

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Literature often acts as a mirror for human experiences in extreme situations, including the psychological suffering caused by armed conflict and war. This suffering is skillfully depicted through characters and storylines, especially in illustrating the psychological states of characters that are usually unseen in real life. Therefore, literary studies focusing on a character's psychological conditions are essential for understanding the human side behind these horrific events. As a result, these extreme experiences have had the most profound impact, particularly on an individual's mental health, such as psychological trauma, especially for those who experience it firsthand. According to Judith L. Herman (1992), research on psychological trauma is ongoing and constantly evolving, aligned with political movements. The concept of trauma initially emerged with hysteria, associated with women, followed by shell shock from World War I and the Vietnam War, and later the development of a new trauma, known as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is a psychological condition experienced by someone after going through or witnessing extreme and life-threatening events, such as violence or war (Horwitz, 2018:4). It not only affects a person's mental state but also influences how individuals see themselves, others, and the world around them. In particular, the persistent conflict in Syria since 2011, widely recognized as one of the

worst humanitarian crises since World War I, shows the real and devastating effects of such trauma. According to the Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS, 2018), more than half a million people have died since the conflict began in 2011, 13.5 million Syrians need humanitarian assistance, over 6.4 million are internally displaced, and more than 5 million have become refugees. In fact, in 2015, SAMS recorded Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder as the most common mental condition among its population. It highlights that post-traumatic is not just a theoretical idea but a real psychological experience for many, especially those living in armed conflict zones. Reflecting this reality, the historical and social conditions of the war in Syria form the backdrop for *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* (2022) by Zoulfa Katouh, which depicts the psychological struggles of the character Salama shaped by these real-life events.

As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow (2022) tells the story of Salama Kassab, a teenage girl living in Syria during the Arab Spring civil war. Before the conflict, Salama lived a peaceful life with her family. However, the war completely changed her life after violence impacted her family and her home was destroyed by a bomb attack. Amidst the suffering, Salama became a medical volunteer at Zaytouna Hospital and continued to witness the tragic effects of war on civilians. These experiences caused Salama to suffer from PTSD, which affected her mental and emotional well-being throughout the story. As she struggled to face the realities of war, Layla and Kenan appeared as figures who offered emotional support and became sources of hope for Salama to keep going.

With these successive inner conflicts, this thesis will analyze the psychological conditions experienced by Salama using Judith L. Herman's theory of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. In his book entitled *Trauma and Recovery* (1992), Herman has discussed the origins of the term trauma and how Post-Traumatic emerged. Through the character Salama will be analyzed how far a war affects a person's mental condition and how a trauma changes a person.

1.2. Research Problems

1. What are the symptoms of PTSD of Salama in *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* by Zoulfa Katouh?
2. What are the causes of PTSD of Salama in *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* by Zoulfa Katouh?
3. What are the effects of PTSD of Salama in *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* by Zoulfa Katouh?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze the symptoms of PTSD of Salama in *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* by Zoulfa Katouh
2. To analyze the causes of PTSD of Salama in *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* by Zoulfa Katouh

3. To analyze the effects of PTSD of Salama in *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* by Zoulfa Katouh.

1.4. Previous Studies

The author has found some articles related to the novel *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* by Zoulfa Katouh and related to the topic. The article is entitled Salama's Hallucinations as the Impact of the Syrian Revolution in Zoulfa Katouh's *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* (Harianja, 2025) and Salama's Hallucinations Analysis in Zoulfa Katouh's *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* (Hapsari, 2025). Both articles share some similarities in discussing Salama's hallucinations. However, in the first article, the author presents a more specific discussion, covering the symptoms, causes, and impacts of the hallucinations. The second article focuses on Salama's hallucinations as her hidden desires.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in Zoulfa Katouh's *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* (El Gebali, 2025). *Invisible Wounds: Syrian War Trauma and PTSD in As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* by Zoulfa Katouh (Shabbir et al., 2024). Both articles share some similarities in discussing Salama's Post-Traumatic. In the first article, the author discusses Salama's symptoms of PTSD, including guilt, avoidance, and hallucinations. The second article discusses Salama's PTSD due to the Syrian War, including the analysis of Salama's hallucinations as the representation of Salama's fear and her mental conditions.

The Portrayal of the Main Character's Trauma in *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* (2022) (Nopriyanto, 2024), discusses the trauma experienced by Salama, including the symptoms, hallucinations and panic attack. Salama Kassab's Personality in *as long as the Lemon Trees Grow* by Zoulfa Katouh (Aliyya, 2024), discusses Salama's personality structure, including id, ego, superego, and character development in Salama's character.

Based on a review of previous studies, most research on Zoulfa Katouh's *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* (2022) has focused on analyzing the main character's identity and trauma in general. Some studies have discussed the main character's psychological state, but they typically use a broad trauma approach without referencing a specific, systematic theoretical framework. Current study introduces a new perspective by analyzing Salama's character more systematically using Judith L. Herman's Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder theory in *Trauma and Recovery* (1992), specifically through the classification of symptoms such as intrusion, hyperarousal, and constriction (numbing), along with the causes and effects of these symptoms on the main character. Consequently, this study not only identifies the presence of post-trauma but also categorizes the symptoms, causes, and effects both conceptually and clinically. This approach offers a new contribution to the psychological analysis of the novel because it combines character study with a more precise and applicable trauma theoretical framework.

1.5. Scope of the Study

This research focuses on analyzing the main character, Salama Kassab, in the novel *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* (2022) by Zoulfa Katouh, using the theory of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder by Judith L. Herman from *Trauma and Recovery* (1992). The main character in *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* suffers from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder caused by traumatic experiences during the war in Syria, which affect her psychological, emotional, and behavioral state throughout the story. Through this study, it examines narrative elements such as character, characterization, setting, and conflict. Additionally, it analyzes Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in the main character, including symptoms (intrusion, hyperarousal, and numbing), causes (direct and indirect traumatic events), and effects (sleep disturbances, increasing mental health, and avoidance).

1.6. Writing Organization

The writer arranges this paper by dividing it into several chapters. The chapters are as follows:

Chapter I INTRODUCTION

The first chapter consists of background of the study, research problem, objectives of study, previous studies, scope of the study, and organization of the writing

Chapter II THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The second chapter consists of the theories used to analyze the research object and the research method. It consists of relevant and precise theories used to explain the narrative aspects of the novel.

Chapter III DISCUSSION

The third chapter consists of the result of the analysis, connecting the novel's narrative with the theory used. It consists of the intrinsic elements discussion and extrinsic elements discussion.

Chapter IV CONCLUSION

The fourth chapter consists of the summary of the previous chapter.

Bibliography