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والثلاثون

الأسطورة والرمز في الأدب: دراسة مقارنة «الخيميائي» لباولو كويلو و«ذئبة الحب والكتب»

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المستخلص:

استهدف البحث تقديم تحليلاً مقارنةً للأسطورة والرمزية في رواية "الخيميائي" لبول كويلو (١٩٨٨) وفي أعمال محسن الرملي "ذئبة الحب والكتب" (٢٠١٥)، وستحلل كيف تُسهم البنى الأسطورية واللغة الرمزية في مساعدة أبطال كلتا الروايتين في رحلتهم نحو اكتشاف ذاتهم ضمن التراث الأدبي الغربي والعربي. وتعتمد الدراسة على إطارين نظريين هما "رحلة البطل" (الأسطورة الأحادية) لجوزيف كامبل و"النظرية النموذجية" لكارل يونغ. وتستكشف الرموز المشتركة من خلال منهج مقارنة قائم على التحليل الرمزي والنموذجي. ويتضح أن الروايتين، تتلاقيان في المستوى الصوفي، كما شكلت الرمزية إطاراً يُتيح إعادة بناء هوية الشخصية الرئيسية. تجمع القصة بين مفاهيم صوفية قديمة ونماذج يونغ لانتقاد الحياة المادية وإعادة تعريف الذات، كما تُسهم في سد الفجوة ربط السياق السري العربي للرملي بالنقايد الأدبية الغربية لكويلو، مع التركيز على خصوصية النقد الأسطوري والتحول النمطي، لإثبات أن السرد القصصي يعمل على إعادة بناء التجربة الإنسانية عبر الحدود الثقافية، تم تقديم عدد من التوصيات أبرزها توسيع نطاق البحث المقارن لمجموعة أوسع من الروائيين العراقيين، وفهم كيف يمكن للسرد أن يعالج موضوعات كالصدمة والهوية الوطنية باستخدام الرمزية والأساطير.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الأسطورة، الرمزية، كويلو، الرملي، الخيميائي، ذئبة الحب والكتب.

Myth And Symbolism in Literature: A Comparative Study 'THE ALCHEMIST' By Paulo Coelho and Iraqi Novel Of. "SHE-WOLF OF LOVE AND BOOKS" By Muhsin El Ramli

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Abstract

This study will attempt to conduct a comparative analysis of myth and symbolism in *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho and the Iraqi Novel *She-Wolf of Love and Books* by Muhsin El Ramli. It will also examine the use of mythic structure and symbolic language in the journey of self-discovery of the protagonists in the Western and the Arabs literary traditions. The research is based on two theories: Joseph Campbell's Hero and the Heroic journey (monotheistic myth) and the paradigm theory proposed by Carl Jung. It examines common symbols by comparing the symbols on the premise of symbolic and paradigm analysis. The two novels meet at the same mystic level in which symbolism is a pattern to build up the identity of the protagonist. Combining the Sufi ideas of the past and the Jungian models, both stories are aimed at criticizing material life and reconstructing the self. They also serve to fill in the gap between the context of the narratives of the Al-Ramli and the Coelho literary traditions through the focus of specificity of the myth criticism and stereotypical transformation to assert that narrative fiction is used to recreate the human experience across the boundaries of cultures. Several suggestions were put forward, and the first was the need to expand the field of comparative research to a wider sample of the Iraqi novelists, and to understand how the theme of trauma and national identity can be overcome with the help of symbolism and myths.

Keywords: Al-Ramli, Coelho, Myth, *She-Wolf of Love & Books*, Symbolism, *The Alchemist*.

Introduction

Mythology and symbolism have always held a special place in world literature as two of the most powerful narrative tools that help writers explore the most important aspects of human experience and identity. These elements transcend linguistic and cultural barriers, giving literary works a universal appeal. *The Alchemist* (1988) by Paulo Coelho is one of the most powerful literary works of the modern era, known for its rich symbolism and spiritual perspective. In this novel, Coelho created a mythical story using the



character of Santiago, a shepherd, and his journey, drawing on the symbolism of the soul and the journey adopted by Campbell.

On the other hand, the novel *The Wolf of Love and Books* by Iraqi author Muhsin al-Ramli is a spiritual and highly sensitive story that combines fantasy and the search for the soul by Hayam (the main character). The story predicts the emotional aspects of love, suffering, and identity confusion. It utilizes the theories of Joseph Campbell (*The Hero's Journey*) and Carl Jung (*Archetypal Theory*) to analyze psychological and spiritual transformation. It is characterized by its ability to evoke imagination, spirituality, and symbolism with a mythical character, helping to express oneself and restore the soul and identity.

