

**THE HERO'S JOURNEY OF THE MAIN CHARACTER IN ZOULFA
KATOUH'S *AS LONG AS THE LEMON TREES GROW***

THESIS

By:

Ananda Putri Anggraeni

NIM 210302110080



**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM
MALANG
2025**

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THESIS

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By:

Ananda Putri Anggraeni

NIM 210302110080

Advisor :

Whida Rositama, M.Hum

NIP 198804222019032010



**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM
MALANG
2025**

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I state that the thesis entitled *The Hero's Journey of the Main Character in Zoulfa Katouh's As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* is my original work. I do not include any materials previously written or published by another person, except those cited as references and written in the bibliography. Hereby, if there is any objection or claim, I am the only person who is responsible for that.

Malang, November 10th, 2025

The Researcher



Ananda Putri Anggraeni

NIM 210302110080

APPROVAL SHEET

This to certify that Ananda Putri Anggraeni's thesis entitled *The Hero's Journey of the Main Character in Zoulfa Katouh's As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* has been approved for thesis examination at Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, as one of the requirements for the degree *Sarjana Sastra (S.S)*.

Malang, November 10th, 2025

Approved by

Advisor,



Whida Rositama, M.Hum
NIP 1988042220019032010

Head of Department of English
Literature



Dr. Agwin Degaf, M.A.
NIP 198805232015031004

Acknowledged by

Dean,



Dr. M. Palsol, M.Ag.
NIP 197411012003121003

LEGIMATION SHEET

This is to certify that Ananda Putri Anggraeni's thesis entitled *The Hero's Journey of the Main Character in Zoulfa Katouh's As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* has been approved by the Board of Examiners as one of the requirements for the degree of *Sarjana Sastra* (S.S) in Department of English Literature.

Malang, December 10th, 2025

Board of Examiners

Signature

1. Sri Muniroch, M.Hum.
NIP 196905032003122003



2. Whida Rositama M. Hum.
NIP 198804222019032010



3. Hafidhun Annas, M. Hum.
NIP 198807292019031009



Approved by,
Dean of Faculty of Humanities



Dr. M. Parsol, M.Ag.
NIP 197411012003121003

MOTTO

“Allah does not burden a soul beyond that it can bear. It will have (the consequence of) what (good) it has gained, and it will bear (the consequence of) what (evil) it has earned.”

“And be patient, for indeed, the promise of Allah is true.”

-Surah Al-Baqarah:286, Surah Ar-Rum:60-

“There are many colors in life; all you need is to keep your eyes open and be grateful.”

-Ustadzah Halimah Alaydrus-

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my parents for their unconditional love, continuous prayers, and unwavering support, to my lecturers and academic advisors for their patient guidance and sincere dedication, to my family and friends for their constant encouragement and for adding color and meaning to my journey and to myself, for the perseverance, resilience, and growth gained through every stage of this endeavor.

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I dedicate this thesis with great respect and love to:

1. My beloved parents, thank you for every sacrifice made, for sending me to school, and for the endless support, unconditional love, and tireless prayers that have strengthened me in every phase of this journey. Your unwavering faith in my abilities, your wisdom in moments of doubt, and your presence in both joy and hardship have been my greatest source of strength. Without your love and encouragement, this achievement would not have been possible.
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The Researcher



Ananda Putri Anggraeni

NIM 210302110080

ABSTRACT

Anggraeni, Ananda Putri. 2025. *The Hero's Journey of the Main Character in Zoulfa Katouh's As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow*. Thesis, Department of English Literature. Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang.

Advisor: Whida Rositama, M.Hum

Keywords: *Hero, Hero's Journey, Arcetypal Critism*

This research analyzes the journey of the main character in the novel *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* by Zoulfa Katouh using the archetypal criticism approach and Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey (Monomyth) theory. This study focuses on identifying and explaining the stages of the Hero's Journey experienced by Salama, as well as the symbolic and psychological transformations reflected throughout her journey. This research employs literary criticism, with the novel *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* as the primary data source. The research data consist of literary texts, dialogues, phrases, and quotations. The analysis is conducted by classifying events in the novel into the stages of the hero's journey, namely Departure, Initiation, and Return.

The findings indicate that Salama's journey represents the Hero archetype, reflecting universal human experiences. Salama receives the call to adventure as a result of war related conflict and personal trauma, confronts various physical and psychological trials, and undergoes significant inner transformation. This journey reflects a process of confronting fear, suffering, and the shadow self, which ultimately shapes the character's maturity and self-awareness. This study concludes that *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* symbolically and psychologically represents the Hero's Journey pattern, affirming the relevance of archetypal criticism in analyzing contemporary literary works that address themes of conflict, trauma, and human resilience

ABSTRAK

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Advisor: Whida Rositama, M.Hum.

Keywords: *Hero, Hero's Journey, Kritik Arketipal*

Penelitian ini menganalisis perjalanan pada tokoh utama dalam novel *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* karya Zoulfa Katouh dengan menggunakan pendekatan archetypal criticism dan teori Hero's Journey (Monomitos) yang dikemukakan oleh Joseph Campbell. Penelitian ini berfokus pada identifikasi dan penjelasan tahapan perjalanan pahlawan yang dialami oleh tokoh Salama, serta transformasi simbolik dan psikologis yang tercermin sepanjang perjalanannya. Penelitian ini menggunakan kritik sastra dengan sumber data utama adalah novel *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow*. Data penelitian meliputi teks sastra, dialog, frasa, dan kutipan. Analisis dilakukan dengan mengklasifikasikan peristiwa-peristiwa dalam novel ke dalam tahapan perjalanan pahlawan, yaitu Departure, Initiation, dan Return.

Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perjalanan Salama merepresentasikan arketipe Hero yang mencerminkan pengalaman manusia secara universal. Salama mengalami panggilan petualangan akibat konflik perang dan trauma personal, menghadapi berbagai ujian fisik dan psikologis, serta mengalami transformasi batin yang signifikan. Perjalanan tersebut mencerminkan proses konfrontasi dengan ketakutan, penderitaan, dan bayangan diri (*shadow*), yang pada akhirnya membentuk kedewasaan dan kesadaran diri tokoh. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa novel *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* merepresentasikan pola Hero's Journey secara simbolik dan psikologis, serta menegaskan relevansi kritik arketipal dalam mengkaji karya sastra kontemporer yang mengangkat tema konflik, trauma, dan ketahanan manusia.

المخلص

أنغرابيني، أناندا بوتري. 2025. رحلة البطلة سالما في رواية "ما دامت أشجار الليمون تنمو" للكاتبة زولفا كاتو أطروحة، قسم الأدب الإنجليزي. كلية العلوم الإنسانية، جامعة مالانغ الإسلامية الحكومية مولانا مالك إبراهيم.

المشرف: ويدا روزيتاما، ماجستير في العلوم الإنسانية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: بطلة، رحلة البطلة، النقد الأرقى

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل رحلة الشخصية الرئيسية في رواية *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* للكاتبة زولفا كاتو من خلال تطبيق منهج النقد الأركيتيبي ونظرية رحلة البطل (المونوميث) التي طرحها جوزيف كامبل. وتركز الدراسة بشكل أساسي على تحديد مراحل رحلة البطل التي تمر بها شخصية سلامة، والكشف عن الدلالات الرمزية والتحويلات النفسية التي تنعكس من خلال هذه الرحلة. تعتمد هذه الدراسة على منهج النقد الأدبي، حيث تُعد رواية *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* المصدر الأساسي للبيانات. وتشمل بيانات البحث النصوص الأدبية، والحوار، والعبارات، والاقتباسات. ويتم إجراء التحليل من خلال تصنيف أحداث الرواية وفق مراحل رحلة البطل، وهي: المغادرة، والتهينة (الابتلاء)، والعودة.

تشير نتائج الدراسة إلى أن رحلة سلامة تمثل أركيتايب البطل الذي يعكس التجربة الإنسانية الشاملة. تتلقى سلامة نداء المغامرة نتيجة صراع الحرب والصدمات الشخصية، وتواجه اختبارات جسدية ونفسية متعددة، وتخوض تحولاً داخلياً عميقاً. وتعكس هذه الرحلة عملية مواجهة الخوف والمعاناة والظل الكامن في الذات، مما يساهم في تشكيل نضج الشخصية ووعيها الذاتي. وتخلص الدراسة إلى أن رواية *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* تجسد نمط رحلة البطل على المستويين الرمزي والنفسي، وتؤكد أهمية النقد الأركيتيبي في تحليل الأدب المعاصر الذي يتناول موضوعات الصراع، والصدمة النفسية، والقدرة الإنسانية على الصمود.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the background and the formulation of the research problems. Furthermore, it examines the significance of the study, the scope and limitations of the research, and concludes with definition of key terms used in this study to promote conceptual clarity and avoid misinterpretation.

A. Background of the Study

Heroes are often portrayed as individuals who possess strength and fight against injustice or oppression. In popular culture studies, superheroes are understood as iconic figures who continue the tradition of heroism in ancient mythology, but are presented through contemporary visual and narrative forms. This is emphasized in an article that states that superheroes serve as representations of social values that are constantly being negotiated, such as issues of identity, power, and justice in a global context (Mahmutovic, 2022). Superhero characters such as those in the Marvel Avengers films, Ultraman, Harry Potter, and Katniss Everdeen demonstrate how extraordinary powers are combined with a moral mission. Thus, fictional heroes in popular culture not only exhibit heroic actions but also personal struggles that reinforce universal values such as courage, sacrifice, and the fight against injustice.

According to Siti Khomsah (2015) heroes are individuals who are respected for their contributions that benefit others and influence society's behavior (Reynaldi et al., 2024). This is exemplified by figures such as Malala Yousafzai, an education activist who bravely opposed the Taliban and later established the Malala Fund to fight for girls' right to education. Similarly, Nelson Mandela became a symbol of the struggle against apartheid, spending decades in prison before leading national reconciliation in South Africa (Britannica, 2023). Real-life stories like these confirm that heroism is not always related to physical strength, but rather moral courage and the determination to fight for social change. Thus, real-life heroes complement fictional portrayals of heroism and provide an authentic dimension of how heroic values are manifested in society.

A hero shows initiative to drive change and is able to move society toward better conditions, not only because of their position as a formal leader, but also because they can emerge from ordinary individuals who have a leadership spirit. Everyone has the potential to be a heroic figure who can inspire, foster optimism, and lead change even in times of crisis. However, a leader is not necessarily a hero, and a hero does not always hold a leadership position. Therefore, the concept of heroic leadership is needed, which is a leadership style that combines the ability to influence with heroic character, especially courage, which determines the quality of a leader. (Reynaldi et al., 2024).

Heroism is not always related to physical strength or extraordinary abilities, but rather to concrete actions that prioritize humanity (Blaščíková & Nemec, 2023). For example, teachers, health workers, social activists, and humanitarian volunteers are often considered modern heroes because of their contributions to the welfare of society. Volunteers working in war zones such as Syria often risk their lives to help victims of conflict, demonstrating courage that is no less than that of classical heroes in mythology. This expanded definition shows that heroism is no longer viewed solely through the lens of physical strength or social status, but through dedication to humanitarian values.

One form of the evolution of the concept of heroism in modern literature can be seen through the theory of the Hero's Journey, popularized by Joseph Campbell through his monumental work, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949). Campbell identifies the hero's journey as a cyclical process that goes through specific stages, such as departure, initiation, and return, which reflect deep character growth and change. This structure highlights universal patterns in heroic narratives, where the protagonist embarks on an adventure, faces trials and tribulations, and ultimately emerges transformed. Campbell's application of the Monomyth theory extends beyond traditional heroic epics to contemporary literature that explores complex and nuanced protagonists.

One such example is *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* by Zoulfa Katouh. The novel is set against the backdrop of the Syrian Civil War, a conflict that has devastated the lives of millions of people since it began in

2011. The conflict not only caused physical destruction, but also brought deep trauma to the community, especially for individuals who lost their families, homes, and sense of security (Yuliansyah et al., 2023). Under these conditions, ordinary people are often faced with difficult choices, which indirectly force them to become heroes in their own ways.

