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**MASTER'S THESIS
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

**Application of Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey on Michael
Moorcock's *Elric of Melnibone* and Kentaro Miura's *Berserk* as
Examples of Dark Fantasy and Anti-Hero Archetype**

BERKAY KUTMAN

**SUPERVISOR
Asst. Prof .Yasemin YAVAŞLAR ÖZAKINCI**

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**Berkay
KUTMAN**

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Melnibone* and Kentaro Miura's *Berserk* as Examples of Dark Fantasy and Anti-Hero
Archetype*

2025

COMMITMENT

I hereby declare that this thesis has been prepared in accordance with the academic and ethical principles of the Graduate School of Education at Manisa Celal Bayar University, Department of English Language and Literature. All information and literature used in the thesis have been properly cited, and the thesis is entirely my own work. I confirm that I have provided references for all quotations and have not utilized any artificial intelligence or software that violates academic and ethical principles during the preparation of this thesis.

Signature
Berkay KUTMAN

ÖZET

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

Berkay KUTMAN

Manisa Celal Bayar Üniversitesi

Lisansüstü Eğitim Enstitüsü

İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Anabilim Dalı

Danışman: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Yasemin YAVAŞLAR ÖZAKINCI

Kahramanlar edebiyatta ve diğer medya türlerinde yaygındır. Kahramanların metin türlerinde kullanımının erken klasik metinlerden modern hikayelere kadar uzun bir geçmişi vardır ve geleneksel metinlerde farklı form ve türlerde görünürler. Homeros'un *İlyada'sı*, Geoffrey Chaucer'in *Canterbury Hikayeleri*, J.K Rowling'in *Harry Potter serisi* ve J.R.R Tolkien'in *Hobbit'i* geleneksel metin olarak sayılan örneklerdir. Bununla birlikte, geleneksel hikâye yapılarından farklı olan metinler de vardır. Standart dışı olanlar Karanlık fantastik alt türü ve Anti-kahraman arketipi olarak sayılabilir. Standart kahraman arketipi ve standart fantastik türle karşılaştırıldığında her ikisi de farklıdır. Bununla beraber, standart yapıdan farklılığı ve popüler anlatıyı örnekleme ile ilgili ortaya çıkan sorular vardır. Ortaya çıkan bu sorularla ilgili olarak, Michael Moorcock'un *Elric of Melnibone* ve Kentaro Miura'nın *Berserk* eserleri iyi birer karanlık fantastik örneğidir ve dikkat çekici anti-kahramanlar içerir. Her ikisi de popüler kültürde hayranlar tarafından sevilen metinlerdir ama akademik çalışmalarda pek tartışılmamış ve temsil edilmemişlerdir. Bu tezin amacı seçilmiş popüler metinlerdeki karanlık fantastiğin ve Anti-kahramanın özelliklerini çalışmak ve tartışmaktır. Bu analiz için, Joseph Campbell'ın Kahramanın Yolculuğu eseri kullanılacaktır ve bu metot ile Karanlık fantastiğin ve Anti-kahramanın özellikleri tartışılacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Karanlık Fantastik, Anti-kahraman, Kahramanın Yolculuğu, Anlatı, Arketip

2025, 95

ABSTRACT

M.Sc. Thesis

Berkay KUTMAN

Manisa Celal Bayar University

Graduate School of Education

Department of English Language and Literature

Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Yasemin YAVAŞLAR ÖZAKINCI

Heroes are common in literature and other media forms. Heroes have a long history from early classical texts to modern stories, and they appear in various forms and genres in traditional texts. Such examples as: Homer's *Iliad*, Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter series* and J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* can be considered as traditional text. However, there are texts that are dissimilar than traditional story structures. As there are non-standard story structures, there are also heroes that do not fit into the hero archetype. The non-standards in this sense are the Dark Fantasy sub-genre and the Anti-hero archetype. Both are quite different when compared to traditional hero archetypes and fantasy genre. However, there are questions regarding these topics about the difference from standard structure and their portrayal in popular narratives. Regarding these topic questions, texts like Michael Moorcock's *Elric of Melnibone* and *Berserk* are good examples of the Dark Fantasy sub-genre and show remarkable Anti-hero characters. Both texts are beloved by fans in popular culture yet are not discussed or represented in academic studies. The purpose of this thesis is to study and discuss the qualities of the Dark Fantasy sub-genre and Anti-hero archetype in these selected popular texts. For this analysis, Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey is going to be used and through this method the qualities regarding Dark Fantasy and Anti-heroes will be discussed.

Keywords: Dark Fantasy, Anti-hero, Hero's Journey, Narrative, Archetype

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Topic of this thesis is to use Campbell's Hero's Journey by applying it to Michael Moorcock's *Elric of Melnibone* and Kentaro Miura's *Berserk* to analyse and discuss the Archetypal and Sub-genre qualities. The selected texts are chosen for their representation of the Dark Fantasy genre and their protagonists being examples of the Anti-hero archetypes. With the aid of Campbell's Hero's Journey, Dark Fantasy status of each text and Anti-hero qualities will be analysed.

This thesis begins by providing background information regarding Joseph Campbell and Hero's Journey, Michael Moorcock and *Elric of Melnibone*, Kentaro Miura and *Berserk*, Dark Fantasy and Anti-hero archetype. Chapter two is the application of the method on both texts. The third chapter focuses on discussing the Anti-hero archetype on both texts' protagonists. The fourth chapter discusses the status of the Dark Fantasy sub-genre. Finally, finish this thesis with the conclusion.

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INTRODUCTION

Heroes have been a crucial part of every story from the earliest examples from mythic tales and legends, medieval romances to contemporary stories from a range of literary genres. Not only are hero stories widely read but also analysed in academic fields and story reviewing. Heroes have been analysed in various subjects regarding the aim and stance of the critics. There are numerous examples of heroes from classical text to modern media. Heroes like Frodo Baggins, Harry Potter, Achilles, Robin Hood, King Arthur, Batman and Spiderman have been the centre focus and subjects of analysis. Yet, it is often discussed how these characters become heroes and show proof of their stance as heroes.

The critics have speculated that the heroic deeds done by the hero are what make them a hero or the growth they go through, and actions committed along the growth make them a full-fledged hero. They discussed and analysed heroic characters on the topic of how they become heroes. One example academic would-be Joseph Campbell who is a known figure in the study of heroes through diverse mythologic and religious texts. He detailed this in his book titled *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, where he explains his theory known as Hero's Journey or Monomyth. The Hero's Journey consists of three stages and seventeen steps that the hero character goes through. Campbell's book discusses stories that contain and tell the tale of a heroic figure going through several ordeals in their journey that they go through and, in each part, or sequence in their journey, they must go through this to become a hero.