Problem statement :

Although *The Alchemist* has received widespread critical interest, especially concerning its symbolic and mythical aspects, most studies have analyzed the journey of Santiago with reference to the hero's journey and the role of the important symbols, which include the desert, the treasure, and cosmic signs influencing the process of spiritual transformation. The philosophical and mythological dimensions of the novel have also been highlighted in other academic resources, which support the argument that it is a spiritually based text and an allegorical one.

Al-Ramli has not been similarly treated by *She-Wolf of Love and Books*, nor have books in which he wrote his commentary on *Modern Europe*, particularly not in works composed in English. Even though some Arabic-language sources have focused on the emotional impact of the novel and symbolic metaphors of the she-wolf and the books as an identity, memory, and resistance, these are still rather narrow interpretations of the novel. The lack of a consistent mythical or comparative analysis of the novel in a wider cross-cultural context is also quite a conspicuous gap in the current body of scholarship.

Moreover, most studies have the propensity to read *The Alchemist* as an all-purpose spiritual story without intensely analyzing its portrayal of the East or questioning the cultural baggage it carries in its mythic vision. *She-Wolf of*



Love and Books, on the other hand, has not been discussed in terms of mythical or symbolic in the Western academic discourse.

Besides, even though The Alchemist has traditionally been interpreted as a spiritual allegory in general, the literature contains a fair deal of information about the particular cultural undertones of the novel. In its turn, She-Wolf of Love and Books does not have a specific mythological or symbolic interpretation in the Western academic discourse. The study fills these gaps by putting two particular theories into practice to show the detailed design of both texts:

Heroes' Journey (Monomyth) The Hero's Journey by Joseph Campbell: It is applied to examine the structural phases of the transformation of the protagonists, between the first phase, the Call to Adventure, and the last phase, the Return.

Archetypal Theory of Carl Jung: The Theory was used to explain the models of characters that are universal, like the Seeker, the Mentor, and the Shadow, and the symbolic significance of repetitive motifs, such as the desert and the wolf.

Through their intersection, the research shifts away to a thorough analytical discourse about the role of the archetypal forces in self-discovery in Western and Arabic backgrounds. Thus, the study is a contribution to the body of literature because it provides the missing theoretical framework based on the comparison between the myth and symbolism used to construct the hero's journey to self-knowledge.

Main Question:

What do mythical structures and symbolic language in She-Wolf of Love and Books and The Alchemist help the hero transform into himself?

Sub-questions:

- What do the two novels have in common? What archetypal symbols (e.g., the journey, desert, books) can be found to share?
- What role do these factors play in the personality of the main character in the self-discovery process?

**Methodology:**

Comparative Literary Analysis: This paper will use a comparative method to explore the interaction between *The Alchemist* and *She-Wolf of Love and Books* and myth and self-discovery.

Theoretical Framework: Jungian psychology and spiritual transformation are used to examine the theories of Joseph Campbell (*The Hero Journey*) and Carl Jung (*Archetypal Theory*).

Symbolic Analysis: The primary symbols, rather, the desert, the mentor, the books, and the wolf, are understood in terms of their archetypal functions in the story.

Limitations

In this study, we will confine ourselves to the theme of myth, symbolism, and the heroic journey in the work of *The Alchemist* and *She-Wolf of Love and Books* based on the selected passages.

Research Objectives

1. The main idea is to explore how mythical architecture and symbolic language reveal the process of self-discovery of the main character. Specific goals include:
2. Using similar symbols and archetypes (e.g., the desert, books, wolf, and mentor) to replicate the inner change in the hero.
3. Comparing how myth and symbolism are used to build individual and spiritual identity in the two texts.
4. The use of Jungian theories (Seeker, Mentor, and Shadow) to the narrative transformation.

Importance of the research:

Literary: Comparing the ways both Western and Arabic literature use mythical and symbolic patterns to cover universal human experiences across geographical borders.

Theoretical: The application of Campbell and Jung to the interpretations of traditional structures of modern narratives using Campbell, *The Hero's Journey*, and Jung, *the Archetypal*



Theory.Analytical: Providing a specialized model for interpreting how literary symbols function as archetypal forces that facilitate internal transformation and self-discovery.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Definitions of Key Terms

Myth: is not understood as a simple and archaic mode of narration, but as a deep symbolic order that can build the collective consciousness and has a strong impact on literary art. Northup Frye states in *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) that literature is inseparable from myth since it serves as a structural framework of patterns in literature. Frye clarifies that myths reproduce themselves in a constant cycle in contemporary texts in forms of recurring symbols, images, and narrative meanings.

