysis.

RESULT

1. Forms of Inner Conflict in Alam

The research results show that Alam experiences four forms of inner conflict: hatred, fear and anxiety, sadness and disappointment, and anger.

1.1 Hatred

The inner conflict of hatred was discovered when Alam expressed resentment toward the social labels attached to his family. This finding is illustrated in the following quote.

"I hate being called the 'widow' of an executed political prisoner—can I study at a special and unique high school like this?" (NA/KB/2023/8)

1.2 Fear and Anxiety

The inner conflict of fear and anxiety was discovered when Alam felt unable to do anything to help others in the situation he faced. This finding is illustrated in the following quote.

"I didn't even dare to comfort him or pat him on the shoulder or say, 'Calm down, Bim, one day you'll meet your father.' It was all a lie. I felt increasingly anxious because I felt unable to do anything." (NA/KB/2023/89)

1.3 Sadness and Disappointment

The inner conflict of sadness and disappointment is found when Alam recalls past experiences that still linger within him. This finding is demonstrated in the following quote.

"All those scoldings still linger inside me like scars etched in my heart that will never heal." (NA/KB/2023/154)

1.4 Anger

The inner conflict of anger is found when Alam shows emotional outbursts due to the treatment he received. This finding is demonstrated in the following quote.

"I hope he immediately releases his grip because I'm afraid my blood will start to boil and I might throw him." (NA/KB/2023/249)

2. Factors Causing Alam's Inner Conflict

The research results indicate that Alam's inner conflict is influenced by two factors: family and social factors.

2.1 Family Factors

The family factor is found through Alam's family circumstances, which are influenced by his past political background. This finding is demonstrated in the following quote.

"Mrs. Uma's life as a teacher was also forcibly ended simply because of an inherited identity." (NA/PK/2023/6)



2.2 Social Factors

Social factors were discovered through Alam's experiences interacting with his social environment. These findings are illustrated in the following quote:

"This is the first time I've felt happy because there's someone else as 'crazy' as me, to the point that the book's layout has to be the same length and width." (NA/KB/2023/133)

3. Alam's Psychological Condition Based on Albertine Minderop's Theory of Literary Psychology

The research results indicate that Alam experiences four psychological conditions: psychological trauma, anxiety, emotional stress, and self-acceptance.

3.1 Psychological Trauma

Psychological trauma is found through the character's experiences related to his identity and family. This finding is demonstrated in the following quote.

"They were already in a place free from the various names, criticisms, and labels that had confined them in a prison of names, a prison of identity." (NA/PKS/2023/6)

"I tried to remember because all this time I had put the Sastrowidjojo family, complete with aunts and uncles, in a dark warehouse in my brain that I never visited." (NA/PKS/2023/363)

3.2 Anxiety

A state of anxiety was found when the character Alam experienced insecurity in facing certain situations. This finding is demonstrated in the following quote.

"Those sharp, shining eyes made me completely afraid to move." (NA/PKS/2023/9)

"Every day I passed the luxurious houses in Menteng and Kebayoran, my head suddenly felt dizzy from the mixed sensations." (NA/PKS/2023/181)

3.3 Emotional Stress

Emotional stress was found when Alam expressed a state of physical and mental exhaustion. This finding is demonstrated in the following quote.

"Suddenly, my body and soul were so tired." (NA/PKS/2023/109)

3.4 Self-Acceptance

Self-acceptance was found when Alam expressed a feeling of greater peace after experiencing various events in his life. This finding is demonstrated in the following quote.

"Seeing my mother's happy face, after years of her being anxious because of my behavior, my heart felt more at peace." (NA/PKS/2023/202)

DISCUSSION

This study analyzes the inner conflict of Alam in Leila S. Chudori's novel *Namaku Alam* using Albertine Minderop's literary psychology approach. The analysis covers three main points: the forms of inner conflict, the factors causing the inner conflict, and Alam's psychological condition. The following discussion directly argues each finding based on citations obtained from the research, supplemented by at least two theoretical perspectives and references to relevant research.

Alam's hatred is expressed through direct expression of the social labels attached to his family. The quote "I hate being called 'widow' by executed political prisoners" (NA/KB/2023/8) shows that Alam's hatred is not directed at a person personally, but rather at the social naming system that demeans his family. This finding aligns with research by Ruddin et al. (2025), which specifically examined labeling practices in the novel "My Name is Alam" using Howard S. Becker's labeling theory. The study found that Alam received various stigmatizing labels such as "bastard child," "traitor to the state," and "itchy widow child" from various social actors, including family, friends, and school officials, which cumulatively formed a deviant identity and caused psychological distress.

In line with that, Husna et al. (2025) in a study entitled "The Inner Conflict of the Main Character in the Novel *Namaku Alam* by Leila S. Chudori" also confirmed that Alam's hatred towards the social label attached to him is one of the significant forms of inner conflict in the novel. Thus, Alam's hatred needs to be read not only as a psychological weakness, but as a response to the systemic stigmatization mechanism inherited from the New Order's political policies, as depicted through the "clean environment" policy that continues to haunt the families of former political prisoners across generations.