Campbell's Hero's Journey or Monomyth, the term used before it became popularized with the name Hero's Journey, became a widely used method of analysing and writing method for hero stories. It became known thanks to George Lucas's *Star Wars* movie as he declared that he became inspired by Campbell's book and wrote the movie in the scheme that Campbell brings forth. This popularized the method, in the early to late 80s in America, and Hero's Journey was widely used and became a discussion point for analysing and reviewing heroic tales from varying genres such as novels, short stories, movies and TV series. However, Hero's Journey would lose popularity in the following years as better methods of story analysis or

methods of discussion would replace Hero's Journey. Methods like; Vogler's Hero's Journey and Murdock's Heroine's Journey would replace Campbell's version.

Hero's Journey got recognized as one of the methods of analysing stories of its narrative sequences and most importantly one of the first examples of analysing the hero archetype in narrative exemplified by Campbell's analysis of a hero that goes through certain ordeals that make the character be named as a hero. As the method became an important part of analysis in narrative studies along with Campbell's analysis and exemplification of "What a hero is". His studies made a great contribution to the field of Hero analysis in both literature and myths. Not only in literary studies but also in cinema and media studies Lucas' *Star Wars* movie is an application of Campbell's Hero's Journey inspiring others to follow or study his scheme. Though the method was not used widely in contemporary age due to other methods of narrative analysis becoming popular. Despite losing popularity, Hero's Journey can be a valid method of analysing heroes and hero tales.

As time passed, new types of heroes and hero story saw surface. These new types of stories and heroes have started to surface as the writing of heroic stories became more experimental and these new stories being published and read by the masses. This new type of story would be Dark Fantasy and along with the new story, a new type of hero was brought forth, the Anti-hero. Dark Fantasy is a sub-genre of the Fantasy genre and saw great growth in popularity and interest by many. The sub-genre is very different from Traditional Fantasy stories. In this sense, fantasy, or traditional fantasy, can be explained as stories with speculative and highly imaginative elements that are deemed as not real. This genre saw recognition with the works of J.R.R Tolkien and C.S Lewis as the representatives for the birth of the fantasy genre. Dark fantasy, when compared to Fantasy, is very different due to being much darker in tone and setting and contains darker subject matter. The sub-genre saw surface with the writings of another genre that mixed darker elements, which is called Sword and Sorcery genre. This genre is more about action in fantastic settings than narrative driven fantasy. Dark fantasy combines both elements of dark subject matter contained in the horror genre and fantasy action in sword and sorcery. The birth of the sub-genre is often attributed to Karl Edward Wagner and Charles L. Grant. The Dark Fantasy sub-genre is different than traditional fantasy, so is the hero character. Where archetypal heroes are seen in traditional works, Dark Fantasy has heroes that are different than traditional hero archetypes.

Archetypes are symbolic characters seen in fictional works. Credited to C.G Jung for bringing forth the idea to the field of psychoanalysis, then added to the field of literary studies by academics in the field. There are many different types of archetypes seen in fiction and Hero archetype is one that is recognized the most. Hero archetype can be explained as heroic figures that commit acts of heroism to save people and do acts of good. In the subject matter of fantasy, they are often seen in hero stories and fantasy works. Yet, with Dark Fantasy, hero archetype is seen very differently. As sub-genre that deviates from traditions, so does the hero, which is called the Anti-hero. The Anti-hero is a type of hero that can be described as darker or grey in characterization and portrayal. Anti-heroes are far from traditional hero archetypes seen in classical stories. Both the archetype and the sub-genre had seen a rise popularity in the early to late 1980s in the literary culture and writing, and publishing of stories of written form, cinema form, and television form. With their rise, the sub-genre and sub-hero archetype became widely used and popular in contemporary media. Both the genre and archetype seem different in comparison to the norm genre of Fantasy and to the norm Hero archetype as they follow the traditional and normative style of how Fantasy stories are written, and how Heroes in these stories are portrayed and act in their heroic manner.

In this thesis, two notable example texts will be used regarding the portrayal of the Dark Fantasy sub-genre and Anti-hero archetype. These two texts are Michael Moorcock's *Elric of Melnibone* and Kentaro Miura's *Berserk*. Both texts are similar in genre and hero characters, yet the first text is a novel and the second text is a manga. It is common for novel to be used in literary studies, yet Manga, as a comic art form and of Japanese origin, is not often seen in western literary studies. However, this has changed and comic media forms, especially manga, became subject matter and subject of study and analysis in the western literary studies. This thesis aims to be part of this trend and use a Japanese manga to compare it to a western novel in the topic of Dark Fantasy representation and portrayal of Anti-hero characters.

The first text, Michael Moorcock's novel, is about the story of Elric, an albino sorcerer-warrior, as the last emperor of Melnibone and his journey to save his empire from chaotic forces of evil, as he uses the methods of evil. Moorcock's novel is important to the sub-genre of Dark Fantasy as it is one of the early precursor examples and inhabits the first portrayal of Anti-hero in fantasy fiction. The second

text, Kentaro Miura's *Berserk*, is about of Guts, the Black Swordsman, as he is on a journey of battling demonic forces of evil while wielding an enormous sword made of iron. Miura's *Berserk* gained a great following of fans to his work and became a popular example of the Dark Fantasy sub-genre and Anti-hero portrayal. These two texts are the subject of analysis and discussion in this thesis for their importance in sub-genre and character archetype. Yet, both are not much recognized in academia. Both texts are popular and loved in mainstream culture. However, both are not represented much in academic studies and discussions.

This thesis will follow in four chapters. The First chapter is about the background information and context of the method and primary two texts. Then, the rest of the chapters will follow with the analysis and discussion of the primary two texts. The second chapter is about the application of Hero's Journey on to these texts. Third Chapter is about the main character archetypes in these texts and within the method of hero's journey. Last and fourth chapter is about the genre and narrative elements of the dark fantasy sub-genre and the genre's narrative elements within the method.

This thesis has two goals, first is to analyse and discuss the Dark Fantasy and Anti-hero archetype with the aid of Hero's Journey as a method of character and narrative structure analysis. Second is to bring academic recognition to both Michael Moorcock's and Kentaro Miura's works as literary representatives in popular culture and mainstream media. With this thesis, the goal of this thesis is about proving that popular texts, that are appreciated in popular culture, can be used in academic purpose and show that popular texts can have a place within academic studies. This thesis hopes to become an example and try to remove the negative perspectives about these popular texts that are deemed far from tradition.