Equally, Jung and Campbell associate myth with the psychological component of human experience that is collective. To Jung, mythic symbols represent what he calls archetypes, which are constant structures of characters, e.g., the hero, the victim, or the Great Mother, or recurring plot structures, e.g. the journey, the sacrifice and rebirth and death circles. In his turn, Campbell focuses on the universality of these patterns and sees myth as a human language that reflects some basic psychological and spiritual truths. From this point of view, myth in literature is more than just a mere story; it is a mechanism of interpretation by which the symbolic architecture of literary productions can be seen and known.

Symbolism is sometimes used in literary analysis in conjunction with the Symbolist Movement of the late nineteenth century, but the theoretical meaning of symbolism is much deeper than this historical one. According to the views of Paul Ricoeur in *The Symbolism of Evil* (1967), the literary symbol transcends its actual meaning to imply several different meanings of interpretation and states that the symbol produces thought rather than the thought can be produced directly. Symbolism is a meaning-making that refers to historical one a new level of thinking and insight. Northup Frye also relates symbolism to myth, and he confirms that literature functions as a system of symbols through which cultural meanings are re-created within the text (Frye, 1957).



.In this sense, it can be seen that symbolism is a process whereby literature expresses shared values, beliefs, and psychological truths which help to sustain its link with myth and narrative structure.

The symbol is a mediating element in psychoanalytic criticism, especially the Freudian and Jungian frameworks, which uncover the desires, anxieties, and fears. Moreover, Symbols are used to bring out the hidden psychological material in a manner that can be expressed and understood within the literary discourse.

According to the researcher's view: Myth: is the macro-structure that shapes literary narratives, based on collective archetypes. Symbolism is the micro-level tool that operates within the text to embody deep meaning, often working in a complementary relationship with myth.

Paulo Coelho – Brazilian Writer

Biography

Paulo Coelho is a Brazilian writer who has woven his fictional and non-fictional works around questions of faith and spirituality, making them the core of his literary experience (Coelho & Costa, 2011). His writing often explores the human search for meaning through symbolic narratives, focusing on the link between nature, the soul, and the divine (Coelho, 2011; 2016).

The Alchemist (1988) is his most famous work, translated into more than 80 languages and receiving the Nielsen Gold Bestseller Award (Coelho, 1988). Other globally acclaimed novels that define his literary career include Veronika Decides to Die (1998), The Fifth Mountain, Eleven Minutes, and The Witch of Portobello, all of which have achieved significant international recognition (Mayer & Maree, 2017)

Summary of Alchemist

The Alchemist (1988) by Brazilian author Paulo Coelho is considered one of the most prominent global literary works addressing the theme of self-discovery through a symbolic spiritual journey. The story centers on Santiago, a young Andalusian shepherd who is repeatedly haunted by a dream about a treasure hidden near the Egyptian pyramids.



This vision compels him to take on a long road trip through Spain, Morocco, and Egypt, where he faces several challenges, experiences, and life-altering moments and deep soul discoveries.

The novel is written in the form of the Hero's journey as stated by Joseph Campbell and makes use of symbolic settings (desert, the treasure, omens, and the sacred stones Urim and Thummim) to communicate thoughts and feelings of fate, faith, and the unity of all life or the Soul of the World. The experiences that Santiago undergoes with symbolic people such as the King of Salem, the Alchemist, and Fatima are important milestones on his spiritual journey, and each teaches him about love, wisdom, and self-discovery.

The philosophy that has always persisted in Coelho's narrative is that once one actually wants something, the entire universe is conspiring to assist in getting that thing, and that one should listen to one's heart and one's intuition. In a simple and at the same time deep writing style, Coelho manages to create a universal narrative with no cultural restrictions, the human soul becomes part of the process of seeking one's Personal Legend. The novel is a good representation of a symbolic work that shows how myth could be used to convey a spiritual approach to life (Mariya Azim Khan et al., 2025).

Mohsin Al-Ramli – Iraqi Writer

Biography

Mohsin Al-Ramli is an Iraqi writer, academic, and translator residing in Spain, whose work reflects a fierce internal conflict between two cultures and languages. He earned his PhD from the Autonomous University of Madrid in 2003, focusing on the influence of Islamic culture on Don Quixote, and currently serves as a professor at Saint Louis University in Madrid (Al-Agha, 2021). As a prolific translator, he has published dozens of literary texts and poems, bridging the gap between Arabic and Spanish literature through the translation of globally renowned authors (Al-Mufarrjji, 2016).

