



**TRAUMA AND SELF-DESTRUCTIVE RESPONSES EXPERIENCED BY
ROBIN SWIFT IN R. F. KUANG'S *BABEL, OR THE NECESSITY OF
VIOLENCE* (2022)**

A THESIS

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
Undergraduate Degree Majoring Literature in English Department
Faculty of Humanities Diponegoro University

Submitted by:

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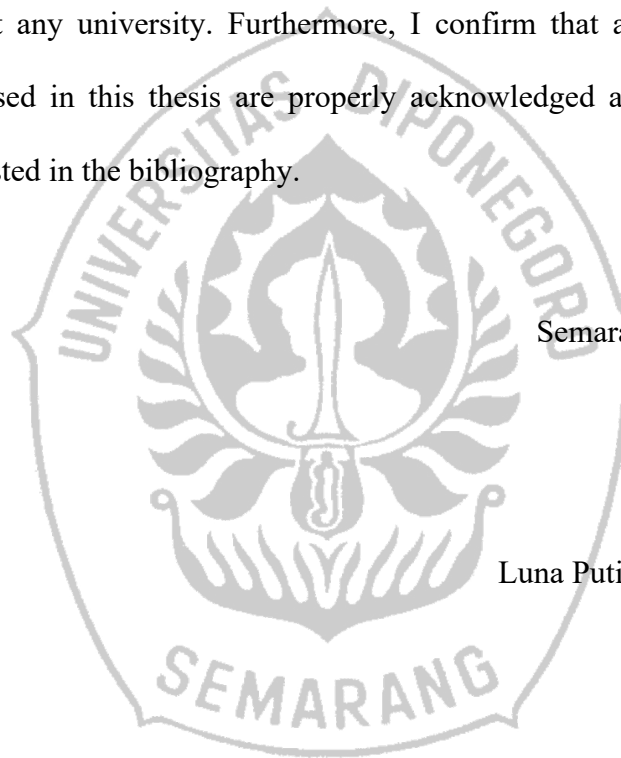
2026

PRONOUNCEMENT

I hereby declare that this thesis entitled “Trauma and Self-Destructive Responses Experienced by Robin Swift in R.F. Kuang’s *Babel, or the Necessity of Violence* (2022)” is entirely my own work. The research and writing process were carried out independently and do not contain materials previously submitted for diploma, undergraduate, master’s, or doctoral degrees at any university. Furthermore, I confirm that all references and sources used in this thesis are properly acknowledged and limited to the sources listed in the bibliography.

Semarang, 18 May 2026

Luna Puti Aulia Setiawanta

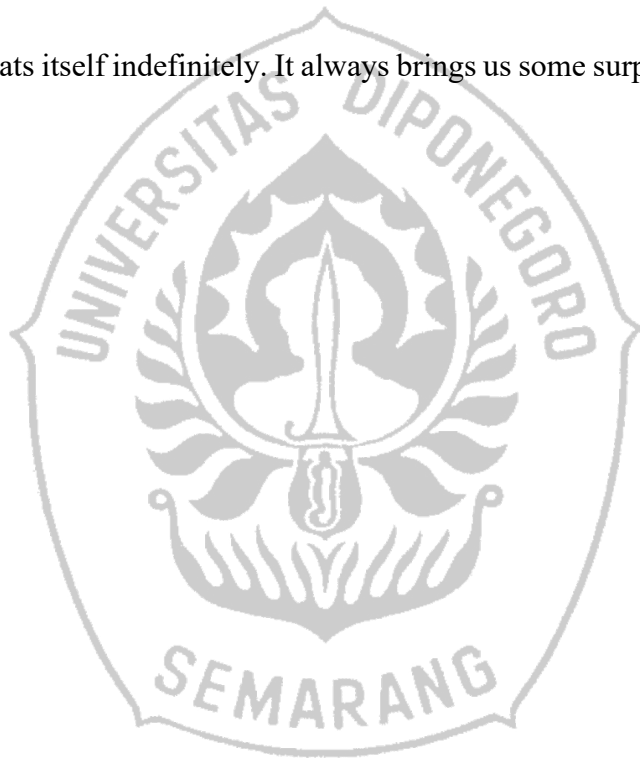


MOTTO AND DEDICATION

“It’s okay to fail. I mean, let’s do it and fail! We’re not geniuses. So we won’t be able to move forward if we don’t fail.” — **Will Serfort**

“She’s too focused on the frustration of what she can’t do than the joy of what she can. Being inexperienced isn’t a sin. In her rush to improve, I hope she doesn’t lose her footing.” — **Qifrey**

“Fate never repeats itself indefinitely. It always brings us some surprises.” — **Klein Moretti**



This thesis is dedicated to those who lost themselves along the way;

may we find ourselves again.