CHAPTER ONE

LITERARY AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

INFORMATION

This chapter is dedicated to giving theoretical background about Joseph Campbell and Hero's Journey, the Dark Fantasy sub-genre. The First section is about Joseph Campbell and Hero's Journey, then following with explanations of each act and step in Campbell's Hero's Journey. Second Segment is about the Dark Fantasy sub-genre and information about the sub-genre and which genre it evolved and adapted from. Third segment is about the archetypal information, following the explanation of What is an Archetype and following explanations of the Hero and Anti-hero archetype. This is the structure of the first chapter in this thesis, and it aims to give background information regarding the literary and theoretical subjects discussed in the thesis.

1.1. Background of Joseph Campbell

Joseph Campbell is an American author, academic, and folklorist known for his term called Monomyth, later renamed and popularized as Hero's Journey. Born on the 26th of March in 1904 to the Roman-Catholic and Middle-class family of Charles and Josephine Campbell as their firstborn son. Campbell is prominently known in American culture and academia for his writings regarding folklore, religion, and myths around the world. Also, criticism directed towards him from academics and folklorists alike to his writings, status, and knowledge he had spread in his own time. Campbell gained widespread fame and recognition on three occasions in his life, first his most-known book titled *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, which studies the hero stories around the world from various cultures, religions, and myths from different civilizations and ages in time. Second where Campbell gained traction was when the creator of the *Star Wars* movies and the universe George Lucas wrote the first *Star Wars* movie after basing the heroic journey of Luke Skywalker, on reading Campbell's book, which Lucas himself stated was an eerie experience reading Campbell's book and beginning to realize that *Star Wars* draft was following classical myth motifs (Larsen and Larsen 541-543). The

last and third occasion is when Campbell was interviewed by Bill Moyers in a six-episode documentary titled *The Power of Myth*, televised across America in the 1980s. These three moments in his life brought wide attention to him in his life.

Joseph Campbell was born in White Plains, New York as the first-born son of Charles William Campbell and Josephine Campbell. The Campbell family was of Irish-Catholic and Roman-Catholic descent and lived in middle-class status. Joseph Campbell's first fascination with different cultures began at the early age of six or seven when his father took him and his little brother Charley to see Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, a traveling outdoor show depicting early American Cowboy and Native American Indians and showing elements of both cultures. Campbell became fascinated with the Native Americans and began to read books about early Native American Indians and their myths and religious values (Larsen and Larsen, 23-24). His catholic upbringing and avid interest in Native American Indians would be the early precursor of his mythic, religious, cultural knowledge, interest in reading and analysing other world myths and stories.

This was the ambition for Campbell to seek education in this field and began his education at Dartmouth College in 1921, however, he would later transfer to Columbia University and study in the field of literature and obtain his bachelor's in 1925 and his master's in 1927 in medieval literature (Larsen and Larsen 57-59). In 1934, Campbell accepted a position at Sarah Lawrence College to teach in the field of comparative literature and mythology for the next thirty-eight years of his life (Brown 122).

In 1949, Joseph Campbell wrote and published his first book titled *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* would become his magnum opus. The key text that became associated with him and his contribution to his study of hero archetype and narrative studies regarding the journey and cycle of hero goes through. The success of his book would grant him numerous awards and honours from The National Institute of Arts and Letters for his contribution to literature. In this book, Campbell would put forward his idea and theory regarding "Monomyth", a name Campbell borrows from James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* as Joyce was a great inspiration for Campbell and was one of his favourite novelists. Monomyth would be the early term for his Hero's Journey before it got popularized and rebranded as Hero's Journey later.

Later on his writings would follow as *Masks of God: Primitive Mythology* (1959), *Oriental Mythology Occidental Mythology* (Vol. 3: 1964), and *Creative*

Mythology (Vol. 4: 1968); *The Flight of the Wild Gander: Explorations in the Mythological Dimension* (1969); *Myths to Live By* (1972); *The Mythic Image* (1974); *The Inner Reaches of Outer Space: Metaphor as Myth and as Religion* (1986); and five books in his unfinished four-volume, multipart *Historical Atlas of World Mythology* (1983–87).

These are his academic writings and would gain attraction and criticism for his writings by his peers and other critics and academics, however, Campbell would gain mainstream popularity through two events in his life, firstly being his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* becoming an inspiration for movie writer and director George Lucas for writing his famous *Star Wars* Trilogy and universe as Lucas used Campbell's book as a guide for completing his story and become a path for him to befriending Campbell. Secondly, his interview/documentary series with Bill Moyers, journalist, and commentator, named the Power of Myth, spanning six episodes from various topics in Campbell's life and works getting televised to the American public and gaining attraction by millions, though the series would only get televised after the death of Campbell in 1987 due to cancer. Though it may have been released after his death, the series would help the masses to get to know Campbell and have his books become read by the wide populace.

his motto "Follow your bliss" inspired his theory of Monomyth/Hero's Journey inspired creators and writers as a form and diagram of how to write their own hero stories (Campbell 121). Firstly, of course, George Lucas with his *Star Wars* trilogy, and one of the first to promote Campbell's narrative diagram and his book to others as his movies being an example of how Hero's Journey is applied in story writing and creation. Second is movie writer Christopher Vogler, known for his addition to the creation of Disney's *The Lion King* movie. He used Campbell's narrative diagram in writing and teaching other movie script writers how a character goes through in their development in their story. Vogler later writes *Writer's Journey* to teach script writers and simplifies Hero's Journey and lowers the seventeen steps from Campbell's book to twelve steps simplifying each step and three acts.

1.2. Monomyth/Hero's Journey

Monomyth is one of the staple theories and ideas of Joseph Campbell and he is recognized by this frame and theory when he first forwarded this idea in his first published book by the title of *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* in 1949. Though Campbell first brought it to light in academia with the name of “Monomyth” inspired by James Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake* and did one of the first literary analyses of the work and borrowed the word from *Finnegans Wake*. Campbell explains Monomyth in his book, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, in this paragraph “A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man.” (28) In summary, Monomyth can be explained as the narrative pattern that stories of heroic grandeur share in each story as the main characters go on a journey that deems them as the hero and go through several ordeals in their journey.

However, the concept “Monomyth” would soon be replaced by the new popular term nowadays known as “Hero’s Journey”. Both are the same theory yet the latter term became popularized in the late eighties by Bill Moyers in his episodic interview documentary series and later published in book form *Power of the Myth*. After Bill Moyers, the term “Hero’s Journey” became a staple in identifying this narrative pattern. In this interview Campbell explains Hero’s Journey as:

Well, there are two types of deed. One is the physical deed, in which the hero performs a courageous act in battle or saves a life. The other kind is the spiritual deed, in which the hero learns to experience the supernormal range of human spiritual life and then comes back with a message.