The main character in this novel is Salama, a teenager in Homs who finds herself in the midst of the chaos of war. Her once ordinary life changes drastically, forcing her to face a new reality of loss, suffering, and uncertainty. In her efforts to protect her loved ones, she shows extraordinary courage that she herself does not realize. Salama's story shows how ordinary people can become heroes, not in spectacular ways, but through resilience, sacrifice, and love in challenging situations. This novel tells the story of Salama, a young woman who struggles with trauma, loss, and identity while fighting to protect his loved ones. Salama's journey reflects universal themes of heroism and self-discovery, framed by the harsh realities of war (Katouh, 2022). Her story parallels the stages of Campbell's hero's journey, as she navigates moments of departure from his familiar world, initiation through trials and personal growth, and the possibility of returning as a changed individual.

Analyzing Salama's journey through the lens of Campbell's Monomyth offers a deeper understanding of how contemporary narratives adapt the hero's journey to explore complex social, cultural, and psychological dimensions. This study seeks to examine the stages of Salama's hero's journey and their alignment with Campbell's framework, highlighting the novel's

engagement with universal themes of resilience, transformation, and identity reconstruction in the midst of adversity. Salama's journey reflects the modern hero stages: departure from her old life, initiation through various trials, and eventual transformation as a stronger individual. By analyzing these stages, this study aims to analyze the main characters in *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* novels based on Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey theory to reveal the characters' inner and spiritual transformation as representations of modern heroes. The study also confirms the relevance of Monomyth theory in analyzing modern narratives, particularly in depicting the courage of ordinary people in the midst of human tragedies such as the Civil War in Syria and their ability to overcome pressing problems.

In line with the focus of this study, various previous studies examine themes and theories related to the hero's journey. Wardana (2023), Wicaksono (2020), Damayanti & Munjid (2020) and Amalia (2020) use Campbell's Hero's Journey theory as an analytical tool in examining their research objects. These studies show that Campbell's theory is flexible in understanding character development in various literary narratives. Meanwhile, Sheehan & Riddle (2021) used Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey theory as a conceptual framework to understand the experiences and motivations of international students. Although their research object was not a literary work, this study shows that the Hero's Journey can be used flexibly as a narrative analysis tool in a modern context, thereby strengthening the relevance of this theory in analyzing the journey of contemporary fictional characters such as Salama.

Other research contributions have enriched the diversity of theoretical approaches in the study of character and heroism. Kilic (2023) applied Carl Gustav Jung's psychoanalytic theory to explore the unconscious dimensions of the main character through the concepts of archetypes and the process of individuation. Furthermore, research conducted by Nguyen & Nguyen (2023) analyzes the protagonists in Haruki Murakami's novels using Joseph Campbell's hero's journey theory. Their research reveals that Murakami's protagonists undergo three stages of journey, namely separation, initiation, and return, which emphasize inner transformation rather than physical heroism. Although focusing on different literary works, this research supports the application of Campbell's hero's journey framework in analyzing modern fictional characters, which is relevant to the analysis of Salama's journey in *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow*.

Additionally, research by Masyhur, Fithratullah, and Kasih (2023) applied the Hero's Journey theory to examine the development of protagonists in films, confirming that Campbell's model applies not only to written literature but also to visual media. Research by Sunal (2024) and Steinmetz (2022) also examined the concept of heroism through an archetypal approach to film characters, showing that the structure and patterns of heroism remain relevant and easily recognizable in various forms of popular media.

The flexibility of archetype theory is also evident in research conducted by Kravchenko, Zhykharieva, & Kononets (2021) who used a linguistic approach to analyze the representation of heroes in rap music lyrics.

The study shows that the concept of heroes is not only found in traditional literary works or films but also in contemporary cultural products that are close to everyday life. Meanwhile, Marasigan (2023) applied Caserta's version of the monomyth model to analyze character development in the video game Final Fantasy VIII, reinforcing that Campbell's theory can be applied to interactive and digital narratives.

This collection of research shows that the Hero's Journey theory and archetypes have a broad analytical scope, allowing researchers to explore narratives in novels, films, digital games, and music. However, research that deeply applies Campbell's Monomyth to Zoulfa Katouh's novel *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* is still very limited. This limitation opens up opportunities for more focused research, particularly to examine how the structure of the hero's journey can be used to understand the psychological and moral dynamics of characters in the context of modern warfare.

Based on the background and previous research described above, the researcher has identified several gaps in the theoretical framework and research subject. Although there have been researchers who have studied Zoulfa Katouh's novel using *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder* theory, there has been no research that applies the Hero's Journey theory to analyze Salama's character development in depth. Meanwhile, the difference between this study and other studies that use Campbell's theory is that they generally focus on fantasy, adventure, or film narratives, and only a few have examined how the

monomyth structure works in war narratives with young female characters as protagonists. This confirms that there is a research gap that needs to be filled.

Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by offering a new perspective on the novel *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* through the application of Joseph Campbell's Monomyth theory. By examining Salama's journey based on the Hero's Journey structure, this study seeks to reveal the transformation, resilience, and moral heroism she displays in the face of the chaos and violence of war. Ultimately, this study shows that Campbell's theory is not only a tool for understanding narrative patterns, but also a means of reading how hope, courage, and humanity survive in extreme conditions.

B. Problem of the Study

To support this topic, the researcher has formulated one central research problem to guide the discussion: What stages of the hero's journey does the main character experience to become a hero in *Zoulfa Katouh's As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow*?

C. Significances of the Study

This research was undertaken to offer at least some advantages for readers and subsequent researchers. Theoretically, it aims to assist students of English language and literature in enhancing and broadening their educational literacy through the novel *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow*. Practically, this research tries to contribute to the methodologies for applying Campbell's

Monomyth Theory in the analysis of literary works, particularly those involving heroic narratives. Additionally, it seeks to offer fresh perspectives on comprehending the storyline of each hero within the novel using the hero's journey theory.

D. Scope and Limitation of the study

This study focuses on analyzing the journey of the main character in Zoulfia Katouh's novel *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow*. This analysis aims to show how contemporary narratives adapt the journey of the main character to highlight complex social, cultural, and psychological dimensions through three main stages: Departure, Initiation, and Return. This study also affirms the relevance of the Monomyth theory in analyzing modern narratives, particularly in describing the courage of ordinary people amid humanitarian tragedies such as the Syrian Civil War and their ability to overcome pressing problems. This study is limited to one novel selected by the researcher, *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* using the main character to represent how hope, courage, and humanity can survive in extreme conditions.

E. Definition of Key Terms

The following definitions are provided to prevent misunderstanding and to clarify some key terms used in this study:

1. Hero : A Hero is an individual who possesses the determination to surrender oneself and exemplify the loftiest ideals of humanity for the benefit of others (Campbell, 2020).
2. Hero's Journey : In this context, the hero's journey pertains to the alignment of narrative with the stages delineated by Joseph Campbell in his book *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*. This framework comprises three primary phases: Departure, Initiation and Return. The Departure stage consists of 5 stages including 1. Call to the Adventure, 2. Refusal of the Call, 3. Supernatural Aid, 4. The Crossing of the First Threshold, and 5. Belly of the Whale. The Initiation stage consists of 1. The Road of Trials, 2. The Meeting with the Goddess, 3. Woman as Temptress, 4. Atonement with The Father, 5. Apotheosis, and 6. The Ultimate Boon. The last stage of return consists of 1. Refusal of the Return, 2. The Magic Flight, 3. Rescue from Without, 4. The Crossing of the Return Threshold, 5. Master of Two Worlds, and 6. Freedom to Live (Campbell, 2020)

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the researcher explains the approach used and the framework of Campbell's Hero's Journey theory as related to the selected object. The explanation of this theory seeks to equip readers with an insight into its application within the present study.

A. Archetypal Criticism

Archetypal criticism is an approach in literary studies that emphasizes the existence of recurring universal patterns in literary works, such as images, symbols, motifs, and characters. The term archetype comes from the Greek words *arche*, meaning beginning, and *type*, meaning mold or pattern. Thus, archetypes can be understood as basic patterns that serve as references for various similar representations in literary works across cultures and eras.

The concept of archetypes is rooted in Carl Gustav Jung's analytical psychology theory, particularly his idea of the collective unconscious. Jung asserted that archetypes are universal patterns that shape human narratives and characters (Jung, 1962). In literary studies, Jung's approach is used to interpret characters as embodiments of archetypal journeys that represent the process of self-discovery and psychological transformation. Through the analysis of

archetypes and symbolism, Jung's framework helps to reveal deeper meanings in the development of characters and the inner conflicts they experience.

One important concept in Jungian theory is the shadow, which is the dark side of the personality that contains fears, impulses, and experiences that are suppressed by the individual (Saraswati et al., 2024). Although often viewed negatively, the shadow is an integral part of the personality that must be faced in order for individuals to achieve wholeness. In literary works, the shadow is often reflected through the internal conflicts of characters, which trigger psychological change and growth.

In literary texts, archetypes function as symbolic structures that evoke fundamental emotional responses in readers. Archetypes can appear in the form of characters, such as heroes, mentors, or rebels; symbols, such as journeys or circles; or narrative motifs that recur throughout literary history. An image or motif can be called an archetype if its appearance is recurrent and shows a similar pattern in various literary works across time and culture.

Archetypal criticism views literary works as not standing alone, but rather as part of a broader, collective literary framework. This approach emphasizes the universality of human experience and views literary texts as manifestations of common psychological patterns. Therefore, archetypal analysis aims to find complete meaning through recognition of the basic patterns that support the narrative structure of a work.

Jung also proposed several major psychological archetypes, namely Persona, Self, Shadow, and Anima/Animus (Gijo & George, 2021). The

Persona represents the social mask that individuals use when interacting with the outside world, while the Self symbolizes the unity between consciousness and unconsciousness. The Shadow reflects primitive instincts and repressed aspects of the self, while the Anima and Animus represent the feminine and masculine elements in the human psyche, respectively. These archetypes are often reflected in the inner conflicts and character development of characters in literary works.

In addition to these psychological archetypes, Jung also identified universal character archetypes, such as Hero, Caregiver, Rebel, and Sage (Gijo & George, 2021). Among these archetypes, Hero has a central position in many literary narratives because it represents human struggles in facing challenges, crises, and the process of self-transformation. This archetype forms the basis for the emergence of the hero's journey pattern found in various literary and mythological traditions.

In relation to Hero's Journey research, archetypal criticism provides a theoretical foundation for understanding the character's journey as a representation of universal human experiences. The hero's journey pattern which includes the stages of departure, initiation, and return can be understood as a manifestation of the Hero archetype that originates from the collective unconscious. Therefore, the archetypal criticism approach is relevant to use in this study to analyze the main character's journey, particularly in revealing the symbolic meaning and psychological transformation experienced by the character throughout the narrative.

B. Campbell's Theory of Hero's Journey or Monomyth

This research uses the Hero's Journey theory developed by Joseph Campbell, a professor of American literature at Sarah Lawrence College who is known as an expert on comparative mythology and comparative religion. The theory put forward by Joseph Campbell has been known since the 1990s as the basis for the most influential and deeply rooted scriptwriting model practiced internationally (Hambly, 2021). This theory is also called the Monomyth which discusses a person's journey to become a hero and is very popular as a reference in composing stories. Campbell first presented this theory in his famous work *The Hero With a Thousand faces* which was published in 1949 by Pantheon Books and has gone through various revisions. This includes the latest electronic edition published in 2020 by the Joseph Campbell Foundation. Based on his research into various myths and legends from different cultures, Campbell identified universal pattern of the quest myth, known as the Hero's Journey, which he then summarized in his theory. This theory is a major contribution to understanding the similarities in storylines of various narratives throughout the world.

The term *Monomyth* was first introduced by Joseph Campbell after he adapted it term from James Joyce, who previously used it in the novel *Finnegans Wake* which published in 1939. Campbell's Monomyth theory was influenced by Carl Jung's ideas about archetypes who stated that legends, folklore and myths have similar universal patterns (Mahendra & Ihza, 2021).

In his autobiography, Campbell revealed that figures such as Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung greatly influenced his thinking regarding the human soul, which then inspired his creative works, including myths. Campbell asserts that Jung's theory of archetypes made a significant contribution to the development of his concept, with both agreeing that archetypes are innate patterns in the human psyche that are passed down through generations. Although they come in various forms, these archetypes come from the same source and remain recognizable in various cultures.

