CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Identity issue is considered as a part of psychological problems by common people although the real meaning is totally the opposite. While it may seem like it has something to do with 'what is in the mind', identity issue is actually both in the mind and the surroundings of the individuals suffering from it. This issue of identity could be about the hard time of an individual in realizing who he or she is, choosing who or what they wanted to be, accepting or rejecting the identity that had been realized, and changing the he or she that the people around them already knew them as.

This problem of identity issue was known since the late 17th century, with Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* became one of the first milestones. Juliet, who was a daughter of the aristocracy, fell in love with Romeo who was the son of her family's enemy, and vice versa. Previous study has confirmed that the problem in identity issue which questions whether people should live according to their identity in class or their identity as an ordinary human being inside Romeo and Juliet story.

Rustin (2008) argues that the ending of Romeo and Juliet, which tells both of main characters dying because of their love, makes both of their family realize and discover the result of their conflict that has awakened the division between both

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families that destroyed them. This identity issue that clashes both families results in the main characters death, and this becomes one of the themes for literary works in the future generations.

The pattern of stories such as *Romeo and Juliet, Harry Potter series, The Lord of the Rings series*, and *Percy Jackson* series are quite similar to each other. The pattern meant includes having a hero from a certain underestimated position that receives a certain quest to reach a certain goal, such as Romeo in Romeo and Juliet, Percy in Percy Jackson series, Frodo in The Lord of the Rings, or Thomas in The Maze Runner. However, not only patterns such as those that exist in stories, but also other kinds of patterns, and these patterns are what the writer focus on in this research.

The study about pattern of events in stories are called archetype. Archetype is one of the literature theory which define by one of theorist named Northrop Frye as "the recurring use of certain images or image clusters" (Griffith 2014, 183). There are many definitions about archetype that are proposed by experts such as Campbell, Frye, Jung, and others that have their own definition of archetype. Campbell, for example, sees archetype as a pattern of journey that happened in every literary works. Thus, he proposes the pattern of hero's journey that always occurs throughout literary works as 'Monomyth'. Aside from Campbell, there is also Jung who argues that dream is the most dominant factors in this approach because dreams have important roles in the hero's consciousness.

Some examples of archetypal stories that discuss the identity problems of each character inside the story include *Romeo and Juliet* by Shakespeare, which talked about identity as nobles or as a human being because Romeo's and Juliet's family clashes with each other. Then, *The Lord of the Rings Trilogy* by J.R.R. Tolkien tells about Frodo's journey in earning the identity as hero or as enemy because he holds the Ring. Then, *Harry Potter the series* by J.K. Rowling that tells about Harry's choice in becoming either hero or villain, and *Percy Jackson series* by Rick Riordan that tells about how a teenager could live up to the expectations given to him while also proving himself to be someone he wanted to be identified as. Those novels received many awards and are appreciated by many people for years, especially novels that achieved awards in some bestseller lists by famous organizations such as *New York Times, USA Today, The Wall Street Journal,* etc.

The novel written by Rick Riordan entitled *The Son of Neptune* will be the object of this study. There are some reasons why this novel is chosen. The first reason is because the author, Rick Riordan, has written many books in the fantasy genre and was known worldwide. Most of his works reached bestseller awards for young-adult readers, especially the series of Percy Jackson. The second reason is because the story combines the 21st century civilization with Ancient Roman culture, a combination that is new. Moreover, the characters of this novel are mostly teenagers, the phase in which considered to be the journey of kids in becoming adults.

The writer assumed that this novel has an issue about identity which is experienced by the main characters, Percy, Frank, and Hazel. For example, the main heroes and heroine (Percy, Frank, and Hazel) in the story experienced conflicts that makes them question their own existence because of their complex identities as both human and demigod. This is an interesting problem to be analyzed because aside from trying to be identified as who they are; they are also trying to identify what they have to accept in order to make themselves better. These characters are trying to get recognition from both the society and their own self.