The usual hero adventure begins with someone from whom something has been taken, or who feels there's something lacking in the normal experiences available or permitted to the members of his society. This person then takes off on a series of adventures beyond the ordinary, either to recover what has been lost or to discover some life-giving elixir. It's usually a cycle, a going and a returning. (157)

The pattern is divided into three parts as: Separation-Initiation-Return (Campbell 28). Same as how a story or text is written with an introduction, body, and conclusion, Campbell deduces that hero stories go in this format, and each part is

divided into several smaller parts/steps that occur in a story. Though Campbell himself has used many different variants and some hero stories may have all the part, or few of them or less. In his book, Campbell has listed seventeen steps, with the first part consisting of five and the second and third part being six, in a total of seventeen steps. This is how a Hero's Journey is formed all together with a story being divided into three parts and each part having several steps that the hero must go through in their heroic journey, though not all stories have to have all steps nor have none of the steps. In some instances, the hero has only one or all the parts or has less than seventeen steps. This can even be in a different order in either one part or all three parts. Campbell explains as:

Whether the hero be ridiculous or sublime, Greek or barbarian, gentile or Jew, his journey varies little in essential plan. Popular tales represent the heroic action as physical; the higher religions show the deed to be moral; nevertheless, there will be found astonishingly little variation in the morphology of the adventure, the character roles involved, the victories gained. If one or another of the basic elements of the archetypal pattern is omitted from a given fairy tale, legend, ritual, or myth, it is bound to be somehow or other implied—and the omission itself can speak volumes for the history and pathology of the example, as we shall presently see. (35-36)

This has sparked some debate about the certainty of the Hero's Journey as all parts and steps can either be in order or not in order, though this depends on the story it is applied to.

1.3. The Steps Within Monomyth/Hero's Journey Further Explained

Hero's Journey follows the three parts of Separation/Departure, Initiation, and Return (Campbell 28). The first part consists of five steps and later consists of six steps, in total making it seventeen steps in a hero's journey. Each step in order as follows in the first part of the three-part journey listed as: 1-The Call to Adventure, 2-Refusal of the Call, 3-Supernatural Aid, 4- The Crossing of the First Threshold, 5-The Belly of the Whale (Campbell 34). These are the first five steps that occur in the Separation or Departure part of the Hero's Journey. This is the first great stage in a journey of heroic deeds that occur in grand hero narratives and Campbell himself goes into detail in his *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* as he wrote each chapter

about the three parts and following steps in three parts and explaining what each part is in Hero's Journey.

In the first step, "The Call to Adventure", Campbell writes as the first step that is taken in the first act and where the mythical journey begins to make its call to the hero (53). The hero in this part is called to act or take part in this action of a heroic journey; this journey may take them to different planes of existence or lands that are different and strange to the land that the hero resides in. This can be a different situation the hero is not in before, this situation can be that the main character is declared to be the hero and must go on an adventure to reach the goal, and this goal can vary depending on the story.

In the second step, "Refusal of the Call", Campbell explains this as start of the negative in the hero's path and where the first conflict occurs (54). This part is self-explanatory as the hero in question is reluctant to take the burden or mantle of the hero going on the journey, the heroic adventure the hero is tasked with. This can be due to various reasons that the hero in question uses either as an excuse or reason for them not to go on this heroic quest, yet they eventually go on this quest one way or another.

The third step is "Supernatural aid", Campbell describes this as the appearance of the crone, fairy godmother and Christian god appearing before the hero. (65). The hero gets aid from a supernatural being. This being varies in form and figure as a wise old wizard, a beautiful angel, or gods or goddesses as examples. They either give a boon, an item to the hero that will aid them in their journey or give them a supernatural fantasy power that will help them overcome hardships in their journey, or on some occasions can be both from a single supernatural source or multiple sources that bless the hero.

The fourth step is "The Crossing of the First Threshold", Campbell compose it as the border of the hero's destiny and tries to go forward beyond here. (71). This is where the hero is ready to take part or take action on their journey as a hero and where they step into the threshold, the border, the line of the different planes of existence, land or country, that is mentioned in the first step as the hero is called to go into these lands, and it's their first challenge to cross this border and finally go into their journey.

The fifth and last step is "The Belly of the Whale", Campbell scribes as where the hero enters a metaphorical belly of a whale where the rebirth of the hero

happens (83). This is the last hurdle of the hero and symbolizes the hero's separation of their past self and becoming their new self as the hero and begin their transformation into a hero. This can happen either as a first heroic deed or the first heroic action they perform that shows their capabilities and abilities as a hero. As the name suggests, in "The Belly of the Whale", the hero must escape from the belly, the belly being their past or previous state of being.

The first stage of the hero's journey is of The Hero departing from the world to the world of adventure. The hero in question gets a call of action to start their heroic journey and this call can be for various reasons: for example, saving a country, saving a person, or retrieving an object or trinket that was lost or stolen that needs to be retrieved back and brought to a certain person. The Hero at first is reluctant to accept this deed and may reject this call yet eventually accepts this quest and goes on with the journey, though this rejection can be for various reasons that are attributed to the hero. Before crossing the threshold, the Hero gets a visit from a supernatural being in the form of angels, fairies, gods and goddesses, and old wise wizards that give the Hero aid in the form of a boon, this boon can either be magical powers or increase in their attributes or items that inhabit magical powers or in certain cases both. Now that the Hero is equipped, they must cross the threshold into the world of their journey by crossing the border that separates the hero's old world and new world, this can be a physical border and spiritual border. Lastly, the Hero performs their first heroic deed and becomes a hero by performing great heroism or using their heroic capabilities to show heroism. With these the Hero can be finally recognized as the hero and step into the second stage of the Hero's Journey.

The Second stage is called Initiation. This stage consists of six steps: 1-The Road of Trials, 2-The Meeting with the Goddess, 3-Woman as the Temptress, 4-Atonement with the Father, 5- Apotheosis, 6- The Ultimate Boon (Campbell 34). This stage is where the Hero is initiated in their journey and where their heroic actions occur and are tested.

The first step is "The Road of Trials" In this stage, Campbell writes as when the hero passes the threshold, this is where the mythic adventure fully blooms, and several tests come in front of the hero (89). This is where the hero gets tested by their abilities, quirks, and heroic actions with the help of their favoured patron being either a wizard, God, goddess, supernatural being, angel, or fairies as examples. The hero

commits heroic deeds in this stage and is tested by the range of how heroic they are and each action they commit is a test for the hero.