APPROVAL

**TRAUMA AND SELF-DESTRUCTIVE RESPONSES
EXPERIENCED BY ROBIN SWIFT IN R.F. KUANG'S *BABEL, OR
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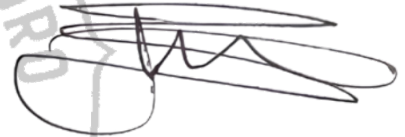
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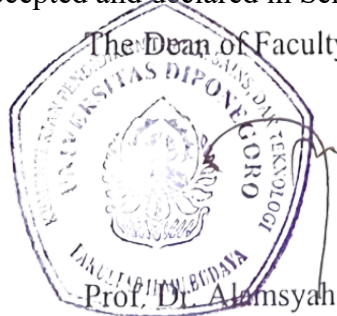


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forward despite the uncertainty. This thesis stands not only as the completion of a degree, but also as a testament to a journey of losing and slowly rediscovering yourself. If nothing else, let these pages remind you that even when you felt unseen, you never truly stopped trying to find your way home to yourself.

This thesis is far from perfect and has several limitations. So I welcome constructive criticism, suggestions and feedback for future improvement. It is hoped that this study may be a useful reference for further research in the field of literary studies that deals with the colonial trauma, identity conflict and self-destruction.

Semarang, 18 May 2026

Luna Puti Aulia Setiawanta

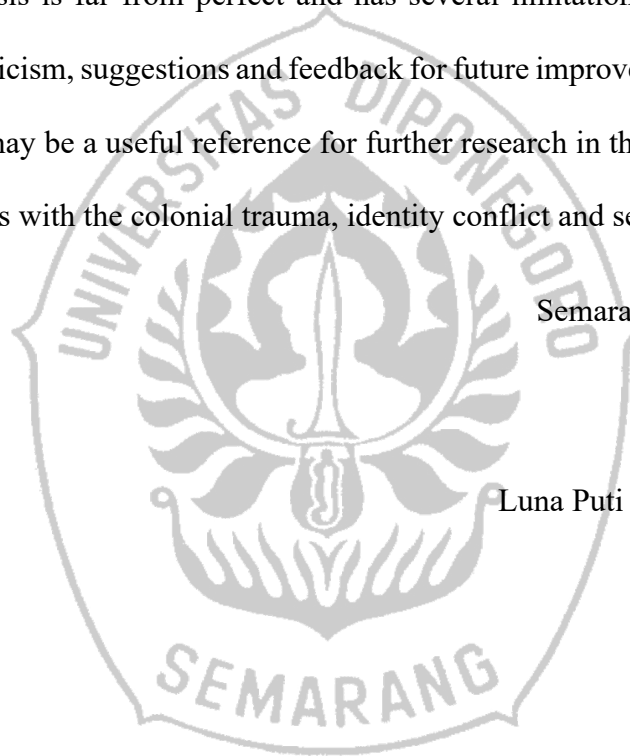


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ABSTRACT

This research analyzes the self-destruction of the main character, Robin Swift, in the novel *Babel, or The Necessity of Violence* (2022) by R.F. Kuang. The study aims to explain how the trauma of colonization results in Robin Swift's self-destruction through repetition, grief, repression, and identity conflicts. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method, with data in the form of narratives, dialogues, and the actions of characters in the novel. The results show that Robin's trauma develops through colonial power relations, outsider identity, moral conflict, and repeated experiences of loss. Drawing on Cathy Caruth's Psychological Trauma Theory in her book *Unclaimed Experience* (1996), these experiences remain unprocessed, continues to return through guilt, denial, and psychological fragmentation, which slowly erodes Robin's ability to defend himself. The study also finds that Robin's destructive actions are not only related to political resistance but also develop from the accumulation of colonial trauma and psychological exhaustion that persist throughout his life.

Keywords: Trauma; Colonialism; Self-Destructive; Belatedness; Repetitio