One way to analyze this research is using the Monomyth or Hero's Journey theory. As explained above. The Monomyth is a theory introduced by Joseph Campbell which is designed to examine narratives that contain elements of heroism or an individual's journey of transformation towards the status of a hero. Campbell stated that heroes are individuals who have a significant role in fighting for important values or goals, both for themselves and society. In his view, every hero goes through a long journey involving challenges and achievements. So, he deserves to be called a figure of merit. Based on his analysis of various legends and myths. Campbell discovered a universal pattern in the structure of these stories, where the hero's journey has certain similarities from beginning to end. He explains that a hero goes on a journey to gain revelation or understanding, complete his mission and ultimately return as a wiser individual, bringing benefits and wisdom to others (Campbell, 2020).

In his book, Josep Campbell, *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*, he states that to become a hero you have to go through 17 stages which are divided into 3 main stages. These stages outline the hero's journey from the initiation of his expedition to his reinstatement in commonplace life. The structure is organized into three fundamental stages: Departure, Initiation and Return, each of which will be described in detail hereafter.

C. The Stages of Hero's Journey

Stages in the hero's journey theory are a series of steps or phases that a hero goes through during his journey. Before starting a journey, an individual generally lives his daily life in what is called the ordinary world. This world is a place where they live life as usual, without facing significant challenges and getting used to existing routines. The stable condition experienced in this world is called "*equilibrium*". A hero's journey takes them into a world or dimension outside the *ordinary world*, which in this theory is known as a *Special World*. This world is referred to as such because it represents a realm of life distinct from the one the hero is familiar with. Within this Special World, the hero encounters allies and adversaries while confronting various dangerous. The Departure stage marks the point at which the hero leaves the Ordinary World and begins the Initiation Stage within the Special World. After successfully entering the Initiation stage and facing challenges in the Special World, the hero returns to his original life in the Return Stage. At this stage,

the hero will return from the Special World to the Ordinary World (Campbell, 2020).

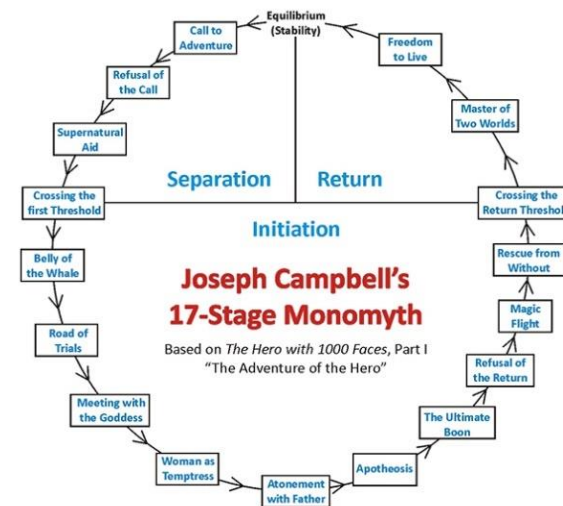


Figure: The Illustration of seventeen stages of hero's journey (Campbell, 2020)

1. Equilibrium

Equilibrium refers to the stable, harmonious and prosperous initial state of the hero's life which is called the Ordinary World. This condition is often characterized by routine without major conflict, but may be accompanied by a feeling of dissatisfaction or longing for something more meaningful. When this balance is disturbed by a crisis, conflict or Call to Adventure. Heroes are encouraged to begin their journey to the Special World, facing various challenges and trials that test their abilities and accelerate their personal transformation (Campbell, 2020). One of the most important phases of this journey is his symbolic *dying* completely and experiencing a rebirth or transformation that allows him to continue his quest (Sobari, 2024). In the end the hero returns to the ordinary world with great changes in himself. Restoring

balance both within oneself and the world or community. Although, the balance often takes on a new, better form.

2. Departure

As explained above, this stage is a transition or departure stage for a person towards his heroic journey. This stage consists of five parts. However, this study only uses three stages, namely the Call to Adventure, Refusal of the Call, Supernatural Aid and Crossing the First Threshold. The explanation is as follows:

a. The Call of Adventure

At this stage the hero receives an invitation or sign asking him to leave the ordinary world. This call can take many forms and is often preceded by a mistake or unexpected event, as Joseph Campbell (2020) explains in his book. For example, Katniss Everdeen in *The Hunger Games*. Her calling came when she volunteered to take the place of her sister Prim to become a participant in *The Hunger Games*, through her epic journey to survive and fight against an oppressive system. Heroes usually start out in a status quo situation in the ordinary world, such as Neo, his life as a computer programmer and hacker who feels that there is something wrong with the world around him. His routine life is disrupted when he meets Morpheus and is introduced to the reality of *The Matrix*. However, a certain event or piece of information changes everything and forces them through the adventure. For example, in a

more symbolic context such as in a journey game, this call is seen when the player sees a mountain in the distance, signifying the destination and start of the journey they are about to take (Beggan, 2020).

b. Refusal of The Call

At certain stages in a hero's journey, sometimes the call to adventure is not immediately accepted because of doubt or uncertainty about one's abilities. This stage reflects the hero's doubts about the journey that must be undertaken, often caused by responsibilities that still bind him in the ordinary world or fear of the dangers that may be faced. In mythology and folklore, this rejection is often rooted in the hero's inability to let go of the things he considers important in his life (Campbell, 2020). Regardless of the underlying reasons, both explicitly and implicitly heroes generally will not let this opportunity pass them by. Even in many cases the hero may resist adamantly, but ultimately remains trapped in the world of adventure, even though they initially entered with stiff resistance (Campbell, 2020).

c. Supernatural Aid

The Supernatural Aid stage occurs when the hero, despite lingering doubts, encounters a guiding or protective figure who assists in strengthening their resolve and provides support for the journey ahead. This helper may appear in various forms, such as a wise elder, a mystical being, or another symbolic figure. The primary purpose of this stage is to equip the hero with

essential resources, insights, or powers needed to advance their quest and achieve their purpose. Such assistance may manifest through enchanted items, valuable guidance, spiritual protection, or extraordinary abilities bestowed upon the hero (Campbell, 2020).

d. The Crossing of The First Threshold

Furthermore, after receiving help, a hero must cross the boundary between the known world and the unknown world. A stage referred to as crossing the threshold. At this stage the hero begins to open himself to a new journey full of challenges guarded by the "Threshold Guardian" as the first obstacle that must be overcome (Campbell, 2020). This occurs after the hero decides to accept the call of adventure and the supernatural help it provides. The threshold represents an important moment of transition when the hero leaves behind his everyday life and steps into a new world filled with mystery and danger.

3. Initiation

This stage marks the hero's entry into the Special World, where he begins a new journey to complete his mission. This section consists of several sub-stages, namely: The Road of Trials, The Meeting with The Goddess, Woman as Temptress, Atonement with The Father, Apotheosis.

a. The Road of Trials

The first stage in the Initiation phase involves a series of trials that the hero must face. At this stage, the hero is confronted with various challenges that can vary depending on cultural background. These trials aim to test the hero's strength, perseverance, and ingenuity, and are an important part of their personal growth and transformation. During this process, the hero may receive subtle assistance or guidance from a supernatural mentor encountered earlier in the journey. Such a mentor may provide advice, protective charms, or even secret helpers to support the hero in overcoming these challenges. This stage represents an important turning point in the hero's adventure, forcing them to face obstacles, develop essential skills, and gain the wisdom necessary to continue their journey. (Campbell, 2020).

b. The Meeting with The Goddess

After overcoming previous challenges, the hero usually meets someone who provides guidance or support to help him continue his journey. This stage is often represented by the hero's encounter with a strong and wise woman. At this stage, the goddess represents the personification of wisdom and serves as an intermediary through which the hero gains important insights. As the hero progresses in his adventure, the goddess evolves in various ways, gradually revealing new dimensions of her guidance and understanding. In this depiction, the goddess is someone who can provide the hero more than they can ever imagine. She captivates, guides, and directs the hero to transcend personal and social limitations. By accepting his insights and following his

guidance, the hero achieves liberation and freedom from all forms of restriction. (Campbell, 2020).

c. Woman as Temptress

This stage illustrates the moment when the hero encounters a figure capable of making them lose focus on their ultimate goal. This figure is depicted as an alluring and tempting presence that has the potential to endanger or divert the hero from their primary mission. The character, whether manifested as a real woman or a symbolic representation, serves to entice the hero away from their true duty and calling. Through promises of power, pleasure, or other forms of fulfillment that deviate from the hero's purpose, the tempter seeks to lead them astray from the path of truth. At this point, the hero faces a dilemma whether to yield to the temptation or to remain steadfast in their higher ideals representing a profound moral and psychological struggle. This stage symbolizes the subconscious forces or egocentric impulses that may hinder the hero's spiritual and personal growth. By resisting the allure of the tempter, the hero demonstrates their ability to transcend lower desires and remain true to their ultimate purpose (Campbell, 2020).

d. Atonement with The Father

This stage is a depiction where a hero meets a "father figure" which usually have power over his sons. The point is a metaphor that which usually a son has an idea or ego that is contrary to his father's. Therefore, in this case

the term can be likened to that the father figure is the main enemy of a hero who he must defeat or reconcile. This is a crucial moment where the hero encounters a father figure or symbol of fatherhood in his quest for deeper understanding or reconciliation. This encounter allows the hero to increase his awareness and overcome his fears, preparing him to understand the deeper meaning of the tragic and chaotic nature of the world. Through this encounter, the hero realizes the majesty and hidden meaning within the grandeur of existence (Campbell, 2020).

e. Apotheosis

The Apotheosis stage represents the moment when the hero attains enlightenment and gains deep wisdom from their journey. It marks a fundamental transformation in the hero's perception of both the external world and their inner self. Typically occurring after enduring various trials and challenges, this stage symbolizes the hero's spiritual and intellectual awakening. At this point, the hero achieves a heightened understanding or insight that guides them toward fulfilling their ultimate purpose. It serves as a crucial turning point in the hero's personal growth, bringing them closer to realizing their full potential and inspiring positive transformation within themselves and the world around them (Campbell, 2020).

4. Return

This stage marks the end of the hero's journey, where he successfully completes his mission and returns to his place of origin. However, the journey home is not always smooth, as heroes often face new challenges that must be overcome before they can fully return to their normal lives. In this phase, there are several sub-stages, namely Refusal of the Return, The Magic Flight, Rescue from Without, The Crossing of the Return Threshold, and Freedom to Live.

a. Refusal of the Return

At this stage, the hero faces both internal and external conflicts that cause hesitation or reluctance to return home. However, the journey cannot be considered complete until the hero brings back the rewards or insights gained to benefit the ordinary world. Despite the importance of this responsibility, there are moments when the hero refuses to return. This refusal often stems from self-doubt or uncertainty about the hero's ability to share their newfound wisdom with others. Even great figures such as Buddha are said to have questioned whether their enlightenment could truly be communicated to the world (Campbell, 2020).

This stage reflects the hero's reluctance to share their transformation or wisdom, expressing concern about their role, the consequences of their return, and the challenges that await them after the journey's end.

b. The Magic Flight

In this stage, the hero faces new dangers and obstacles that challenge their strength, intelligence, and determination during the return journey. Despite these challenges, the hero remains committed to bringing back the “elixir” or reward for the benefit of society. The Magic Flight illustrates the thrilling and often perilous journey home after successfully completing the quest. Even when confronted with magical pursuits or resistance, the hero’s resolve to deliver the boon to their world remains unwavering (Campbell, 2020). This stage highlights the hero’s persistence in overcoming adversities to ensure that their victory serves a greater purpose beyond personal triumph.

c. Rescue from Without

This stage represents a miraculous moment in the hero’s return, where unexpected assistance arrives precisely when it is most needed. Such help may come from a powerful or wise figure capable of rescuing the hero during critical situations. Unlike in the Magic Flight, where the hero clings to their individuality and pride, in this stage, the hero experiences humility and a symbolic loss of ego. However, through divine grace or supernatural aid, the hero’s strength and purpose are restored. Overall, this phase emphasizes the importance of external intervention be it from mystical forces, allies, or higher powers that guide the hero through difficulties and enable their safe return to the ordinary world (Campbell, 2020).

d. The Crossing of the Return Treshold,

Once the hero successfully returns to the Ordinary World, they often face difficulty readjusting to normal life. This stage marks the hero's transition from the extraordinary or supernatural realm back to everyday existence. During this process, the hero must integrate the profound lessons, wisdom, and transformations gained from the journey into the realities of daily life. It symbolizes the reconciliation between the spiritual or heroic experiences and the social constraints of the ordinary world. Through this reintegration, the hero applies their newfound knowledge to improve themselves or contribute to their community. Ultimately, this stage illustrates the challenge of merging extraordinary insight with a world that may not fully comprehend or value such transformation (Campbell, 2020).

e. Freedom to Live

This stage represents the end of the hero's journey, where he has successfully returned and now lives again in a world familiar to him. At this point, the hero is considered to have fulfilled his destiny and brought goodness to others. This is often compared to the process of death and rebirth death symbolizes the end of the old hero, and rebirth signifies the emergence of a renewed and better individual. Freedom to live arises from the awareness that all experiences are temporary and constantly changing. By connecting with the eternal essence of the universe, one can achieve true liberation and live in harmony with the fundamental nature of life itself (Campbell, 2020).