The second step is “The Meeting with the Goddess”, Campbell writes as the hero meets with a goddess figure who bestows them a new boon in aid of their mythic journey (109-110). This is where the hero is visited by supernatural aid yet again, either by the previous ones in the first stage or a new supernatural force that the hero sees for the first time. They give boons or items to the hero that will help them in this stage, this may be different from the aid they have gotten in the first stage as that aid was for them to start their journey, while this one is to help them in this stage’s step. This step occurs when the hero is favoured by the patron or patrons of their journey, and these patrons may differ in form and being and their aid can either be something physical or non-physical that helps them in their journey.

The third step is “Woman as the Temptress”, Campbell explains this as the moment where a great difficulty happening to the hero which comes in the form of a woman or something great and powerful hidden in the form of a woman (111-112). In this step, the hero faces forces that will try to sway them out of their journey and the hero faces this tempting force and tries to stay true to their journey. This force may come either as natural beings or supernatural beings that try to tempt the hero or stop the hero in their journey. As suggested by the name of the step, this blocking and seducing force either comes in the form of a woman or not as this varies depending on the journeys that Campbell previously analysed.

The fourth step is “Atonement with the Father”, Campbell compose this as a challenge cutting the path of the hero, which the hero must atone for and face their fears and worries (120). This is the part where the hero meets a great power figure in their journey. This power figure is generally a male figure depending on the hero's story, with either great supernatural power or someone with immense abilities, confronting the hero and this confrontation becomes the middle point of the journey. The power figure can be the hero’s antagonist serving as the main villain or opponent, or someone acting as a greater evil that the hero must confront. The Father here is a figure confronting or towering over the hero and the hero must challenge them.

The fifth step is “Apotheosis”, Campbell addresses this step as the point of immortality or everlasting thing living inside the hero coming forth (154). This is where the hero comes upon a great epiphany and gains clarity or great knowledge of

something relevant in their journey. Through this, the hero goes through a change, and this becomes a great help in the upcoming hard steps in their journey, toward the end of the second act. This is the moment of climax in the journey as this step leads to the next step and to the end of the second act.

The sixth and last step is "The Ultimate Boon", Campbell explains as appearance of gods and goddesses blessing the hero, bringing great illumination (168). This is where the ultimate goal is achieved in the journey of a hero. The hero achieves what they were seeking in their journey and obtains it finally after many hurdles in their journey. This goal can be many things exemplified such as saving someone, retrieving a sacred object, or defeating a great evil.

The second stage of Initiation is about the hero getting tested in many trials that await them as they set out on their journey. They pass these hurdles and get tested if they are fit to be deemed as a hero. As they pass these hurdles and tests, they meet with a female figure, usually a goddess or a female figure who wishes to aid them and bestow upon them a boon or magical aid as a prize for passing these tests, or in some cases this may be a male figure as that wished to aid the hero and name becomes just symbolic. As the hero meets with a female figure who aids them, they also meet with a female figure who tries to persuade them to leave their quest or halt their journey. Though as the name suggests, this may or may not be a female figure or a figure altogether that tries to stop them, this may be a greater force or metaphorical idea that tries to stop them as they move on to the next step. Here they are met with a greater force, usually a greater male figure, who tries to stop them from achieving their goal in their journey and this figure is a greater force or someone with immense strength and feats that becomes a wall to the hero. However, the hero comes upon a great knowledge or comes upon something that will help them in their journey and pass through this wall as they move on to the last step. This is where the ultimate goal is achieved, and the hero achieves their goal as a hero and finishes their task. This task could be many things such as defeating someone that poses greater harm, saving someone, or retrieving something sacred or something that was stolen.

The Third stage and final stage is called "Return" and like the previous stages. This stage consists of 1- "Refusal of the Return," or the world denied; 2- "The Magic Flight," or the escape of Prometheus; 3- "Rescue from Without"; 4- "The

Crossing of the Return Threshold," or the return to the world of common day; 5- "Master of the Two Worlds"; and 6- "Freedom to Live,"

The first step is "Refusal of the Return", Campbell writes as the accomplishment of the hero quest and realization of the end of their journey (179). As the hero finishes their quest and their time in the realms of the journey is over, it is time for them to go back to their old realm from where they migrated to become a hero. However, The Hero does not want to return to their old realm as they see no reason for them to go back and continue with their status, this is where the name of "Refusal of the Return" derives from.

The Second step is "The Magic Flight", Campbell explains as the complication of the magical flight and evasion which the hero does with the aid of gods and goddesses (182). The name derives from the action The Hero in question must take, as they do not want to return to their old status and their old realm and they want to keep their magical gifts and boons that were given to them. As The Hero wants to keep them, they must escape with their powers, magical abilities, magical tools, and boons. Either escape from returning them to those who have given them or escape from returning to their old realm and status with the help of the boons.

The Third step is "The Rescue from Without", Campbell describes this as the hero being brought back to their old world and may occur with or without the aid of supernatural beings (192). As The Hero has gotten help from supernatural forces and guides on their quest at the previous stage, at this stage they must need their help again or from other sources like before to help them return to their old state and realm of being. Usually, this happens when The Hero is wounded or tired from the end of their journey and needs help to return.

The Fourth step is "The Crossing of the Return Threshold", Campbell explains as the failures and difficulties that happen along the journey to the hero's old world (202-204). This is the adjusting phase of the hero as they have returned from the realm or world of the journey or quest. However, The Hero has a hard time adjusting to their old realm and is unable to transition to their old state. This is a hard time for The Hero, yet they must go through this.

The Fifth step is "Master of the Two Worlds", Campbell compose as the division of the hero's world and trying to be the master of this division (212-213) The Hero finally can adjust to their old realm and state after the journey they have

been through and the change, they went through to evolve into a hero to complete the task of the journey. As they have mastered the new realm of the journey, they have mastered their old realm, the hero becomes master of both worlds so to speak.

The Sixth and last step is “Freedom to Live”, Campbell writes this as the hero becoming the champion of their life and thing that they did from start to the end of their journey (225). Change is constant, as the hero has gone through many changes in their life, this change brings them freedom from their previous responsibility, and this freedom brings them two types of freedoms, the first being life and death as they have back to their old state due to the end of their journey, they are back to being free to live and free to fear death. This can be seen as becoming human again, as a human is free to live their life and free to fear death as any kind of human being fears.