Literary Career and Major Works



Al-Ramli has gained significant international recognition for his novels, including *Scattered Crumbs*, which won the Arkansas Arabic Translation Award in 2002, and *The President's Gardens*, nominated for the International Prize for Arabic Fiction in 2013 (Al-Agha, 2021). His novel *The She-Wolf of Love and Books*, shortlisted for the Sheikh Zayed Book Award in 2015, is a multidisciplinary work that blends history, autobiography, and psychological analysis. In this narrative, he invokes the spirit of his martyred brother, Hassan Mutlak, to explore collective and individual human emotions through a structure reminiscent of the early modern novel (Al-Mufarriji, 2016).

The Interviewer asked: Of course, we will pause at *The She-Wolf of Love and Books*, in which you invoked the spirit of your martyred brother, the novelist Hassan Mutlak. Could you tell us about this novel?

He said: "It is a "novel" that leans toward being a "book," if we want to classify it more precisely. Meaning it is not just a story narrated in an artistic form but rather a book includes history autobiography social and psychological analysis politics, emotions and ideas, facts and imaginations, travels and memories of well-known figures such as Al-Bayati, Awni Kurumi, Mo'nis Al-Razzaz, Muhammad Al-Qaisi, Hassan Mutlak, and others. It also contains texts by myself and others from different literary genres like poetry, short stories, essays, theater, and more. It includes discussions of books, songs, films, artists, intellectuals, academics, and literary criticism. It offers reflections, free thinking, and quotations from philosophers, children and others. In other words through this book/novel I attempted to touch upon numerous individual and collective topics and issues, while also trying to return to the original techniques of the modern novel that began with (*Don Quixote*) which also contained everything I mentioned. I also tried to make the reader experience as many human emotions and feelings as possible—sadness, joy, fear, desire, rejection, pleasure, clarity of knowledge, ambiguity, confusion, love, hate, despair, hope... even boredom and more. This is some of what I attempted through (*She-Wolf of Love and Books*) and I believe it has reached the reader in some way.(Al-Mufarriji, 2016)



LITERATURE REVIEW

Hamedawi (2017): In the study entitled *The Postcolonial Iraqi Novel: Themes and Sources of Inspiration*, the author examines the development of the Iraqi novel following the 2003 invasion. The study highlights the realistic and melancholic tone of modern fiction, providing the foundational social atmosphere that surrounds Al-Ramli's narrative environment.

Fadel (2017): In the study titled *Representations of Identity in She-Wolf of Love and Books by Muhsin El Ramli*, it was found out that the she-wolf and books are symbols of identity at work in the novel to build a discourse of fragmented identity. These symbols are part of mythic and resistance tools.

Ardakani and Rasouli (2021): The authors of the work *Manifestations of Archetypes in the Novel On the Margin of the Prophet Biography (The Wise Old Man, the Mask and the Woman as Models)* have used the theory of archetypes developed by Carl Jung. The paper shows how the archetypal patterns provide an understanding of why characters gain their inner mythic manifestation. (Ardakani et al., 2021.)

Sebastian (2022): In the article *Symbols' Purposefulness in the Alchemist of Paulo Coelho*, the author writes that the novel operates on a synergistic symbolic and mythological reasoning. Symbols such as the desert and the treasure are interpreted as archetypal functions that guide the hero toward his "Personal Legend"

Sebastian (2023): In the study entitled *Rethinking Fate or 'Maktub' in Paulo Coelho's The Alchemist*, the research suggests a convergence between human freedom and cosmic signs. It highlights how these perceptions of fate influence the mythic reading of the hero's journey.

Helaly (2023): In a study involving a *Close Reading of Naguib Mahfouz Trilogy*, the researcher utilized Jungian concepts like the "persona" and the "shadow." The study explores the internal struggles of characters, mapping the unconscious terrain of the mind through literary symbols.

Az-Zubaidy (2024): In the study entitled *Empowering the Voice and Revolt of Iraqi Women in Mohsen Al-Ramli's novel 'I Killed Her Because I Loved Her'*, the researcher utilized trauma theories to understand the psychological



impact of war. The study illustrated how the female body is transformed into a symbol of resistance and resilience (Thamir R. S. Az-Zubaidy, 2024). (Subramanian and Bhatnagar (2024): In the research entitled Spiritual Journey of Santiago in Coelho's 'The Alchemist', the focus is on how the protagonist's journey blends Joseph Campbell's monomyth with Jung's process of individuation. The symbols act as a bridge between the unconscious and consciousness.