Based on the theoretical framework presented in this chapter, archetypal criticism and Campbell's Hero's Journey theory provide a comprehensive foundation for analyzing literary characters through universal psychological and narrative patterns. Archetypal criticism offers insights into how characters, symbols, and motifs function as manifestations of the collective unconscious, while Campbell's monomyth theory systematically outlines the stages of the hero's transformative journey. By integrating these two theoretical perspectives, this study is able to examine the protagonist's journey not only as a narrative development but also as a process of psychological and symbolic transformation. Therefore, the theories discussed in this chapter become the main analytical tools for interpreting character development, inner conflict, and heroic transformation in the selected literary works, which will be analyzed further in the following chapters.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter discusses the procedures for carrying out this research. It is divided into four sub-chapters consisting of design, sources, data collection and the analysis process. The explanation of these procedures provided readers with an understanding of how this research was conducted.

A. Research Design

This study is a Literary Criticism. Literary criticism is a method for evaluating, interpreting, and analyzing literary works to reveal their deeper meanings (Tyson, 2006). This research belongs to the class of literary criticism because this research uses the theory of moral philosophy and ethics as a tool for reading literary texts. This research also interprets the meaning and value contained in poem and aims to understand and show how literature can be a mirror and critique of social injustice that is happening In this context (Booth, 1988).

Specifically, this study is an archetypal criticism. Archetypal criticism focuses on identifying universal patterns, symbols, and recurring character types in literary and cultural works. This approach is based on Carl Gustav Jung's concept of the collective unconscious, which suggests that certain archetypes such as the Hero, the Shadow, and the Mentor are embedded in the human psyche and repeatedly appear in literary narratives. Archetypal

criticism is particularly relevant to this study because it allows the analysis of Salama's journey as a symbolic representation of universal human experiences, including struggle, transformation, and resilience.

In this study, archetypal criticism is applied by identifying Salama Kassab as the Hero archetype and analyzing her psychological transformation through the symbolic stages of Joseph Campbell's monomyth or Hero's Journey. The analysis focuses on how Salama's experiences reflect the stages of Departure, Initiation, and Return, while also examining the presence of archetypal figures such as the Shadow and the Mentor. Through this approach, Salama's journey represents not only a narrative progression but also a process of inner transformation

This research employs literary criticism, which applies literary theory to analyze literary works in the form of novels. The theory used in this study was Joseph Campbell's Monomyth theory or Hero's Journey, as presented in his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. This research focused on how the Monomyth theory is applied to analyze Salama's story in *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow*. Campbell's monomyth cycle was used to investigate the hero's journey experienced by Salama, which forces a person to leave ordinary life for an unfamiliar territory. The instrument in this research is the researcher herself, who interprets the data obtained.

B. Data Source

Data collection in this research used reading and note-taking techniques, and it was divided into three steps. First, the researcher read the

novel *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* carefully several times to gain a deep understanding. Second, the researcher recorded relevant data from the novel in the form of sentences, dialogues, phrases, and quotations. Finally, the researcher selected and classified the data based on Campbell's Monomyth theory or Hero's Journey.

C. Data Analysis

The analysis conducted in this study organized and grouped the collected data according to Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey theory, relating it to the development of the main character in the novel *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow*, namely *Salama*. After that, the researcher explored how Salama faced and overcame challenges throughout the narrative. In the end, the researcher will formulate conclusions based on all findings and discussions according to the researcher's interpretation and findings.

CHAPTER IV

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This chapter explains the answers to the research questions posed regarding the stages of the hero's journey experienced by the main character to become a hero in *Zoulfa Katouh's novel As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow*. This chapter presents the main findings, which include excerpts from dialogues or sentences in the novel that support the analysis of the main character in his journey to become a hero. These quotations are then analyzed and linked to the stages of Campbell's Hero's Journey theory, describing the development and struggles of the main character as he undergoes his transformation into a hero. The stages of the hero's journey consist of: Equilibrium, Departure, Initiation and Return.

Salama is an ordinary teenager in Syria whose life changes drastically after war breaks out in her country. As a pharmacy student, she never imagines that she stands on the front lines saving the lives of people wounded by war. However, the situation faced by her family and homeland compels Salama to take on this role. At first, she is filled with fear, trauma, and doubts about her own abilities. She faces many challenges, including the loss of loved ones, the mental strain caused by war, and the internal conflict between her desire to flee and her calling to continue fighting.

Salama's journey as a hero in this study is analyzed using Joseph Campbell's Monomyth or Hero's Journey theory to determine how closely the character's storyline follows the stages proposed by Campbell. According to the Hero's Journey theory, a hero's journey consists of three main stages, namely Departure, Initiation, and Return. Within each stage, the hero undergoes a series of experiences that lead to transformation, ultimately becoming a stronger and more self-aware individual after completing the journey.

1. Equilibrium

Equilibrium, or the Ordinary World, is the starting point of the narrative in which the character's life is still stable, harmonious, and relatively peaceful. At this stage, the hero lives in a condition of balance, far from major conflicts and life-threatening challenges. This phase is often characterized by daily routines and a sense of normalcy, although it may also be accompanied by subtle feelings of longing or dissatisfaction. When this equilibrium is disrupted by crisis, conflict, or a call to adventure, the hero is compelled to leave the Ordinary World and enter the Special World. According to Campbell (2020), the Ordinary World serves as an initial point of comparison that highlights the contrast between the hero's former life and the extraordinary trials that follow.

This stage is clearly reflected in *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* through Salama Kassab's memories of her life before the civil war. The following quotation illustrates her peaceful and ordinary life:

"The days when my siblings and I burst into the supermarket after school, stuffing our arms with bags of chips and gelatin candies. It takes me back to Mama, shaking her head as she struggles to hold back a smile while watching her children our faces flushed, our eyes bright doing our best to conceal our spoils of war inside our backpacks (p.7).

The quotation portrays Salama's childhood as filled with simple pleasures and warm family interactions. Her routine of going to the supermarket after school with her siblings and the image of her mother smiling affectionately reflect a harmonious family environment. This moment emphasizes emotional stability, innocence, and a sense of safety, which are essential characteristics of the Ordinary World. At this point, Salama appears as an ordinary teenager whose life is not yet overshadowed by fear, violence, or loss.

Before the civil war breaks out, Salama's daily life is described as peaceful and hopeful. She grows up in the city of Homs, surrounded by lemon trees and the fragrance of daisies, which symbolize comfort, beauty, and tranquility. The environment around her remains calm and untouched by violence, standing in sharp contrast to the devastation that later defines her reality. The warmth of her family including her parents, her older brother Hamzah, and Layla provides emotional security and reinforces the sense of balance in her early life.

In addition, Salama was also known as a girl who studied hard and had high aspirations. She attended university, majoring in pharmacy. For

Salama, her youth should be filled with studying, building dreams, and achieving a bright future. Her academic life was like that of any other student. She was busy with lectures, reading books, and preparing herself to become a professional in the health sector. At that time, her mind was filled with aspirations and hopes, not worries about how to save the lives of others in the midst of war.

"For seventeen years, Homs raised me and cultivated my dreams; Graduate from university with a high GPA, secure a great position at the Zaytouna Hospital as their pharmacist, and finally be able to travel outside of Syria and see the world"(p. 3).

According to the above excerpt, Salama is initially described as a teenager who lives a simple life with youthful dreams. She has clear and focused goals. This description shows that Salama is in a stable phase of life, full of hope and protected by the warmth of her family. Her life revolved around things that were normal for a young girl: education, family, dreams, and a peaceful environment. This was part of the “ordinary world” in the Hero's Journey framework, a point of balance before the big storm came. However, the bitter reality of civil war destroys all foundations of stability. The city that was once peaceful turns into a battlefield, the scent of lemons that once provided comfort is now mixed with the smell of smoke and blood, and the sound of family laughter is replaced by screams and the silence of loss. Salama not only lost her dreams but also the people she loved, so that the world she knew vanished in an instant. The life that was once simple and full of beauty now only exists in the form of painful memories.

2. Departure

Departure is a transitional stage or departure of a person towards their heroic journey. In the journey of a character, this is when the character begins to leave their normal life and enter a new reality full of challenges. At this stage, a person will be faced with experiences they have never had before. Therefore, this stage is also referred to as the moment of departure from the normal world to the extraordinary world. Departure is divided into several parts, namely the call to Adventure, Refusal of the Call, Supernatural Aid and Crossing the First Threshold.

a. Call to Adventure

The point at which the hero receives a symbolic call or invitation to depart from the familiar world signifies the beginning of the transformative journey. This call usually comes in various forms and is often preceded by mistakes or unexpected events. Salama's normal life was destroyed when civil war broke out in Syria. In July, she lost everything in a week. First, she lost her mother, who was killed in a bombing in Homs. After that, she lost Baba and Hamzah, who were arrested while participating in a demonstration. All that remained was her sister-in-law, Layla, who was pregnant. This series of tragedies caused Salama to lose her old world. All her simple dreams of studying, working, and living with her family became fragments of memories. This sense of loss not only left her with grief, but also forced Salama to change drastically. She could no longer be a normal teenager who only focused on

college. It was from this point of destruction that Salama began to take on a new role as a volunteer at the hospital. This is shown in the following quote:

It didn't matter that I was eighteen year old. It didn't matter that my medical experience was confined to the words in my textbooks. All of that was remedied as the first body was laid out before me to be stitched up. Death is an excellent teacher"(p.4).

"I lost everything last July. Everything—within a single week... We lost Mama, Baba, and Hamza. Worst of all, we still don't know whether Hamza and Baba are alive"(p. 48).

This excerpt shows the moment when Salama received her call to adventure, albeit unconsciously. She was forced by circumstances to step into a special world. Amidst the chaos, Salama decided to persevere and do what she could, even if it was just stitching simple wounds, sterilizing equipment, or assisting doctors in emergency procedures. Over time, her involvement grew until she became an important part of the medical volunteer team. The shift from being an ordinary teenager to a humanitarian volunteer happened suddenly, but was driven by a combination of the trauma of loss and the urge to survive. The loss of her family made her realize that she had little else to protect except the people around her. Volunteering was her way of feeling useful, of surviving, and perhaps also as a small form of resistance against the helplessness caused by war.

"The year I spent in pharmacy school didn't prepare me for any of this. Even if I had graduated, it wouldn't have made a difference. I was never supposed to do the work I do now. My first-year classes were mostly theoretical, and my lab courses were about mixing simple formulations, laying the foundation to build on in the coming years"(p.54).

The quote describes an important moment in Salama's life that marks the beginning of his transformation into a hero in *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow*. When he says, *"I haven't graduated yet. I was only in my second*

year when—you know...,” Salama implies that his youth, which should have been filled with dreams, studies, and hopes, was suddenly taken away by the outbreak of war. She does not continue her sentence because the pain and loss are too great to express. In the next part, the narrative explains that she was forced to drop out of college when demonstrations at her university turned into bloody chaos, and her classmates were arrested by the army.

This quote shows that Salama's call to begin her journey did not come through gentle inner urges or spiritual invitations, but rather through destruction and suffering. The tragedy of war destroyed all forms of normality in her life her education, her family, and the future she had planned. She had no opportunity to refuse or avoid it, because reality forced her to survive amid the chaos. Having completely lost his old life, the only option left for Salama was to continue living by fighting helping others, facing trauma, and finding meaning behind suffering. It was from this point that his heroic journey began, not because of a desire to be a hero, but because circumstances forced him to become one.

b. Refuse of The Call

The next stage in a hero's journey, the call to adventure is sometimes not immediately accepted due to doubts or uncertainty about one's own abilities. This stage reflects the hero's doubts about the journey that must be undertaken, often caused by responsibilities that still bind them to the ordinary world or fear of the dangers they may face. This is especially true if the call is

fraught with risk and suffering. Regardless of the underlying reasons, whether explicit or implicit, heroes generally will not let this opportunity pass them by. In many cases, heroes may even resist vehemently, but ultimately find themselves caught up in the world of adventure, even though they initially entered it with fierce resistance.