The Third stage of Return is a journey to the first realm of the first stage of Departure. The Hero at first may not want to return to their old realm and state of being. As they do not want to return, they use their magical abilities and boons to flee from this return and escape from it and escape from returning the magical gifts to the giver. Eventually, they accept that they must return and seek aid from a guide figure to help them traverse back to their old realm they departed for the journey. They finally return yet they have a hard time adjusting to their old realm and have a hard time transforming back to their old state and have a hard time balancing their pre-hero and hero state. Eventually, they manage to adjust and become masters of both worlds and can live in both states after the end of their journey. As their journey is over, they are free from all hero-related burdens and go back to freely worry about their human burdens, one of being free to live as a human and the second of being free of fearing death as any mortal being worries about death.

1.4. The Primary Texts of the Thesis

The Subject texts of this thesis are two different works with similarities between them regarding their genre. This part, in order, follows Michael Moorcock who is a renowned English writer, editor, and figurehead of the New Wave in speculative fiction and his work *Elric of Melniboné*, a story partly published in literary magazines and later compiled and published in novelette form. Second written work is by Kentaro Miura, a Japanese manga artist, writer, and figurehead of Japanese Dark Fantasy, and his *Berserk* series published in manga form.

1.4.1. Background of Michael Moorcock

Michael Moorcock is an English writer and editor known for his contributions to the emergence of the New Wave movement in science-fiction writing and his known Sword and Sorcery genre and early Dark Fantasy example, Elric of Melnibone saga series. Moorcock began his literary career by writing his own magazine story in the 1950s, which was the start of his writing fictional and speculative stories. Later, Moorcock began working as an editor for story magazines and began publishing his works in such magazines. His biggest editorial success would be his work for the *New Worlds* magazine between the years 1964 and 1971 and again from 1976 to 1996 while also publishing his writings. This magazine is and his editorial work is important in English Science-fiction writing as it would trigger the New Wave movement of science-fiction and speculative fiction in England and Moorcock becomes the semi-influential figure in the emergence of this movement. Another important contribution would be his *Elric of Melnibone* saga series, early published in magazines and then later compiled in books and novelettes. The series is an example of the early Sword and Sorcery genre, a genre consisting of characters and fights occurring in magical battles and sword duels, and an early example of Dark Fantasy writing. The story is centred around the title character Elric of Melnibone, a character who is prominent with his talent in both magic and skills in swordsmanship. Elric would become a stable character in the Sword and Sorcery genre and become a pop-culture figure in both American and England media in various forms like comic books and magazine publishing (SFE).

1.4.2. Elric of Melnibone

Elric of Melnibone saga, or *Eternal Champion: Elric of Melnibone* in its Multiverse title, is the title fantasy work of Michael Moorcock. First published in various forms of novelettes, novellas, and magazine stories and fully compiled in novel form in the following years in the early 1960s, where it was first published, and later mid 1970s and 1980s in England (Clute). The Chronology is often debated as the saga is set in a multiverse where each story or volume takes place and often

sees different routes of Elric's journey or different states that he is in the published story. As each story is different, Elric himself is a different person in each of them.

Elric of Melnibone gets his title name of being a Melnibone, people that live in the island kingdom of Melnibone, also known as the Dragon Isle in the Lore. It is an island of sheer magical power where each person is strong with magical abilities and harbours dragons where the soldiers ride upon them. Elric, however, is no ordinary Melnibonean as Elric is the 428th and last Emperor of the isle of Melnibone. Elric resides in the capital city known as the Dreaming City and does his rules there. However, Elric is different as he is an albino, and due to this ailment, he is physically ill and lethargic. Due to this, some people look down upon Elric, however, do not dare to challenge him as he is the emperor. Elric is only able to gain a healthy state thanks to the potions that he brews. Despite his albino state, he is still a formidable sorcerer and swordsman. Elric is known as the last emperor as he abdicates his throne in the first novel and begins his journey as a traveling sorcerer/swordsman. Elric also wields a cursed demonic sword dubbed "Stormbringer" a sword that drains the soul of those Elric slays and gives him strength in return, however, the sword hunger for more, and Elric becomes addicted to the strength that the sword gives him in return with each kill. Stormbringer would only see surface at the end of the first novel and later series in writing as the sword is a part of the Eternal Champion multiverse.

1.4.3. Background of Kentaro Miura

Kentaro Miura was a Japanese manga artist and writer famously known for his great and surreal art and story writing done in his widely acclaimed manga titled *Berserk*. *Berserk* itself gained worldwide recognition from manga readers and for its Dark fantasy elements in its creation. Miura published his work in 1989 in the monthly manga magazine *Animal House*. Later, the magazine would change its name to *Young Animal* and Miura would continue to have his work published by that magazine. *Berserk* would gain attraction and gain success through this attraction, which would have his manga be turned into a twenty-five-episode anime in 1997. In total, *Berserk* has been published in a total of 42 volumes and has become one of the most sold Manga, in a total of 60 million copies, worldwide. However, Miura passed away at the age of fifty-four due to aortic dissection and *Berserk* would go on

indefinite hiatus in 2021. The series would only continue to be published in 2022 by his peers, assistants, and manga artists as the story was finished but not yet inked and drawn into manga form. *Berserk* would continue under new credits as “original work by Kentaro Miura, art by Studio Gaga, supervised by Kouji Muri”. The series would continue thanks to Miura's memorandums and notes relayed to Mori by Miura before his untimely passing. In our contemporary time, *Berserk* is regarded as an influential Dark Fantasy series that has inspired other manga artists and creators in Japan and the western hemisphere and popular media around the world. Due to this wide attraction, *Berserk* became one of the staple dark fantasy creations in current time from its publishing in the late 20th century (Berserk Fandom).

1.4.4. *Berserk*

Berserk is a manga series drawn and written by the late Kentaro Miura and continued in publishing by his close manga artist friend Kouji Muri after Miura's passing, in total 42 volumes that are widely read both in its native language and in translated form by the Western audience. *Berserk* is centred around the Black swordsman named Guts and his story of revenge against Griffith and the God Hand, godly beings who wield immense power, for what they have done to Guts and those who are close to him. Guts' backstory is also tragic as his life is full of hardships both in his childhood and after the betrayal done by Griffith, his old close best friend. Guts is different from any other swordsman as he carries a giant thick metal sword that no ordinary person can carry with their strength. The Blade can slice people in half with both its weight and thickness, which makes Guts a dangerous swordsman to deal with. Not only does Guts fight with humans, but he also fights with monsters and demons that torment him due to the brand on his neck as it attracts demons and monsters alike. This brand was put by the God Hand as he was to be a sacrifice for Griffith as he becomes the fifth member of the God Hand, however, Guts survives heavily injured, losing his right eye and left arm. Guts is alone due to this curse done by the Brand, however, in his journey, he meets new allies on the way, but these allies also must deal with what curses Guts and the monsters and demons he fights with his immense giant blade. Guts had a rough life from the start, born out of the corpse of his dead mother and raised by sadistic mercenaries from childhood and launched onto the battlefield at a young age, forced to wear and wield equipment

bigger than him. His luck would turn after meeting with Griffith and his band of Hawk and meeting with Casca and falling in love with her, yet all would go back to chaos after Griffith betrayed the band and sacrifices them and Guts and Casca to the God Hand, only Guts heavily injured and Casca heavily traumatized and raped by Griffith in his new God Form. The first three volumes show post-God Hand Guts in his journey to find Griffith. The latter eleven volumes tell his backstory from childhood to adulthood and meeting with Griffith and his band of Hawk and Casca his lover and the twelfth volume continue from volume three.