Marium Bushra et al. (2025): In a recent reading of The Alchemist, in a new reading, the article uncovered some layers with the concepts of Peirce regarding signs. Such things as the desert obtained deeper functions instead of being mere storytelling gimmicks. Unspoken messages were riding along with the reiterating images - not only was gold was treasures. Due to these trends, Santiago was shifting more toward the inside than forward. The word of meaning came up at the place of meeting between the unseen and the seen. Decoration could not be considered as a symbol shaping identity, as well as symbols. The spiritual thoughts received an expression specifically because such indicators were solidified below the surface. (Marium Bushra et al., 2025).

Finally, previous studies showed that symbols and myths function as both narrative and psychological tools which authors rely on to shape the hero's journey and psychological transformations—whether in Paulo Coelho's The Alchemist or in contemporary Iraqi literature such as She-Wolf of Love and Books by Muhsin Al-Ramli.

What these studies expose is that symbolism is more than just decoration of art, that it connects thoughts in the darkness to thoughts in the light. Evidence demonstrates that social environments and the events in the past determine who people become. Applying Jung's concept of universal patterns, along with the concept of heroic journeys by Campbell, can be used to aid in the explanation of how characters develop through the power of myths.

"What Does the Soul Truly Want?"



"If the world of mythos is a universe, I come from a tiny archipelago of deeply ethnic families... If courage and bravery are the muscles of the spiritual drive that help a person to become whole, then stories are the bones."(Campbell, 2004)

Theory of the Heroic Journey of Campbell.

The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho is a good example of a story structure that follows the heroic journey model of Joseph Campbell, in The Hero of a Thousand Faces.

The Alchemist by Coelho is shaped in a similar way to ancient narratives. Santiago is brought through the process of the hero, starting with the initial changes and ending with the point where he comes back with something. This movement causes some changes in him. He does not begin at the same point, although it may sound so. The journeys are made to be a repetition of occurrences, in time and place. This form of a journey was identified by Joseph Campbell as a mono-myth, or a repetition of stories in the world (Campbell, 2004.)

The voyage starts with a takeoff or a setting out. The dream of treasure is what creates a call to adventure in Santiago in The Alchemist, which is an invitation and inspiration to make his personal myth come true. This is in line with the explanation by Melchizedek when he says that when an individual wants something the entire universe is out to assist him/her to get it. (Coelho, 1988). Here, the journey appears as an ascent toward unity between humanity and the universe. Santiago accompanies the traveler on this same path, not only guiding him but also shaping him step by step, elevating his understanding.

Vogler (2007) noted that these characters reflect internal patterns, revealing the changes within the individual in response to their experiences, as depicted in "The Alchemist." We will explore these characters below:

Santiago: The innocent/protagonist seeking to discover himself and the meaning of his existence.

Melchizedek: Teacher of tools and wisdom

Fatima: She is the guide of hearts, and in her presence, there is a power that moves from one thing to another without uttering a word. She shows in the



novel the Campbell pattern through symbols and an inner journey, when she transforms the myth into dreamlike levels that reveal the individual's journey to understand himself, and to find the meaning from which belonging and awareness originate (Vogler, 2007).

Between Acceptance & Refusal !

Every night, a treasure under the pyramids takes shape during the sleep of Santiago and everything starts to roll. This flash of desire is what sets him into motion, unthought but irrefutable. His vision reappears in his routine so many times that it is like leaving.

"It's the possibility of having a dream come true that makes life interesting" (Coelho, 1993).

The very beginning of the dreams immediately initiates the process and throws the main character into the unknown - which is the step one according to Campbell. Diwan writes in 2023 that the answer to the call is everything; it shifts the course of a human being directly to the unknown territory.

Santiago is scared by it even after the call and he questions whether it would be better to walk away than confront what could go wrong. What he now possesses is frail, worthy of a fortified position. To remain on track is to ask a question, to have doubts about whether dreams are too expensive. To go ahead is to lose all that one knows. The indecisiveness is like dust in front of a storm, heavy and slow.

"I fear that once my dream comes true, I will not have any point to continue living" (Coelho, 1993). It is this struggle that Beggan referred to as the Refusal of the Call - one of the main areas where the hesitation strikes and it is too dangerous to take a step. Change is imminent, but it is safer to retreat in that moment.

Meeting the Mentor

A change is initiated when Santiago encounters Melchizedek, a character who is shrouded by the silent gravity of advice. The mentor provides symbolic tools (the Urim and Thummim) and explains the concept of the "Personal Legend," emphasizing:



"When you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it." (Coelho, 1993.)

The mentor is a central figure in the hero's journey, offering wisdom and spiritual guidance to face upcoming challenges (Campbell, 2004.)

"Listen to your heart. It knows all things, because it came from the Soul of the World." (Coelho, 1993.)