For Salama, this rejection was evident in her inner attitude toward the war and her role as a medical volunteer. From the beginning, she never wanted to be part of the revolution. The loss of her family left Salama traumatized and exhausted, so her deepest desire was simply to leave Syria with Layla in order to start a new life safe from bombs, blood, and death. This can be seen in the following quote:

"I'm not a monster. There are people suffering and I can help. It's the reason I wanted to be a pharmacist. But I refuse to think about why they end up in the hospital. Why all of this is happening. The why took away Mama. I remember her finger cold against mine. It took Baba and Hamza to God Knows where" (p.12).

This quote explicitly describes Salama's rejection of her destiny. She feels that her life should revolve around her pharmacy studies, her family, and her youthful dreams, not wrestling with death in an emergency hospital. However, war leaves Salama no room to refuse completely. Even though her heart refuses, the reality around her continues to force her to act. The wounded bodies, crying children, and suffering he witnessed every day left him no choice but to help save people. This is where Salama's greatest contradiction emerged: his desire to run away versus the reality that demanded he stay.

Furthermore, Salama's doubts are reinforced by the appearance of Khawf, the personification of her fear. Khawf becomes an inner voice that

constantly reminds Salama of the risks of staying in Syria. He is a symbol of rejection itself, the side of Salama that wants to run away, give up, and leave all the suffering behind. Khawf appears at the same time as the tragedy in July, when Salama loses her mother.

*"I lost everything last July. All in the span of one week.
 "Later that day, when Khawf appeared and told me his name, it took a bit for me to realise I was the only one seeing him. At first, I thought the drugs were giving me visions, that he would disappear when the morphine did. But he stayed by my side, whispering horrible things while I cried for Mama. Even when the pain subsided, and my ribs healed. And my hand scarred, he didn't leave" (p. 15-16).*

This quotation marks a crucial moment that represents the Refusal of the Call stage in Salama's hero's journey in *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow*. The presence of Khawf a figure only visible to Salama symbolizes her deepest trauma and fear born from the devastation of war. The name *Khawf* itself means "fear" in Arabic, and his appearance is not merely a hallucination caused by medication, but rather a manifestation of her emotional and psychological wounds. When Salama realizes that Khawf does not disappear even after her physical pain fades, it reflects how psychological scars linger far longer than bodily wounds. Khawf becomes the inner voice that constantly whispers guilt, doubt, and despair, representing the haunting aftermath of war and the loss of her peace of mind.

This stage reveals Salama's humanity and vulnerability. She is not a hero who willingly accepts sacrifice from the beginning, but a young woman forced to grow amid tragedy and destruction. Her desire to flee Syria with Layla shows that her refusal stems from a longing to survive, not from cowardice. In fact, this refusal makes her journey more realistic and

emotionally resonant, as she does not immediately embrace her destiny but undergoes a painful internal struggle between fear and duty. Through this struggle, Salama's transformation gains depth and authenticity showing that true courage is not the absence of fear, but the strength to move forward despite it.

c. Supernatural Aid

During the Supernatural Aid stage, the main character meets a guiding figure who provides wisdom and motivation to persist in their difficult journey. At this point, the hero is usually still filled with fear, doubt, or despair, so the role of the mentor is very important in fostering courage and confidence. Mentors are not always present in the form of real teachers or wise figures, but can be friends, relatives, inner voices, or even memories that provide motivation. The presence of a mentor provides important resources in the form of knowledge, advice, and symbols of strength that will help the hero face future trials. Thus, this stage serves as a psychological transition from a fragile and unprepared individual to a figure who is brave enough to embark on the great adventure that awaits them.

In Salama's journey, this stage is reflected through the presence of Dr. Ziad, a figure who serves not only as a colleague but also as a fatherly presence, offering guidance, comfort, and a sense of safety amid the chaos of war. Within the hospital, where the air is filled daily with cries of pain, blood, and loss Dr. Ziad becomes the one person capable of balancing Salama's logic

and empathy. He understands the immense burden she carries, not only from the responsibility of saving lives but also from the trauma of losing her family. In a world where death has become routine, he helps her hold on to her humanity and sense of purpose.

Dr. Ziad stands as a source of emotional and moral strength, reminding Salama that a true hero is not someone who sacrifices everything without limits, but someone who endures while maintaining balance between compassion and self-preservation. He encourages her to realize that taking care of herself is also part of the struggle, for without doing so, she cannot continue to help others. Through his words, Salama learns that courage is not about denying pain, but about facing it with resilience and inner strength.

"Salama, we talked about this. You can't work yourself to this point. You have to take care of you. If you're drained and in pain, you won't be able to help anyone. No one should have to handle this horror. Especially someone as young as you are." His glance softens. "You've lost more than anyone ever should. Don't confine yourself to the hospital. Go home." (p. 40).

This quotation illustrates Dr. Ziad's role as an external mentor filled with wisdom and compassion in Salama's journey. He is not merely a senior doctor in the hospital, but also a guiding figure who understands the limits of human endurance, especially for someone as young as Salama, who is forced to face circumstances far beyond her years. His words reveal a deep concern for Salama's physical and emotional well-being, which has been gradually worn down by trauma, guilt, and the relentless pressures of war. Dr. Ziad reminds her not to lose herself in her devotion to helping others, because without inner strength and self-care, she will not be able to continue her humanitarian mission.

This advice holds profound meaning for Salama's character development. Through Dr. Ziad's words, readers see how the role of a mentor extends beyond technical or professional guidance it also nurtures emotional and spiritual awareness. He emphasizes that being a hero does not mean sacrificing oneself entirely to the point of losing one's identity, but rather maintaining balance between responsibility toward others and care for oneself. This quotation also highlights how Dr. Ziad becomes a pillar of strength for Salama, guiding her not to drown in grief and guilt, but to find the courage to keep fighting while preserving her humanity.

Aside from Dr. Ziad, Salama is also accompanied by Khawf, the embodiment of her own fear, who functions as a form of "*inner mentor*." Although Khawf initially appears to be a burden that haunts and pressures her, his presence gradually guides Salama toward a deeper understanding of her fear, the acceptance of reality, and ultimately, the discovery of inner courage and resilience. Emerging in July during the bombings, Khawf becomes an inseparable part of Salama's psyche, symbolizing the internal conflict between despair and endurance that defines her psychological journey throughout the narrative.

He stands in front of me and I instinctively jerk back. 'I, you should know better by now. Unlike you, I don't tire, I don't feel pain, and I won't stop until get what I want. Fighting me, fighting your mind- 'he twirls his fingers and my pulse races as pitch darkness '(p. 53).

This quotation illustrates Khawf as an *inner mentor*, even though he originates from Salama's deepest fear. Khawf asserts his invincibility by emphasizing that he is a projection of Salama's own mind. Although his

presence initially appears oppressive, it is through this internal confrontation that Salama learns to recognize that fear is not something to be eliminated but to be acknowledged and understood. Khawf compels her to confront the harsh realities of war and to transform her fear into a source of strength. Thus, her existence serves as a psychological mechanism that fosters Salama's emotional resilience and growth.

Therefore, the Meeting the Mentor stage in Salama's hero's journey manifests through two distinct dimensions. Dr. Ziad serves as the *external mentor*, providing tangible guidance, emotional stability, and moral insight to support Salama in her role as an inexperienced medical worker thrust into crisis. In contrast, Khawf functions as the *internal mentor*, representing her subconscious struggle with trauma and fear while ultimately shaping her inner fortitude. Together, these two mentors form a crucial turning point in Salama's development, guiding her transformation from a fearful and uncertain young woman into a courageous and steadfast figure capable of enduring the trials of war.

d. Crossing of The First The Threshold

This stage of the Hero's Journey theory, Campbell identifies the protagonist's transition from the ordinary world into a new realm filled with challenges, dangers, and uncertainty. At this point, the hero no longer merely accepts the call to adventure but fully steps across the threshold that separates the familiar and safe world from the unknown. This threshold may take the

form of a physical boundary, a major event, or a psychological transformation that signifies the irreversible change in the hero's life. Consequently, this stage functions as a symbol of total commitment, marking the hero's entry into the realm of trials where retreat is no longer possible.

In Salama's story, this stage illustrates her complete departure from her former life as a university student and a young woman filled with dreams and aspirations. The devastating impact of war thrusts her into a new and perilous reality during what should have been her academic years. The threshold is vividly represented when Salama is forced to work in the hospital stitching wounds, performing emergency surgeries, and witnessing death on a daily basis. At this point, she no longer inhabits her *ordinary world* of simple happiness with her family and dreams; instead, she enters a realm dominated by trauma, fear, and an immense sense of responsibility that she cannot escape. This boundary is not merely spatial but existential, for the moment she sutures a patient's wound, she realizes that her life will never be the same again. Her normal world has collapsed, and she is now bound to a journey of saving others amid the chaos of war, with no path back to the life she once knew.

"Pharmacist prescribe medications- they don't perform surgeries. I was supposed to graduate and be that. Or a researcher. I'm not a surgeon. I wasn't made to cut into bodies, stitch wounds and amputate limbs, but I made myself become that person."(p. 29).

This quotation reflects Salama's awareness that she no longer belongs to her former world but has been transformed by the circumstances surrounding her. Furthermore, she describes her first experience at the hospital as something entirely foreign and overwhelming:

The year I spent in pharmacy school didn't prepare me for any of this. Even if I had graduated, it wouldn't have made a difference. I was never supposed to do the work I do now. My first-year classes were mostly theoretical, and my lab courses were about mixing simple formulations, laying the foundation to build on in the coming years (p.54).

This quotation strengthens the metaphorical image of Salama's crossing of the threshold without preparation, leaving behind the safety of her youth and stepping into a world filled with peril and responsibility that allows no return. Thus, this stage symbolizes Salama's full commitment to her heroic journey, as she becomes bound to her new role as a healer and savior amid the horrors of war—despite being constantly haunted by trauma and fear.

3. Initiation

This stage is where a hero has transitioned to a special world, where they begin to truly face a new world full of trials, tribulations, obstacles, and opportunities for growth. Here, the main character is tested physically, mentally, and spiritually. They are forced out of their comfort zone, face real conflicts and discover strength within themselves as well as help from outside. This part consists of several stages, namely The Road Of Trials, The Meeting with The Goddess, Woman as Temptress, Atonement with the Father, and Apotheosis.

a. The Road of Trials

This stage represents the first sub-phase of the Initiation in Campbell's Hero's Journey, describing the hero's path through a series of

trials, challenges, and ordeals designed to test their strength, determination, and courage. These trials may take the form of physical dangers, internal conflicts, temptations, or failures that cause the hero to fall and rise repeatedly. Despite their difficulty, each test serves a crucial purpose: to strengthen the hero, expose weaknesses that must be overcome, and prepare them for the enlightenment that follows. In other words, The Road of Trials is a winding and arduous journey of growth and self-discovery through which the hero learns, matures, and proves their worth before attaining the ultimate goal.

In Salama Kassab's narrative, this stage is vividly reflected through the numerous hardships she endures after the Syrian war shatters her life. From the outset, Salama faces profound loss: her father and brother, Hamzah, are imprisoned, her mother is killed in a bombing, and she is left alone with her pregnant sister-in-law. This initial tragedy becomes the first trial that forges her emotional pain and deep sense of guilt. Furthermore, as a pharmacy student forced to serve as a medical volunteer in a war hospital, Salama continually confronts overwhelming suffering: treating the wounded, witnessing death on a daily basis, and struggling to save lives despite severe shortages of medicine and equipment. Every life she fails to save intensifies her trauma and moral burden, as if the blood of the dead remains imprinted on her hands.