Alam's helplessness in the face of others' suffering (NA/KB/2023/89) aligns with Minderop's (2010) view that this type of anxiety stems from a conflict between the desire to act and the ego's inability to find meaningful action. This perspective differs from Horney's (in Feist & Feist, 2010), who placed the source of anxiety in social insecurity, not solely intrapsychic conflict. These two perspectives can be reconciled through the findings of Hasan & Ali (2025), who demonstrated that Alam's anxiety was triggered not only by direct traumatic events but also by a prejudiced social climate. Thus, Alam's anxiety is best understood as the result of a mutually reinforcing combination of internal conflict and social insecurity, not simply an interplay of the two.

The metaphor of a wound that never heals (NA/KB/2023/154) depicts sadness that is not merely a memory but a condition that persists in the present. Endraswara (2013) explains that this type of chronic grief reflects the conflict between the hope for recovery and the reality that the wound remains unresolved. Herman (2015) adds that repeated traumatic experiences tend to give rise to complex grief because these memories cannot be properly integrated into the narrative of everyday life. Therefore, the metaphor of an unhealed wound is not merely poetic expression, but rather an accurate description of how traumatic memory works. Ummy (2024) strengthens this argument by finding that profound disappointment in similar characters often accompanies feelings of

abandonment by the social system that is supposed to provide justice. This combination of personal injury and disappointment with the environment makes Alam's inner conflict in this aspect complex.

The physical urge Alam suppresses when his grip on her body is violated (NA/KB/2023/249) aligns with Minderop's (2010) explanation that physical anger is a manifestation of long-contained frustration that explodes when a direct trigger is present. Berkowitz (1993) strengthens this argument by stating that anger is a natural response to frustration, especially when an individual's personal boundaries are violated. However, as Hidayah (2020) notes, a character's anger in a literary work can also serve as a character marker; the fact that Alam merely hopes and does not actually lash out suggests that beneath the intense emotional turmoil, he maintains self-control—an indication of strong ego dynamics amidst seemingly extreme inner conflict.

The termination of Ibu Uma's career due to "inherited identity" (NA/PK/2023/6) demonstrates that the family, rather than being a source of protection, is a source of psychological burden shared by Alam. Rahmania (2023) asserts that the family is the primary unit of personality formation, so when the family itself becomes a victim of the system, the psychological impact on the child is long-term. Bronfenbrenner (1979), using developmental ecology theory, adds that family conditions cannot be separated from the macrosystem context of state policy; the forced termination of the mother's career is a product of a political system that punishes individuals based on inherited identities, not their own actions. This aligns with Leksana and Subekti (2023), who show that memories of the 1965 political violence are passed down intergenerationally through families, and Leong (2021), who notes that descendants of the 1965 political victims still face social discrimination. By combining these four references, the family factor in this study is not merely an interpersonal relationship, but rather a medium for the transmission of socio-political burdens across generations that form the root of Alam's inner conflict.



Alam's joy at finding someone "equally crazy" (NA/KB/2023/133) indicates that social factors involve not only negative pressure but also positive experiences such as encounters with like-minded individuals. Minderop (2010) explains that social isolation, the feeling of being unaccepted or misunderstood by others, is a major factor exacerbating internal conflict. Tajfel et al. (2001), using social identity theory, add that individuals need a sense of group membership to build a stable self-concept, making encounters with individuals who make Alam feel "normal" a psychologically meaningful moment. Barreto et al. (2022) strengthen this argument by showing that individuals experiencing loneliness due to stigma tend to perceive themselves as unaccepted by their environment. Therefore, when acceptance finally comes, the resulting emotional response is particularly strong, reflecting the fulfillment of previously thwarted psychological needs. Therefore, the social factors in this study encompass both interpersonal relationships and the need for social acceptance, which are essential components of the process of resolving internal conflict.

The depiction of identity as a "prison of names" (NA/PKS/2023/6) reflects trauma that is collective, not just individual. Mustoyapova (2021) explains that collective trauma is not only stored in individual memories but is also reproduced through narratives, language, and social memory that are continuously passed down. Thus, negative labeling from the environment becomes a form of social narrative that maintains traumatic experiences. Alam's tendency to hide memories of his extended family (NA/PKS/2023/363) can be understood through the concept of dissociation explained by Pievani et al. (2024), namely a psychological mechanism that emerges in response to severe trauma so that individuals can continue to carry out daily activities even though the traumatic experience has not been fully processed. Farina and Imperatori (2024) add that traumatic

experiences that are not integrated into autobiographical memory can persist in the form of memory fragments, emotional responses, and dissociative symptoms. Referring to these three theories, Alam's inner conflict is not only related to identity pressure due to social stigma, but also trauma that continues to persist because it has not been integrated into the narrative of his life.