Another interesting part of this novel is when one of the main characters, Percy Jackson, lost his memories about himself, his family, and his friends. Percy was called as a Hero in the previous series after he helped Olympus, having identified finally as the 'Percy Jackson' he wanted to be. However, in this novel, he lost all of his past memories along with the memories of his journey in achieving the recognition in the previous series. The writer sees this as a problem that Percy has to undergo, because the writer thinks that Percy's situation is not very much different from the first introduction in the previous series where he is not very much known yet. While Frank and Hazel may not have any role in the previous series, their role in this novel is significant in proving that there are still problems similar to othering in places that seem to be rich with closeness between its inhabitants. In Frank's case, he is treated as someone very different because he is not claimed yet by his God-parent and because

he is a coward. Lastly, in Hazel's case, she exiles herself from other people because her past.

The writer applied Archetypal Heroes Journey theory that is proposed by theorist Joseph Campbell. Campbell believes that every hero unconsciously went through the same plot in the narratives which is known as the journey of hero (Monomyth) and finally constructed the archetype of hero (Campbell, The Hero's Journey 1968) (Guerin, et al. 2005).

The novel has reached more than five years from the first published date and became best-seller novels for almost 5 years. However, there are not many people who use this novel as an object to be analyzed or discussed in academic fields. The writer found an essay that uses Riordan's book *The Son of Neptune* as the part of academic research about Frank Zhang by Tumlos and Steele (2006). Frank Zhang is one of the main characters in the story—the son of Mars, Roman's God of War. He was born as Chinese-Canadian and is depicted as a figure who demonstrates the true breaking of racial and economic stereotypes according to the article. Frank embodies a character that completely diverges from Chinese stereotypes, that is why he is not illustrated as Eastern hero but as Western hero instead. Ruth Martin Curry (2017) also discussed about the definition of heroism in modern construction through his own examples of four trending heroes: a dictator, an astronaut, an athlete, and a victim of abuse. Meanwhile, he also describes two approaches to define heroism that include measuring heroes by virtue of their qualities or by virtue of heroic action.

The writer also hopes that by conducting this study, studies that analyze identity through archetypal theories would increase, because the writer finds this method and theory very interesting to be discussed.

1.2 Statement of the Problems

This research is conducted to discover the hero's journey patterns of the three main characters in the novel and also analyze the identity crisis experienced by the three main characters. Thus, the statement of the problems are:

1) How are the identities of the Heroes and Heroine (Percy Jackson, Frank Zhang, and Hazel Levesque) defined through archetype pattern of Hero's Journey?

2) How is the identity crisis portrayed in the three main characters through the archetypal pattern found?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the statement of the problems above, the objectives of this study include

1) Identifying the archetypal pattern of Hero's Journey of the three characters (namely, Percy Jackson, Hazel Levesque, and Frank Zhang).

2) Analyze the identity crisis portrayed in the three characters through the archetypal pattern found.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The result of this study is expected to help both the writer and readers to understand more about the issue concerning identity crisis which nowadays becomes one of the main problems of society. Identity crisis that influences either internal or external reasons that depicted in literary works tend to persuade the readers to pay more attention to the responsibilities they have and the rights they deserve in accordance with their respective identities. In this study, it is about Percy, Frank, and Hazel's identity that brought them into different responsibilities. This study also hopes to attract the future researchers especially in English Department of Universitas Airlangga who would like to conduct a research in this area of discussion to discuss issues regarding identity because it is a very interesting subject, especially in the postmodern era in which identities are considered vaguer than before.

1.5 Definitions of the Key Terms

1) Archetype : Any repeated pattern in literature, whether of plot, character, themes, settings, or images (Griffith 2014, 183).

2) Identity : The way in which individuals and collectivities are distinguished in relation with other individuals and collectivities (Jenkins 2008, 18).

3) Hero's Journey : A pattern of heroic stories about a hero who goes on an adventure to gain wisdom (Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces. 2004, 16-28).

4) Transformation : A complete or major change in someone's or something's appearance, form, etc. (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). In here, the transformation refers to the metamorphosis/ the change of the three main heroic characters.