Beyond the physical and emotional toll, Salama also faces a profound psychological struggle manifested through Khawf, the hallucinatory figure representing her deepest fears. Khawf symbolizes her anxiety and trauma, constantly urging her to flee Syria, yet simultaneously forcing her to

confront the harshness of reality. This inner conflict between her desire to escape for the sake of safety and her promise to Hamzah, and her guilt over abandoning those who still suffer constitutes one of the most significant trials in her journey.

*'Are you in pain, son?' he asks.
Ahmad shakes his head.
'Adrenalin and shock. He doesn't need morphine. He holds up a hand, interrupting me. 'Salama, it won't. If I could give my life so this boy would be safe and well and healthy, I would. But I can't. I can't help him. But I can help the little girl whose intestines are all over the floor. We can't save everyone (p.57).*

This quotation reveals the moral trial that Salama faces. She is forced to accept the painful truth that not everyone can be saved, no matter how strong her desire to do so. The line “*We can't save everyone*” powerfully encapsulates the hero's inner conflict the moment when Salama must confront her own limitations amid the immense suffering surrounding her.

Additionally, Khawf serves as a constant reminder of Salama's promise to Hamzah and Layla:

Khawf's voice cuts. "How he'd want you to leave. How he'd beg you." 'Salama,' Hamza's voice murmurs in my ears. It sounds bruised. 'Salama, you promised, remember? You would save Layla. And yourself. You'd make up for letting Mama die. You wouldn't go back on your word, right?' The backs of my eyes burn and I roll over to press the pillow over my head. 'Please, stop.' (p.118).

At a certain point, Khawf further reinforces that survival itself has become Salama's ultimate duty:

"I used a little girl's life as collateral. I risked her life. 'You did what you had to do,' Khawf says behind me. 'And it worked. Hamza would understand. And even if he didn't, these are dangerous times. You need to live.' 'Samar could have died.' I hiccup. I was going to have an innocent girl's murder on my conscience." But she didn't,' Khawf points out. 'She's alive, and you have your boat. Now get up, wipe your nose, and give Am his antibiotic for today. This is all for Layla, remember?' (p.136).

These excerpts collectively illustrate the depth of Salama's moral and psychological trials. She clings to her promise to protect Layla and redeem her guilt over her mother's death, yet she is simultaneously confronted with the harsh realization that survival often requires making painful and morally complex decisions. Such choices leave emotional scars and profound guilt but also mark the necessary trials that shape her transformation from a broken survivor into a resilient hero.

b. The Meeting With The Goddess

After overcoming the previous ordeals, the hero in Campbell's *Hero's Journey* typically encounters someone who provides guidance, love, or support to help them continue their path. In this stage, the hero meets a figure often symbolized as a woman who embodies unconditional love, wisdom, serenity, and self-acceptance (Campbell, 2020). However, this encounter should not always be interpreted literally as meeting a woman; rather, it represents a symbolic reconciliation with the hero's softer, spiritual, and emotional side. Through this experience, the protagonist gains a deeper understanding of love, sacrifice, and purpose, learning to perceive the world beyond personal struggle. The Meeting with the Goddess stage often signifies emotional healing and spiritual balance after enduring trials and suffering. Consequently, it serves as a transformative point that renews the hero's strength and reinforces their commitment to continue the spiritual and physical journey toward enlightenment and fulfillment.

In Salama's journey, this stage is reflected through her relationship with Layla, who functions as a source of love, hope, and emotional stability amid the chaos of war. Layla plays a crucial role in Salama's life by offering empathy, understanding, and unwavering support when Salama is overwhelmed by fear, guilt, and trauma caused by the Syrian conflict. Before this relationship deepens, Salama perceives life as a constant burden, defined solely by survival and loss. Layla's presence, however, provides Salama with a sense of belonging and emotional safety that allows her to endure the harsh realities around her.

Layla embodies the symbolic *Goddess* figure by representing compassion and the affirmation of life in a world dominated by violence and destruction. Through her bond with Layla, Salama experiences moments of warmth, emotional connection, and hope that help restore her humanity. Layla reminds Salama that love and care still exist despite suffering, enabling her to maintain her moral integrity and emotional strength. Consequently, Layla's role in Salama's journey signifies a moment of emotional healing and inner balance, marking *The Meeting with the Goddess* as a transformative stage that strengthens Salama's resolve to continue her heroic journey.

"Layla is my sister in every way that matters. She is the reason I keep breathing when everything else tells me to stop. 'Do not focus only on the darkness and the sadness,' Layla says. 'What is happening now, no matter how terrible it is, is not the end of the world. Change is difficult, and its difficulty varies depending on what needs to be changed'"(p. 58).

This quotation represents the emotional culmination of Salama's transformation in the Meeting with the Goddess stage, where she begins to open her heart and embrace love amidst war and uncertainty. Kenan's words

reflect both courage and surrender, the bravery to love despite the inevitability of loss, and the acceptance of joy in the present moment rather than in an uncertain future. His invitation to “find happiness here, in Homs,” symbolizes a profound act of defiance against despair, affirming that even within ruins, life and love can still flourish.

The quotation reflects a crucial emotional and psychological moment in Salama’s journey, particularly within the stage of *The Meeting with the Goddess*. Layla’s words emphasize hope, acceptance, and emotional resilience amid the devastation of war. By stating that what is happening “is not the end of the world,” Layla reframes Salama’s perception of suffering, encouraging her not to remain trapped in despair and sadness. This perspective allows Salama to recognize that pain and change, although difficult, are not final or meaningless.

Layla’s guidance functions as a form of emotional and spiritual healing. Her reminder not to focus solely on darkness and sorrow symbolizes the presence of compassion and unconditional love in Salama’s life. In the context of the Hero’s Journey, Layla embodies the symbolic *Goddess* figure who offers comfort, wisdom, and acceptance rather than physical strength or strategic aid. Through Layla’s words, Salama begins to regain emotional balance and learns to confront trauma without losing her humanity.

Furthermore, the quotation highlights Layla’s role as Salama’s emotional anchor. The statement “she is the reason I keep breathing” underscores the depth of their bond and illustrates how Layla gives Salama a

reason to survive despite overwhelming fear and loss. This moment signifies Salama's gradual acceptance of love as a sustaining force rather than a weakness. Love, in this sense, becomes a source of inner strength that enables Salama to endure suffering and continue her journey.

Therefore, this stage marks a significant turning point in Salama's psychological development. *The Meeting with the Goddess* in Salama's story is not a romantic encounter, but a symbolic reunion with compassion, hope, and life itself. Layla's presence restores Salama's emotional resilience and strengthens her resolve to face the challenges ahead, reaffirming the relevance of archetypal criticism in understanding Salama's transformation amid war and trauma.

c. Woman as Temptress

In the framework of the *Hero's Journey*, this stage represents a critical moment in which the hero is confronted with a powerful temptation that challenges their determination and diverts their focus from the ultimate goal of their journey. Such temptation may take the form of worldly pleasures, comfort, love, power, or even fear that provokes the desire to surrender. During this phase, the hero is tested mentally and emotionally to prove the extent of their commitment to the mission. If the hero successfully resists the temptation, they will emerge stronger and more prepared to advance toward the subsequent stage of personal transformation.

In *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow*, the stage of *The Temptation* is vividly portrayed through Salama Kassab's internal struggles as she faces one of the most profound psychological and moral challenges of her journey. After losing her entire family and enduring a life of suffering as a medical volunteer amid the Syrian war, Salama becomes engulfed by deep despair. Her accumulated fear, trauma, and guilt manifest as an overwhelming temptation to abandon everything and escape. This temptation primarily takes the form of her longing to flee Syria with Layla in search of safety and peace elsewhere. However, behind this desire lies a complex moral conflict, as Salama has made a promise to stay and protect Layla in accordance with her family's last wishes.

Her suffering intensifies when she discovers that her brother, Hamzah, is still alive but held captive in prison. This revelation deepens her emotional turmoil, strengthening her temptation to surrender. Yet it is precisely at this point that Salama's moral strength is tested whether she will succumb to fear or remain steadfast in her promise despite her broken spirit. The primary embodiment of this temptation is represented through the figure of Khawf, a manifestation of Salama's deepest fear and despair. Khawf continuously whispers that staying in Syria will only lead to death, insisting that the only way to survive is to leave. He becomes the internal voice that persistently tempts and tests Salama's resilience. This is reflected in the following quotation:

*"Khawf's voice is as deadly as nightshade. 'If you're not careful, Salama, you might become the instrument of your destruction.'
'I already changed my mind about leaving,' I grumble. 'So why are you tormenting me?'"*

His lips curl into a slow smile. You did. But a lot can happen between now and the boat's departure. I can't have that. You're not in control, Salama. I am. Remember: If you're arrested, then I'm not going anywhere..”(p. 194).

This quotation illustrates how Khawf functions as a symbolic representation of temptation, urging Salama to surrender and abandon her struggle. He implants fear by presenting the worst possible scenarios, causing Salama to doubt herself and nearly lose her sense of direction and purpose. Nevertheless, through her resistance to these temptations, Salama begins to discover her true inner strength, realizing that courage does not mean the absence of fear but rather the ability to endure despite it.

The temptation grows stronger as Salama realizes that continuing her mission means enduring ongoing pain and loss, while escaping would mean betraying the sacrifices made by others. This internal conflict captures *The Temptation* as a moral and spiritual trial, forcing Salama to choose between self-preservation and responsibility toward others. Throughout this stage, the love and hope she discovers in her relationship with Kenan become crucial forces that prevent her from falling into despair. Kenan's presence reminds Salama that life, despite its suffering, still holds meaning when shared with someone she loves. Through this realization, Salama understands that giving up is not an option and that true bravery arises from the willingness to persist amid fear and uncertainty.

Thus, the stage of *The Temptation* in Salama Kassab's journey represents a deeply emotional and transformative turning point. The temptation to surrender and escape the brutal reality of war becomes her greatest test before she ultimately discovers the true essence of courage and

humanity. This stage signifies Salama's inner transformation from a figure consumed by fear into one who comprehends that the greatest strength lies not in being fearless but in having the courage to stand firm despite fear's presence.

d. Atonement with The Father

The stage of Atonement with the Father represents a pivotal moment when the hero confronts a figure symbolizing supreme authority, power, or the primary source of fear. The "father" in this context does not necessarily refer to a biological parent, but rather to any force or entity that embodies a profound influence or challenge the hero must face to achieve personal transformation. At this stage, the hero often experiences a deep emotional or psychological confrontation, during which they must reconcile with their past, overcome guilt, and accept the truths they have long avoided. The process of *Atonement with the Father* marks the point where the hero begins to understand the meaning behind their suffering and discovers new wisdom and maturity. It also symbolizes the reconciliation between the hero's vulnerable and strong sides learning not to be ruled by fear, but to transform it into a source of strength as they move toward healing and enlightenment.

In Salama's journey, the stage of *Atonement with the Father* is symbolically represented through her relationship with Kenan. Kenan does not function as a literal father figure, but symbolizes reality, responsibility, and the acceptance of uncertainty in the context of war. Through his words and actions,

Kenan confronts Salama with the harsh truths of life, particularly the inevitability of loss, death, and difficult choices.

Kenan encourages Salama to face her fear rather than escape from it. His acknowledgment of life's unpredictability forces Salama to confront her guilt, trauma, and hesitation about continuing to live and love. This confrontation marks a psychological turning point, where Salama begins to reconcile with her past suffering and accept realities she previously resists. Through this process, fear no longer controls her, but transforms into a source of awareness and inner strength.

Thus, Kenan functions as a symbolic *father* figure who facilitates Salama's emotional and psychological maturity. The atonement occurs through acceptance and understanding rather than conflict. By reconciling with the realities Kenan represents, Salama gains wisdom and readiness to move forward toward healing and further transformation in her heroic journey. This transformation is clearly illustrated in the following quotation:

"We will write a book together. But we may not survive the next six days. We may be buried here. Anything can happen, and I do not want to wait any longer. No one knows what will happen. But I know what you feel, and you know what I feel. So let us find our happiness here, in Homs. Let us begin a new life here before we begin again somewhere else"(p. 314).

The quotation reflects a moment of acceptance and emotional maturity in Salama's journey. Kenan acknowledges the uncertainty and danger of life during war, emphasizing that survival is never guaranteed. This recognition represents a confrontation with reality, which aligns with the *Atonement with the Father* stage in Campbell's *Hero's Journey*.