Alam's paralysis in the face of a powerful gaze (NA/PKS/2023/9) can be explained by Minderop's (2010) view that this type of anxiety is a manifestation of the ego feeling threatened by a figure perceived as having greater authority—a condition likely related to Alam's past experiences of frequent powerlessness. Meanwhile, the somatic response of dizziness when passing through luxurious houses (NA/PKS/2023/181) indicates a different type of anxiety. Horney (in Feist & Feist, 2010) refers to anxiety stemming from social inequality as cultural anxiety, a response to an environment that continually reminds an individual of their marginalized position. Lowe et al. (2024) explain that somatization is a physical manifestation of prolonged psychological stress, so Alam's physical symptoms can be understood as a form of somatization resulting from ongoing social pressure and trauma. By bringing together these three references, Alam's anxiety is multidimensional, emerging both in direct social interactions and through symbols that remind him of injustice and trauma.

The physical and mental exhaustion experienced by Alam (NA/PKS/2023/109) aligns with Wolf and Fisher's (2023) stress appraisal theory, which explains that emotional distress arises when an individual assesses the demands of a situation as exceeding their coping resources. This cognitive appraisal determines the intensity of stress and psychological response. Maslach and Leiter (2022) reinforce this argument by stating that emotional exhaustion is a state of psychological energy depletion resulting from prolonged exposure to stress without adequate recovery opportunities. Referring to these two theories, the accumulation of stress resulting from the identity crisis, social stigma,

sadness, and anxiety experienced by Alam without psychological support can be understood as both a cause of total emotional exhaustion and a crisis point that opens the opportunity for psychological change toward self-acceptance in the next stage.

The peace Alam feels after seeing his mother's happiness (NA/PKS/2023/202) indicates that this character's self-acceptance stems not from material personal success, but from the restoration of an emotional connection with the most meaningful figure in his life. From a contemporary humanistic psychology perspective, self-acceptance is an individual's ability to acknowledge and accept their strengths and limitations without excessive rejection, thus creating greater psychological well-being (Silva, 2023). From a narrative psychology perspective, identity and self-acceptance are built through the process of restructuring life experiences into meaningful narratives (Adler et al., 2016). Referring to these two perspectives, the use of the phrase "more at peace" rather than "completely at peace" suggests that Alam's self-acceptance is still in its developmental stage: a gradual process of psychological reconciliation that occurs through the reinterpretation of life experiences, the restoration of family relationships, and the formation of a more complete self-identity.

This study has several strengths. First, the analysis was conducted systematically, basing each finding on direct quotations from Leila S. Chudori's novel "Namaku Alam," ensuring a clear and justifiable textual basis for the interpretation of the characters' inner conflicts. Second, this study not only identifies the forms of inner conflict but also analyzes the causal factors and the characters' psychological states, providing a more comprehensive picture of the main character's psychological dynamics. Third, the use of "Namaku Alam" as the research object contributes to the development of literary psychology studies in contemporary Indonesian literature, which has been relatively limited in its application.

Despite these strengths, this study also has several limitations. The analysis focuses on one primary theoretical framework, namely Minderop's

literary psychology. Therefore, more complex psychological aspects, such as intergenerational trauma, identity formation, coping mechanisms, and the process of making sense of life experiences, have not been analyzed in greater depth. Furthermore, this study focuses only on the main character, thus the psychological dynamics between characters that influence the development of Alam's inner conflict have not been comprehensively examined. Therefore, further research is recommended to integrate more diverse and sophisticated psychological perspectives and expand the study's focus on inter-character relationships to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of inner conflict in Leila S. Chudori's novel *Namaku Alam*.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the character Alam in Leila S. Chudori's novel "Namaku Alam" experiences complex inner conflict as a result of life experiences influenced by past trauma, social stigma, and family relationships. The forms of inner conflict identified include guilt, anger, anxiety, sadness, emotional distress, and a process toward self-acceptance. This conflict is triggered by various factors, including family, social, identity, and traumatic experiences, which interact to shape the character's psychological dynamics. Alam's psychological state demonstrates that inner conflict is not static, but rather develops from a phase of psychological distress to a process of self-reconciliation marked by the gradual emergence of peace and self-acceptance.

This research demonstrates that a literary psychology approach can deeply uncover the relationship between the novel's intrinsic elements and the character's psychological dynamics, thus contributing to the development of contemporary Indonesian literary studies, particularly in the analysis of inner conflict. The findings of this study also demonstrate that traumatic experiences, family relationships, and social environments are important factors shaping the development of a

character's personality. Therefore, further research is recommended to develop the study using more diverse psychological approaches, such as trauma psychology, narrative psychology, or positive psychology, as well as expanding the object of analysis to include psychological dynamics between characters to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the representation of inner conflict in literary works.

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