Dreams, omens, and the two stones Urim and Thummim play their role in guiding Santiago. In Barthes' book *Mythologies*, points out that symbols are used in literature to intensify cultural and spiritual meaning, reproducing ideas through familiar images. Accordingly, the concept of the (Soul of the World) emerges in a mythical form, embodying the unity of the universe and the spiritual interconnectedness of all beings, which relates to the symbolic and spiritual dimension of the novel (Barthes, 2009.)

"I am Muhsin Mutlaq Al-Ramli, the author of all the books that bear my name, except this one and had I not been the brother of Hassan Mutlaq, I would have written twice as much as I have published so far or perhaps, I would not have written any of them at all." (Al Ramli, 2015.)

The "Call to Adventure" in the hero's journey begins as Muhsin Al-Ramli embarks on his path after discovering a book that changed his life, where personal grief transforms into a narrative drive, illustrating Campbell's theory on the connection between autobiography and myth (Campbell, J., 2004.)

"I continued to fumble in search of work under the harsh conditions, and the execution of Hassan meant that all opportunities for official employment and publishing were closed to me, so I left my country" (Al-Ramli, 2015.)

Trials & Tribulations begins when the Hero faces challenges following the execution of his brother, Hassan Mutlaq, symbolizing the "Loss of personal support". Political and economic pressures, coupled with a "closing of opportunities," drive the protagonist toward self-discovery, where the hero tests his abilities and creativity. He tests his resilience through writing to achieve satisfaction and to confront his feelings of insecurity (Campbell, 2004.)



Hassan describes: "I tried to find an income from what I knew—reading and writing—so I wrote love letters for my colleagues, and occasionally I was fortunate enough to publish a story or an article in a cultural supplement of a newspaper. I also thought of writing a novel titled (A Crime in Jordan) indeed, I attempted without completing it" (Al-Ramli, 2015).

From Jung's archetypal perspective, the hero embodies the "Seeker/Explorer," striving to find meaning in life amid loss and deprivation, while mourning Hassan's execution symbolizes the Shadow, compelling confrontation with inner pain and hostility before achieving personal wholeness (Jung, 1968).

"She (Hayam) is a woman searching for love, and I am searching for her. Two Iraqis, a woman and a man, seeking love amid wars, dictatorship, occupation, and exile." (Al Ramli, 2015). Now it's clear that real-life experience & social political pressures can be transformed into narrative elements that propel the hero toward maturity and self-awareness, linking the Iraqi novel of Al-Ramli, She-Wolf of Love and Books, to Paulo Coelho's The Alchemist in terms of spiritual and personal growth.

SYMBOLISM AND THE INNER CAVE

The initial inner awareness of the need to change, where Hayam, as a main character, declares her desire to experience true love, which represents an inner call toward an emotional and spiritual adventure (Campbell, 2004). (Hayam is the main character in Al-Ramli's novel, and she revolves around symbols to live the hero's journey in search of herself. She introduces herself by saying: "I have been married for more than ten years... but I am still a virgin; for no one has yet deflowered the virginity of my heart (Al-Ramli, 2015)”).

At this point where the normal life starts to be overtaken by something more enriching, as postulated by Campbell (Campbell, 2004), she expressed her desire: "I want to resume my obsession with love... I want a partner I'm Hayam once again." (Al-Ramli, 2015) ”.

According to Campbell, this stage represents the beginning of the shift from ordinary life to the real experience (Campbell, 2004). This is the moment of inner calling toward an emotional and spiritual adventure, where Hayam



begins her demand for true love despite her marriage and circumstances. She declared: "I am searching for love... I long to be the woman I want, for the man I love... and my heart won't rest until I find him or perish in the attempt."(Al-Ramli, 2015).

1. Writing as a power of Resistance

Hayam transcends the boundaries of self-definition. Her words bridge the gap between what she lives and is supposed to be, and what she believes. She expressed: "Tomorrow I have an appointment with the psychiatrist. I will tell him that I will tell him that I am speaking to an image in my mind... sometimes I imagine he's writing me letters and I'm writing to him" (Al-Ramli, 2015).