Rather than offering false hope, Kenan encourages Salama to face uncertainty honestly and choose to live meaningfully in the present. His invitation to “find happiness here, in Homs” signifies Salama’s reconciliation with fear and impermanence. Through this moment, Salama learns that happiness and purpose do not depend on safety or certainty, but on acceptance and conscious choice.

Thus, the quotation marks a turning point in Salama’s psychological development, where she moves from fear and hesitation toward acceptance and inner strength, preparing her for further transformation in her heroic journey.

e. Apotheosis

The Apotheosis stage represents the phase in which the hero attains enlightenment, a higher understanding, or spiritual transformation after undergoing a series of arduous trials that test the limits of the body, mind, and soul. At this point, the hero is no longer driven by fear, personal ambition, or despair but instead reaches a profound comprehension of the true meaning of their journey and suffering. The hero gains a renewed perception of life and an awareness of the interconnectedness between themselves, the world, and a purpose greater than personal desires. Apotheosis is often depicted as a moment of inner tranquility, where the hero achieves a deeper state of consciousness, accepts all that has happened, and finds peace with both themselves and their surroundings. This stage symbolizes the transformation

of the hero from an ordinary individual into a spiritually elevated being, prepared to face the final stages of their journey with wisdom and serenity.

In the story of Salama Kassab, this stage occurs after she endures profound inner conflicts, loss, and relentless suffering. Having confronted her fears, trauma, and the temptation to surrender, Salama ultimately attains a new understanding of the meaning of courage and life. She realizes that her struggle is not merely for her own survival or for Layla's safety but also for the preservation of hope and humanity amidst the devastation of war. This awareness marks her spiritual transformation from a young woman consumed by fear and guilt to one who can perceive meaning beyond her suffering.

"This is the price of a future with freedom, Khawf. It's a price Hamza pays every day. But I'm Syrian. This is my land, and just like the lemon trees that have been growing here for centuries, spilt blood won't stop us. I have my faith in God. He'll protect me. I've been force-fed oppression, but I will no longer swallow its bitter taste. No matter what" (p.254).

This quotation illustrates Salama's spiritual turning point, in which she is no longer driven by fear, trauma, or regret but by courage, faith, and a higher purpose. At this stage, her devotion to her homeland and her belief in God become her sources of newfound strength. She no longer fights to atone for her guilt but because she believes her life holds meaning beyond herself. She accepts that pain and sacrifice are part of the price for her nation's freedom and a better future. This passage highlights Salama's transformation from a fearful and guilt-ridden girl into a woman at peace with her destiny, guided by faith and ready to face any risk for the sake of freedom and humanity.

"I've been living alone since October. For five months my mind has been spinning a fiction to keep my agony sealed away."

I gaze at her face, trying to commit her to memory. I needed her in my life. I needed that comfort and safety after I lost my whole world. The small moments of happiness I experienced with her were a lifeline. I know I'm owed so much, so I forged my own might life. She let me heal bit by bit. She's as real to me as anything" (p.308).

This quotation reflects Salama's growing awareness of the painful truth she has long denied that Layla, the figure she constantly interacts with and relies on emotionally, is in fact a manifestation of her own mind. She begins to acknowledge that Layla's presence is a coping mechanism, a psychological construct that helped her survive the trauma of losing her entire family. This realization demonstrates Salama's process of acceptance and self-reconciliation; she no longer hides behind illusion or guilt. By recognizing that "Layla" is a form of solace created by her own mind, Salama begins the process of genuine healing.

"He looks peaceful in his sleep, the worry lines around his eyes smoothed. His eyelashes are so impossibly long that they brush his cheekbones. I stare at him for a few more minutes, my heart expanding with love for him.

'We'll be OK,' I whisper, letting the night capture my wish. We're owed that at least. A life of not scanning rooftops, of not being relieved the ceiling didn't cave in on us during the night. He and I are owed a love story that doesn't end in tragedy" (p. 317).

This statement signifies the culmination of Salama's inner enlightenment following her long suffering during the war. At this stage, Salama has made peace with her past and recognizes that she deserves happiness and love. Her relationship with Kenan symbolizes new hope and emotional recovery from her deep wounds. Through her belief that their story does not have to end tragically, Salama affirms her transformation from a fearful, guilt-ridden girl into a brave, loving woman ready to live with renewed hope.

Thus, the Apotheosis stage in Salama Kassab's journey marks the pinnacle of her spiritual and emotional transformation. After enduring immense suffering, loss, and inner turmoil, Salama finally discovers peace, courage, and the true meaning of life. She is no longer trapped by fear or regret but rises with faith, love, and new hope. This enlightenment becomes the foundation for her final steps in the heroic journey as a figure who has healed, matured spiritually, and is ready to face the future with wisdom and serenity.

4. Return

The *Return* stage represents the final phase in the framework of the Hero's Journey, in which the hero has successfully completed the major mission or quest of their adventure. At this point, the hero must return to the ordinary world the place from which they initially departed when answering the call to adventure. According to Campbell (2020), once the hero has accomplished their heroic quest, they must return bearing a *trophy* or *boon* as a symbol of the rewards gained through their struggles. This boon serves as an analogy for the wisdom, knowledge, or spiritual enlightenment acquired by the hero, which can benefit not only themselves but also the community within their original world. However, the journey home is rarely easy. Along the way, the hero may still face obstacles and trials before they can truly reintegrate and resume a normal life as before. Within this stage, Campbell divides the *Return* into six sub-stages: Refusal of the Return, The Magic Flight, Rescue from Without, The Crossing of the Return Threshold, and Freedom to Live.

a. Refusal of The Return

This stage marks the point where the hero is expected to begin their journey back to the ordinary world. However, the hero often experiences an internal struggle that causes hesitation or even outright refusal to return. Such reluctance may arise from the feeling of not being ready to leave the new world, where they have found meaning and transformation or from fear of confronting the painful realities of their former life. A similar experience occurs with Salama Kassab in *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow*. Salama undergoes a profound inner conflict, feeling unwilling to continue living or return to a reality filled with loss, grief, and trauma. Khawf, who represents her fear, continuously influences her thoughts, persuading her to remain trapped in guilt and suffering.

Salama's refusal to return does not necessarily signify surrender; rather, it reflects the emotional tension between fear and the will to survive. She fears that the world she once knew has been destroyed and questions whether there is still a place for her within it. This hesitation encapsulates the stage of Refusal of the Return, where Salama is not yet ready to leave behind her past or face a new life unburdened by loss. Nevertheless, through her internal journey and the support of Kenan, Salama gradually realizes that she must move forward not only for herself but also for those who are no longer alive.

"I don't want to leave Homs. I don't want to go and abandon everything I've ever loved. I'm not ready for a new life, not when every corner of this city still holds memories and guilt"(p. 245).

This quotation clearly illustrates how Salama Kassab experiences the Refusal of the Return phase within the framework of the Hero's Journey. After enduring immense suffering from the war the loss of her family, friends, and future Salama remains emotionally bound to Homs, her hometown. She is not ready to leave the place that simultaneously embodies her pain and her memories.

In the context of Campbell's theory, this phase reflects the hero's psychological hesitation after overcoming great ordeals. Although rationally aware that she must continue living and escape for her safety, emotionally she remains unable to release the past. Guilt and trauma trap her between the desire to survive and the reluctance to move forward. Similar to Buddha's initial refusal to share his enlightenment out of fear that his message would be misunderstood, Salama also resists her "return" to a new life because she doubts her ability to exist beyond the suffering that has defined her. This demonstrates that, at this stage, Salama has not yet fully achieved her final transformation, as she continues to struggle to reconcile with loss and guilt.

b. The Magic Flight

After the hero experiences hesitation or refusal to return from the extraordinary world, the next stage is known as The Magic Flight. In this phase, even though the hero may still feel reluctant to go home for various

reasons, they must eventually return to their original world to bring the blessing, knowledge, or gift acquired from their journey. However, the journey back is rarely smooth or effortless. Often, the victory or reward that the hero has obtained provokes resistance from the forces or entities of the extraordinary world, which are unwilling to let the hero go. These opposing forces may attempt to reclaim what the hero has taken or present new trials such as pursuit, danger, or obstacles—intended to prevent the hero’s return. According to Campbell (2020), the hero’s success in bringing back the “elixir” or sacred boon often leads to a final conflict with the powers of the extraordinary world, testing the hero’s endurance and wisdom before they can fully return to the ordinary realm.

In *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow*, Salama experiences a similar situation when she attempts to leave Syria and pursue a safer life after enduring immense suffering and loss caused by the war. Although she is torn by the desire to stay in her homeland, she realizes that remaining means facing certain death. Nevertheless, the journey toward freedom is far from easy. When Salama decides to start a new life with Kenan and her younger siblings in Germany, they must embark on a long and perilous journey. Along the way, they face brutal border guards, uncertainty about their future, constant fear, and the ever-present threat of danger. This moment illustrates Salama’s Magic Flight her desperate yet determined effort to escape destruction and bring the “boon” of survival and hope to a new life.

“My muscles clench, my heart hammering fast, and I glance at Kenan and see the same fear in his eyes. Even if Am has never been stopped before, it doesn’t

mean that won't happen today. Minds and hearts can change. The soldiers he's struck a deal with might have got bored of their arrangement."(p. 373).

This quotation illustrates the intense tension and overwhelming fear experienced by Salama as she attempts to escape. She realizes that their safety depends entirely on luck and the decisions of others. In this case, the border soldiers. This feeling of fear and extreme vigilance represents the final trial she must endure before she can truly leave behind the world of danger. The moment emphasizes that The Magic Flight is not merely a physical journey, but also a spiritual passage toward freedom, where every step is fraught with threats and uncertainty. Another quotation further reinforces the inner conflict that Salama experiences.

"She holds me close, hugging my head to her chest. Tell me what happened. Through a blubber of tears, I gasp out each word. I can't look at her. Her arms go slack around me and she stiffens. For a long time she doesn't say anything. Muffled voices from outside filter through the door. I don't dare look at her, lost in the burning feeling inside my chest. 'Should we stay?' I say between hiccups.

'Salama. Her voice is quiet, defeated. 'Look at me.'

Reluctantly, I drag my eyes to hers and see them, ocean blue, leaking tears down her cheeks. "We're leaving," she says in a strange voice.." (p. 219).

In this quotation, Salama undergoes a profound emotional conflict that reflects her internal struggle between attachment to her homeland and the necessity of fleeing for survival. Although she wishes to remain in the place that holds her memories and identity, the circumstances of war compel her to leave in order to preserve her life. Similar to Steve Rogers in *Captain America: The First Avenger*, who confronts numerous obstacles in his attempt to return to the ordinary world after defeating his adversary but is prevented by the destruction of his aircraft, Salama also faces external dangers and inner turmoil. The devastation of war and her lingering sense of guilt create an

emotional barrier that makes her journey even more arduous. Nevertheless, her decision to continue symbolizes The Magic Flight, a stage in which the hero struggles to return to the ordinary world while carrying the enlightenment and transformation gained from previous trials. Salama's perseverance thus represents not only her desire for personal survival but also her effort to preserve the hope, love, and meaning of life that she has discovered through her transformative journey.

c. Rescue from Without

The next stage in the hero's journey is Rescue from Without. In this phase, the hero has endured numerous trials and reached the lowest point of their life when both physical and emotional strength are nearly depleted. Campbell (2020) explains that as long as a person remains alive, life itself will always attempt to pull them back, often through the intervention of others or external forces. When the hero is no longer capable of continuing their journey alone, someone or something from outside appears to assist them, helping them to rise again and return to the ordinary world. In other words, the Rescue from Without stage represents a moment when aid, love, or support from others becomes a crucial element that revives the hero's will to survive and return home.

This stage is clearly depicted in Salama Kassab's journey in *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow*. After losing her family, enduring the traumas of war, and being haunted by relentless guilt, Salama reaches the brink of despair.

She feels devoid of strength and contemplates surrendering to her circumstances. In this state of hopelessness, Salama and Kenan decide to flee Syria in search of safety. Their journey leads them to the sea, where they board a small boat with other refugees, hoping to reach European shores. However, the voyage soon turns catastrophic. The boat is struck by a violent storm and capsizes, separating Salama from Kenan and leaving her adrift and alone in the vast, merciless ocean.