The real is contrasted to the dream of what she dreams in this scene, which represents the inner conflict that Hayam is facing in the search for love (Jung, 1968). She said: " I had made a man of my desire to love him... but I guess there is a place where he lives in this world "(Al-Ramli, 2015). (What we enjoy is what makes love special and gives meaning to life, as if it were a sign of an inner strength that existed before history (Eliade, 1963). Hayam declared: "I am happy, and that is proof that I am still alive" (Al-Ramli, 2015)

Subconsciously, the lines of Hayam can be considered as a silence, almost shrouded in a veil in that he is doing something to her which only she knows (Segal, 1999b): "I shall write to you every day...-- even when I am waiting to have the food cooked... I would not write on paper since I cannot hold any piece of paper in the house. I am unable to write on paper because I am unable to leave any paper in the house, and it will be snatched in his hand" (Al-Ramli, 2015)

This is silent resistance within this writing, pushing against her husband and the social norms on her. Words provide her with breathing room in a bid to produce real thoughts in an effort by power to impose silence (Barthes, 2009): "In this email, I will be responding to this email which I distinctly opened, alone" (Al-Ramli, 2015).

It is not only emotion in this instance which is a thing of fact, not so much a thing of relationship, as a thing of discovering oneself. A silent journey



where no meaning is made through identification, but instead by searching within oneself through a form of myth:

"I fear that I would die before I exhaust my passion over love" (Al-Ramli, 2015).

2 .The Soul of the World and the Heart's Wisdom

In this concept, the heart is not just flesh and blood, but a bridge to deeper knowledge; it is also the soul of the world, and will one day reconnect with it (Eliade, 1959) .

Jung supports these ideas with weight by referring to what he terms the Inner Symbolic Center, a sort of inner core where human experiences are intermingled and repeated in various cultures (Jung, 1968.)

Listening to the inner voice is more than one might believe; that move carries a significant meaning and a burden on the audiences whose truth matters (Coelho, 1993): "Listen to your heart. It knows all things, because it came from the Soul of the World and it will one day return there" (Coelho, 1993).

Narratives tend to revive modes of knowledge like accepting feelings and following impulse since the real knowledge can be attained only through experience and motion (Said, 1993): "There is but one way of learning and that is by action. You will know that you have learned everything you need during your journey (Coelho, 1993)

The Wolf & Identity: Mystical Dimension in the Absence and Presence Reflections.

The narrative has a shadow flying through it, which is more than a man; it is furred and silent and symbolizes a revolt against authority. In primitive mystic culture, animals are sacred. In this regard, the wolf has two truths at the same time: the savage tooth of his tearing and the deep-thinking eyes. This mix initiates the main character to a common, sacred, and distinct person, a kind of prophet to the door (Jung, 1968):

I would like to begin with an account of that wolf whom I love very much, he is my grandfather, a strange man or a mad man, as you see (Al-Ramli, 2015).



The grandfather's life is a circle, as is close to the pattern that reminds one of the Sufi doctrine of destiny or written path. This wandering and rebellion against familial tyranny symbolize an interior trip to freedom- a bare Sufi trip in which the inner-self is changed by agony and experience (Eliade, 1963):

He was born in Samarra to an orphaned mother and a fugitive father, my grandfather, the wolf, who replicated the life of his father, fleeing to other countries (Al-Ramli, 2015).

Something is formed in the head of Hiyam, which is older than names--a man walking with a whisper in the heat of the desert. The wisdom is in his silence, in his being lost between the flesh and the spirit; he is a teacher who does not show, but only underlines that the fact of his not showing does not render the journey meaningless:

My father did not see him, nor did I, because he was passing at night, vanishing at day (Al-Ramli, 2015).

The movement that occurs in Sufi philosophy is not walking from one place to another but corresponds to the knowledge search and reaching clarity through drifting. The man who passes between the peoples and is neither one nor the other sees the patterns which others fail to see, and, by doing so creates an existence which is everywhere and nowhere (Eliade, 1963): "He was a married man who did not cease traveling, going to the Levant, Egypt, Iran, the Gulf and India" (Al-Ramli, 2015).

The clay house, in that sense, infiltrates the air in the community, through which the figure is seen through the prism of struggle and gift. He is warmth to the poor and gold to the rich, and to the rich, he is the wolf--the dark man at the door. This two-sidedness identifies him as a character that has a place between a saint and something to be feared:

"The center of a large area was his clay house that made up heretics at a distance, and the poor called it the Golden Quarter, but the rich called it the Wolf Quarter "(Al-Ramli, 2015).

Similarities with The Alchemist:(The Mystical Dimension in Santiago (The Alchemist is a book that brings to life a silent, old life, when the universe is seen as something alive. This is consistent with the mystical



inter-relationship hypothesized by Eliade (1959), which suggests that the world can be a voluptuous flesh of desire in which all movement is directed by some unseen force:

According to Coelho, the universe is ready to lend you a hand in getting whatever you want to get; the universe is all in this (Coelho, 1993).

Furthermore, Coelho places "action" into the context of a Sufi instruction—a form of learning where the external journey mirrors internal enlightenment. According to Campbell (2004), what befalls the hero in the journey—the pitfalls, trials, and lived experiences—is precisely what hands him ancient wisdom. This mystical path reveals that the "magic of life" lies in the manifestation of spiritual desires in the physical world: "The boy thought about the girl. He knew that she would understand, because that was the magic of life: it allowed you to meet the people you had once dreamed of" (Coelho, 1993).

Within this framework, the journey in *The Alchemist* functions in the same manner as the Wolf in Al-Ramli's narrative. These figures provide no explicit answers but rather offer hints, mirroring the ancient mystical tradition where the guide leads the hero toward self-discovery. As Jung (1968) suggests, this is a gradual walk "back and in" toward the self, where characters move toward those profound moments where something internal is finally moved, a process that Barthes (2009) views as the symbolic intensification of meaning.

Hayam's Mystical Dialogue with Hassan: The Presence of Love

The communication between Hayam and Hassan is more than an exchange of notes, which appears in the form of a breath across silence that seals the distance between these two characters. This intimacy is what Ibn Arabi (1980) defines as absence that is entirely created by love; the mystic form of presence of the beloved through the pattern of daily existence. When Hayam reminds her children in a note, she wraps Hassan in her voice and forms a spiritual closeness where she feels that a jubilation is running through her veins (Al-Ramli, 2015.)

This mystical bond can be further revealed concerning the desire of her son Hamid in a casa de jarida - a peaceful place where his mother can read as a



window into a deeper sense of perception. This is in accordance with the principle of *Firasa Ruhiiyya* (spiritual insight) as mentioned by Al-Qushayri (2002), whereby the heart senses some hidden wants without the need of the eye or the ear. The love of Hamid drives him to peep into the heart of his mother (Al-Ramli, 2015), and this fact shows that the heart is capable of seeing what other people cannot see.

Moreover, even some common signs, including a pink hat purchased with a pocket change, are *Karamat Yawmiyya*. These acts are reflections of a silent radiance, according to Chittick (1989) in which the mundane world is a reflection of the divine.

Such a distortion of reality resembles the one in *The Alchemist*, where love is a gravitational force that makes everything around it better. Just as Corbin (1998) argues, meaning sews itself into insignificant moments, so Coelho (1993) thinks that when we aspire to be more than we are, all the things around us are better as well. Finally, both writers demonstrate that love is a flowing breath that discloses some truth of spirituality in the mundane.

CONCLUSION

The comparative analysis presented in this work has indicated that *Mirrors of Absence* and *The Alchemist* meet on the same spiritual platform, although their cultural and geographical backgrounds are different. It is found that the study concludes that the two narratives do not use symbolism as a literary decoration but rather as a structural element that reinvents the identity of the protagonist. Although Ali Al-Ramli relies on memory and the inner cave of displacement and family opposition to initiate self-discovery, Paulo Coelho resorts to the *Soul of the World* and cosmic signs to bring his hero to a *Personal Legend*. Nonetheless, both writers re-conceptualize the process of the way of the self as a religious practice of transformation, where suffering, love, and silence are turned into an active instrument of spiritual awakening and opposition.

In addition, the research explains the manner in which the two novels incorporate ancient mystical practices, including Sufi wisdom and Jungian archetypes, to provide a criticism of materialism as well as logic-based lives. Writing in the work Al-Ramli represents one of the forces of opposition to



social and psychological silence, and in the story Coelho narrates, the main means of knowledge is action and intuition. Such proximity implies that the Arab and Brazilian literary worlds, despite the space between them, seem to be deeply concerned with the individual search for meaning in the divided world. After all, the research establishes that narrative in both situations plays the role of a sacred space in piecing together the fractured fragments of human experience, which proves that the real comeback of the hero is quantified by the clarity of the inner world attained during the journey as opposed to the physical presence on the other side.

RECOMMENDATION

The study offers a recommendation to broaden the comparative research to include a larger group of Iraqi novelists, including Ahmed Saadawi, Inam Kachachi, and Sinan Antoon, to understand the different ways in which the various Iraqi novels explore the theme of trauma and Iraqi nationhood using symbolism and mythology. Further studies are needed to compare these Iraqi works with cross-cultural works of masterpieces all over the world, instead of Latin American or European traditions. The new thematic layers that are suggested to be explored include the synthesis of ancient Mesopotamian myths with contemporary existential crises in Iraqi fiction as well. It is possible to provide a deeper insight into the ways the human psyche is reconstituted and how literary space is formed by theories that do not presuppose myth and symbolism, with the help of such comparisons.

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