This moment symbolizes the absolute nadir of Salama's existence. Adrift in the cold, dark sea, she struggles against hypothermia, losing consciousness, and teetering between life and death. The ocean here serves as a metaphorical boundary between worlds the old and the new, destruction and rebirth. Despite her body's frailty, Salama clings to fragments of consciousness through memories and hope: of Syria, of her lost family, and of Kenan, who embodies her reason to live. Her internal struggle in this scene is profoundly captured in the following quotation:

Caught in the haze of hypothermia, I dream of that Syria. A Syria whose soul isn't chained in iron, held captive by those who love to hurt her and her children. A Syria Hamza fought and bled for. A Syria Kenan dreams about and illustrates. A Syria Layla wanted to raise her daughter in. A Syria I would have found love and life and adventure in. A Syria where, at the end of a long life, I'd return to the ground that raised me. A Syria that's my home.

The day passes and I lose track of time. Darkness finally settles and I have no energy left, and my lips stop moving. The cold has invaded every nerve. I don't know if Kenan has stopped talking as well or if I've lost the ability to hear. It takes everything in me to remember where I am and that I need to breathe. Somewhere in the distance, a glow of light suddenly appears. I blink, its harshness hurting my pupils. I blink again.

Am I dead? (p. 407).

The quotation illustrates Salama's condition at the very brink between life and death. She is trapped in the darkness of the sea, nearly losing

consciousness due to the cold and exhaustion. In that fragile state, Salama begins to dream of a peaceful Syria one free from suffering a symbolic image of hope that persists within her even as her body weakens. Her memories of Syria, Hamzah, Layla, and most profoundly, Kenan, become the inner strength that drives her to keep fighting. The sudden appearance of light in the distance symbolizes external salvation, or *rescue from without*. That light represents a new hope and the intervention of an outside force pulling Salama back from the threshold of death. At this moment, she is “rescued” not only physically but also spiritually. Through the help of others and the love that continues to live in her memory, Salama regains her consciousness and her will to survive.

Thus, this scene embodies the essence of the *Rescue from Without* stage as described by Campbell when external forces, whether in the form of tangible aid or emotional and spiritual support, intervene to restore the hero to the path of life. For Salama, this rescue marks a profound turning point, symbolizing her rebirth from despair into hope and her renewed courage to continue living.

d. The Crossing of The Return Threshold

The stage of *The Crossing of the Return Threshold* illustrates the moment when the hero returns from the extraordinary world to the ordinary one after enduring a series of trials and transformative experiences. At this point, the hero faces a new challenge how to reintegrate into normal life after undergoing profound inner change. According to Campbell (2020), this stage

is not merely a physical journey back to one's place of origin, but also a spiritual and psychological process of reconciling the old consciousness with the new understanding gained through the adventure. The hero may feel estranged, disconnected, or find it difficult to adapt, having witnessed and experienced a reality vastly different from that of others in the familiar world. This stage also signifies the process of integration, in which the hero strives to bring forth the wisdom, insights, and values learned throughout the journey into the ordinary world. In other words, the hero's return is not simply a physical one; it is a return imbued with new meaning and a deeper perspective on life.

This transition is vividly reflected in the story of Salama Kassab, who survives the unimaginable suffering of war in Syria. After losing her family, her friends, and nearly her own life during the perilous escape across the sea to Europe, she begins a new life with Kenan in Toronto far from the sounds of war, the smoke of bombs, and the constant shadow of fear that once haunted her. Yet, the process of adaptation does not come easily. Salama now finds herself in a "new world" that is peaceful and orderly, a world utterly different from the chaos she once knew. Psychologically, this becomes its own form of trial, for although her body has found safety, her soul remains tethered to the battlefields of Syria. She carries within her the invisible scars of trauma, memories of loss, and the weight of survival. Salama and Kenan often remain trapped in fleeting moments of fear: the sound of an airplane, the bustle of a crowded street, each capable of pulling them back to the horrors they fled. At

this juncture, Salama's journey reminds us that "returning" does not necessarily mean "healing." The path to wholeness is an essential part of the hero's reentry into the ordinary world. This is poignantly illustrated in the following passage:

"Kenan and I have been in Toronto for four months, and I still haven't got used to the chill. It took Kenan and me two years not to go sick with fear at those. And sometimes we still forget, the trauma coming back to us in the form of shaking hands and panic-filled eyes. There are times when the nightmares trickle through our sleep like belladonna's poison. They startle Kenan awake; he gasps for air, sweat running down his forehead. They fill his head with paranoia, convincing him that Lama and Yusuf are trapped in Homs or drowning in the Mediterranean. Only when he calls his uncle in Germany to talk to them does he calm down" (p.409).

This quotation illustrates that although Salama has returned to a peaceful world, the scars of war remain deeply imprinted within her. The sound of an airplane something ordinary to most people becomes a trigger of fear for Salama, evoking memories of bombings and air raids from her past. The trembling of her hands serves as a manifestation of the trauma that has not yet fully healed. However, at the same time, the passage also reflects a process of adaptation and acceptance: despite the lingering fear, Salama has become aware of it, confronts it, and gradually learns to coexist with her trauma.

In the context of The Hero's Journey theory proposed by Campbell (2020), this stage signifies the hero's successful transition across the boundary between the old world and the new world. Salama has endured profound suffering, undergone symbolic death, and experienced spiritual rebirth; she now returns to a peaceful world as a stronger and more self-aware individual. The stage of The Crossing of the Return Threshold in Salama's journey does not merely represent her physical return to a place of safety but also reflects

her achievement in reconciling her past with her present. Through her heroic journey, Salama carries the “boon” she has gained resilience, courage, and the capacity to sustain hope amidst wounds and traumas that have not yet fully healed.

e. Freedom to Live

The final stage in the hero’s journey is Freedom to Live. At this phase, the hero has attained inner peace and true freedom after enduring the full sequence of trials, suffering, and personal transformation. The hero is no longer dominated by fear of the past or anxiety about the future, but instead lives in full acceptance of herself and her present life. Freedom to Live also marks the conclusion of the heroic cycle, the moment when the hero has discovered the deepest meaning of her journey and is able to live anew with heightened awareness. Campbell (2020) explains that true freedom does not imply the absence of suffering, but rather the ability to live peacefully with one’s past, accept reality, and recognize that life continues even when wounds and losses remain. In this context, Freedom to Live represents spiritual victory: the hero has successfully reconciled the dualities of life and death, hope and despair, past and future.

In *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow*, this stage is clearly manifested in Salama Kassab’s life after leaving Syria and beginning a new life with Kenan in a safe country. After enduring the trauma of war, the loss of her family, and profound guilt, Salama finally reaches a point where she can start

reorganizing her life. In her new environment, she no longer hears the blasts of bombs or the screams of fear, but instead lives in a peaceful and calm setting. Nevertheless, shadows of the past occasionally resurface; the sound of airplanes, for example, can still evoke fear and bitter memories that are difficult to erase. Over time, however, Salama gradually learns to reconcile with these wounds. Together with Kenan, she discovers ways to confront her trauma and to appreciate the simple pleasures of life once again. This is exemplified in the following passage;

"It's a small one-bedroom apartment, but it's home. A few boxes still clutter the floor. Tariq and his friends furnished the apartment for us, and I had to hide in the bathroom to cry from gratitude for a solid ten minutes before I could face anyone. Sprawled across the dining table are Kenan's sketchbooks, all filled with drawings of our stories. Next to them is a half-empty knafeh pan. The charcoal portrait he drew of me at the Brandenburg Gate is enclosed in a wooden frame, hanging over the couch in the living room" (p. 414).

"He smiles, holding up his phone. An English song I don't know croons out. Dancing with my wife. My eyes burn. We weave distractions between the bouts of agony. Reminding the other we're still here. He drops the phone on the couch beside his laptop, swaying me with the music." (p. 415).

This excerpt shows that, even though trauma and painful memories have not entirely disappeared, Salama and Kenan strive to live life with hope. Simple actions such as listening to a song and dancing become symbols of the new freedom they have found a freedom to feel happiness even accompanied by the wounds of the past. The tears that fall are no longer from fear, but as a form of release and acceptance of the long journey they have undergone.

In the context of Freedom to Live, this moment signifies that Salama has achieved inner peace. She is no longer controlled by guilt or fear, but is able to live in the present with a more open heart. The true freedom that Salama

feels does not mean forgetting her suffering, but accepting that the suffering is a part of herself that has shaped her courage and her love.

Therefore, the Freedom to Live stage marks the peak of Salama's spiritual transformation. She has found balance between past and present, between loss and hope. Now, Salama lives not merely to survive, but to truly experience life, a freedom born from strength, love, and steadfastness after undergoing her heroic journey.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter presents the conclusions formulated based on the research problems, analysis results, and discussions from the previous chapters. In addition, it also provides the researcher's recommendations for future studies related to the applied theory or the literary work analyzed.

A. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* by Zoulfa Katouh through Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey or Monomyth theory. This study analyzes Salama Kassab's journey in Zoulfa Katouh's *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* using Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey theory and the archetypal criticism approach. This study focuses on identifying and explaining the stages of the Hero's Journey experienced by Salama and examines the symbolic and psychological transformations reflected throughout her journey.

The findings reveal that Salama's journey follows the core structure of the Hero's Journey, which consists of the stages of Departure, Initiation, and Return. In the Departure stage, Salama begins her journey as an ordinary young woman whose life is disrupted by the outbreak of war, forcing her to face fear, loss, and moral responsibility. The Initiation stage presents a series

of physical and psychological trials that challenge her endurance, faith, and emotional stability, including trauma, inner conflict, and the struggle between survival and compassion. Through these trials, Salama experiences significant psychological growth and transformation. In the Return stage, although it is not marked by Salama's physical return to normal life, Salama achieves an internal return marked by self-awareness, emotional maturity, and acceptance of her identity and purpose.

From an archetypal criticism perspective, Salama represents the Hero archetype rooted in the collective unconscious. Her journey symbolizes the universal human experience of facing suffering, fear, and moral dilemmas in times of crisis. The patterns of struggle, resilience, and transformation seen in her character reflect a basic structure that transcends cultural and temporal boundaries. Salama's encounters with love, loss, and sacrifice become symbolic moments that contribute to her psychological integration and inner strength.

In conclusion, *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* symbolically and psychologically represents the Hero's Journey through the character of Salama Kassab. The integration of Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey theory and archetype criticism proves effective in revealing the deeper meaning of Salama's transformation. This study confirms that the novel not only depicts a personal story of survival during war, but also reflects universal themes of human resilience, psychological growth, and the search for meaning amid suffering. Therefore, archetypal criticism remains a relevant and valuable

approach to analyzing contemporary literary works that address trauma, conflict, and the enduring power of the human spirit.

B. Suggestion

This research is expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions to the field of literary studies, particularly in the application of Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey theory in modern literature.

First, for future researchers, this study can serve as a reference for exploring the structural and psychological development of characters in various literary works. Future studies may expand the scope of analysis by integrating interdisciplinary approaches such as feminist theory, trauma studies, or postcolonial perspectives to deepen the understanding of the hero's journey within broader cultural and social contexts. Such approaches may enrich the interpretation of how modern narratives reconstruct heroism through the lens of resilience, identity, and human struggle.

Second, for students of English literature, this research encourages the appreciation of the hero's journey as a universal narrative framework that reflects human growth and transformation. By examining how the Monomyth structure operates in contemporary novels, students may develop stronger analytical skills in narrative interpretation and character analysis, while also understanding the relevance of classical theories within modern contexts.

Finally, for readers and educators, the findings of this study highlight that heroism can arise from ordinary individuals who face

extraordinary circumstances with empathy, courage, and moral strength. The novel *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* offers a profound reminder that compassion and perseverance remain essential virtues in sustaining humanity, even amid suffering and loss. Therefore, this research hopes to inspire further literary discussions that celebrate human resilience and the timeless values embodied in heroic narratives.

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CURRICULUM VITAE



Ananda Putri Anggraeni was born in Kediri on Desember 16, 2002. She graduated from SMA Negeri 6 Kediri in 2020. During his high school education, he actively participated in several activities such as Islamic spirituality, Scouting, and Journalism. She began his college education in 2021 at the English Literature Department of UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. During his studies, she was active in the Student Press and served as secretary of the UAPM for one year. Not only that, he also served on the organizing committee for major campus events such as the Cultural Festival. From his fifth to seventh semesters, she took courses in cinematography and produced several short films. She also intership for three months as an editor at JTV Malang.