1.5. The Genres of the Primary Texts

This part of the thesis is about background information regarding genre of the subject texts. Before explaining Dark Fantasy, the main branch genre of The Fantasy will be explained to give context regarding Fantasy genre. After the explanation of What the Fantasy genre is, this part will continue to explain Dark Fantasy sub-genre.

1.5.1. Fantasy Genre

The Fantasy genre is one of the genres that stand out from most of the traditional genres in literature. This is due to its imaginative and speculative nature surrounding the genre. In proper term, Fantasy genre can be described as set in our world or another world that is deemed impossible to perceive (Clute 338). It is a mythic narrative that can be set in other worlds or past and future worlds similar to ours and like our individual experiences (Mathews 21). The key word regarding the genre is “Perceive as impossible”, which John Clute emphasizes in his encyclopaedic book about fantasy literature (338). Balance is another important aspect of the genre, Tzvetan Todorov comments in his book *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre* as: “The fantastic occupied the duration of this uncertainty. Once we choose one answer or the other, we leave the fantastic for a neighbouring genre, the uncanny or the marvellous” (25).

In this context, the Fantasy genre is what can be described as uncanny and marvellous. It is also important to note that Fantasy gave birth to different subgenres that evolved from Fantasy, which Gary K. Wolfe categorizes some of these subgenres in his book titled *Critical Terms for Science Fiction and Fantasy*. Some of

these subgenres are: Animal Fantasy, Applied Fantasy, Classical Fantasy, Comic Fantasy, Dark Fantasy, Epic Fantasy, Evolutionary Fantasy, Existential Fantasy, Free Fantasy, Gothic High (or Low) Fantasy, Heroic Fantasy, High (or Low) Fantasy, Logical Fantasy, Lost Race Fantasy, Magical Fantasy, Material Fantasy, Moral Fantasy, Myth Fantasy, Rationalized Fantasy, Realistic Fantasy, Science Fantasy, Sentimental Fantasy, Sociocultural Fantasy, and Symbolic Fantasy (38-40).

The elements that make the genre impossible in reality are the abundance of supernatural elements, magical entities and the magical powers being emitted by these sources. Also, the appearances of magical and otherworldly creatures are an element of the genre. Such creatures like: Orcs, Elves, Dwarves, Fairies, Angels, Demons, Wizards and Witches are some of these beings that constantly appear in fantasy genre works. These examples are seen in various widely known works, for example, J.R.R Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings series*, C.S Lewis' *Narnia Chronicles*, Roberts Jordan's *Wheel of Time series* and Terry Pratchett's *Discworld series*.

The history of the fantasy genre is often debated by academics regarding the birth of the genre. John Clute argues that the genre saw surface in the 18th century, through his idea of "Taproot Texts" in his book (921-922). Other critics and academics often referenced medieval and texts older to be the early example of fantasy, yet Clute says otherwise, and Fantasy properly flourished from the start of 18th century. Proper example texts saw surface in the 19th century and popularized in the early 20th century (James and Mendlesohn 194-195).

In summary, Fantasy as a genre is a work of fiction that describes events, objects and beings that try to make the reader believe that are impossible (Wolfe 38). Impossible events such as the appearance of godly figures, magical creatures and occurrences where magic is used are key elements to the fantasy genre.

1.5.2. Dark Fantasy Subgenre

Dark Fantasy is a subgenre of Fantasy and becomes a term that is interchangeable with elements of both Horror and Gothic genre. Early definitions of Dark Fantasy have often seen change as the genre saw a prominent rise in the early 1970s and late 1980s. The sub-genre is often credited to Karl Edward Wagner, as his works of sword and sorcery stories were often dark and gruesome and Charles L. Grant, who wrote fiction that was a mix of fantasy and horror. Their works are

marked as the early example of the Dark fantasy subgenre. It is often discussed that dark fantasy is a mix of both gothic, sword and sorcery elements (Stableford 97; Westfahl 177-78). Dark Fantasy can be described as stories that incorporate more horror elements and less supernatural elements, though in some cases supernatural elements in the mix of horror, like werewolves, vampires, demons, and ghosts (Clute 261). Dark Fantasy has often been an intersection of normal heroic fantasy tales and darker and more grotesque stories, either a border that inhabits elements of both worlds and an intersection where the former meets the latter. Defining what Dark fantasy is often regarded as an ambiguous task due to its loose nature and showing apparent elements that define the genre or being very elusive in showing its elements. According to this information, Dark Fantasy has its roots in the early works of the Sword and Sorcery genre, depicting extreme violence in a fantasy setting, either against fantasy creatures or human beings and sexualization of said violence. Making it far from classical fantasy works from figures like J.R.R Tolkien and C.S Lewis in comparison of explains Dark Fantasy and Fantasy genre (Laetz and Johnston 10).

John Clute, Canadian fantasy and Science Fiction genre critic and academic, in his book *Encyclopaedia of Fantasy*, explains Dark Fantasy as:

We define a DF as a tale which incorporates a sense of Horror, but which is clearly fantasy rather than supernatural fiction. Thus DF does not normally embrace tales of vampires, werewolves, satanism, ghosts or the occult, almost all of which are supernatural fictions (although such tales may include DF elements, while some DFs contain vampires, ghosts etc. . . . (249)

Dark Fantasy as a genre has this problem of definition, due to its ambiguous nature. While some Dark Fantasy stories are more fantasy than Dark, for others it is the reverse. This is due to the intersectional position of the genre. The subgenre stands in the middle of the border of fantasy and horror/Supernatural, having elements and thematic influence from both genres. Roz Kaveney in his article, “Dark Fantasy, and Paranormal Romance” discusses this issue regarding Dark Fantasy:

Perhaps the most crucial distinction to draw, and in essence the hardest, is that between dark fantasy and horror. The two genres share much vocabulary and many key writers – there is always a sense in dark fantasy of its protagonists being in a jeopardy that is the default setting of horror. Part of the difference is that the central aim of horror is to create catharsis by

confronting the reader with a world in which the worst thing happens to the characters with whom we identify, whereas the protagonist of dark fantasy comes through that jeopardy to a kind of chastened wisdom. (217)

This seems to be the issue regarding Dark Fantasy whether it is a fusion of both main branch genres, or it is a subgenre of the fantasy genre or horror and supernatural genre. This creates an ambiguous attitude toward the subgenre, yet the influence of both the fantasy and horror genres cannot be discredited as both genres play a role in the creation of this subgenre. Some critics have tried to separate or make comparisons to dark fantasy as a sub-genre of the Fantasy and Supernatural Horror genres which the sub-genre gains inspiration from. An example of this is Gary Westfahl discussing the difference in settings regarding Dark Fantasy and Horror:

There are often key differences in setting. Horror often involves an intrusion of the frightening and unknown into a mundane, everyday world the reader is familiar with, and the horrific element may never be fully revealed to characters. Dark fantasies have an established setting that is fantastic or otherworldly...

Book and movie series that begin as horror may shift into dark fantasy because what was unknown and frightening in the first book—for instance, a world overrun with zombies—is established and known, although maybe only marginally less frightening.

The protagonists of dark fantasies may engage in questionable or evil activities; Michael Moorcock's Elric, featured in novels such as *Stormbringer* (1977), is such an antihero. But protagonists of dark fantasies may also be truly heroic (see Heroes). They face the dangers presented to them in the book, story, or movie to save others or achieve some greater goal. They are often experienced with the occult or in possession of special skills, knowledge, or powers...Conversely, protagonists of horror stories and movies are often survivors: regular people thrust unwillingly into an awful situation that they are unprepared to deal with. (178)

With this information regarding the Dark Fantasy subgenre, context has been given regarding the analysis of both subject texts regarding the genre, narrative, and thematic elements of the Dark Fantasy subgenre. Dark fantasy as a subgenre of the Fantasy genre and a mix of both main branch genres of Fantasy and Supernatural Horror genre, stands either in the middle line of both genres or acts as an intersection

to both. In brief explanation, Dark fantasy is a collective of fantasy and supernatural horror stories and setting elements with fantasy elements like magic, wizards, dragons, gods, and goddesses, etc. as example, and horror elements like murder, death, gore, curses, demons, evil spirits, and hell, etc. This subgenre is a mix of light themes and elements of the fantasy genre and darker themes and elements of the horror genre, standing as something grey in the middle of both main branch genres. In short, Dark Fantasy is a genre that incorporates qualities of three genres horror, supernatural, and heroic tales and either acts as a border or intersection of these elements in making a story that can be qualified to be called Dark Fantasy (Kaveney 214-216).

1.6. The Archetypes of the Primary Texts

This part of the chapter is dedicated to the explanation of archetypes and the anti-hero archetype. First, information about Archetypes will be explained, then following with the Hero archetype and finishing with the subject matter of Anti-hero archetype. After the end of this chapter, the thesis will continue with the analysis of Campbell's Hero's Journey in both subject texts.

1.6.1. Archetype

Archetypes are regarded as symbolic representation of character types and how these character types act according to their archetype. Archetypes appear in related subject areas like behaviour, psychology, history and literary analysis. The proper term, regarding literature, Archetypes can be described as characters that fit into certain characterization categories. The word derives from two Greek names, first part meaning first or original and second part meaning model (Gill 396).

Yet, the function of archetypes did not start like this, the creation of the term "Archetype" is credited to Swiss Psycho Analysts Carl Gustav Jung. Jung coined the term "Archetype" in his essay "Instinct and the Unconscious" in 1919 and would later develop the idea into several archetypes of his own. Jung explains archetypes as "Primordial Form" which reside in the collective unconscious (21). Later, Jung further elaborates the term in his *Man and the Symbols*:

My views about the 'archaic remnants', which I call 'archetypes' or 'primordial images,' have been constantly criticized by people who lack sufficient knowledge of the psychology of dreams and of mythology. The term 'archetype' is often misunderstood as meaning certain definite mythological images or motifs, but these are nothing more than conscious representations. Such variable representations cannot be inherited.

The archetype *is a tendency to form such representations* of a motif—representations that can vary a great deal in detail without losing their basic pattern. (67)

Jung develops his archetypes into six major names: The Shadow, The Trickster, The Wise Old Man, Anima, Animus and The Maiden (Gill 398). Jung's Archetypes inspired the field of Archetypal analysis and brought famous names into the field. Such as is Northrop Frye, who began to do analysis in this field and wrote *Anatomy of Criticism* which brought Archetypes to the field of literary studies (399). Frye comments about archetypes in literature his book: "The symbol in this phase is the communicable unit, to which I give the name archetype: that is, a typical or recurring image. I mean by an archetype a symbol which connects one poem with another and thereby helps to unify and integrate our literary experience." (99)

Both Jung and Frye brought much recognition to the term "Archetype" and with it, gave birth to a new way of analysing recurring images and character types, which made a groundbreaking movement in the field of literature (Gill 401). With their influence, new ways of character and symbol analysis were born and made a great contribution to the field of literary studies.

1.6.2. Hero Archetype

The term "Hero" is often used for protagonists of literary works and media who are in the centre focus and leading figure due to their heroic deeds. The word dates back to ancient Greece, where the name is seen in classical Greek myths. Derived from the word "ἥρως" meaning hero in modern English and described "heroes, as objects of worship" from the Greek (Lidell and Scott). The word "Hero" became an archetype with the analysis of many hero texts and myths which influenced modern literature. The archetype became popularized with the works of Lord Raglan's *The Hero, A Study in Tradition, Myth and Drama* and Joseph

Campbell's *The Hero with A Thousand Faces*, who both studied the traits and story of hero archetypes. Lord Raglan coined twenty-two common traits that are found in heroes, while Campbell analysed stories from different myths and religions to discuss the archetypal hero journey. Both of them describe "What is a Hero?" in different manners. Lord Raglan explains it as the character with most traits are designated as heroes, which he lists: Oedipus, Thesus, Heracles, Siegfried and Robin Hood as some examples from various worldwide myths (179-189). While Campbell describes hero as someone who steps into the supernatural wonder who encounters forces and returns winning (28). Many others have made comments regarding the definition of the hero. For example, L. Sprague De Camp comments about hero archetype in his book, about the fantasy genre, titled *Literary Swordsmen and Sorcerers: The Makers of Heroic Fantasy*:

Then the Hero reappeared in heroic fantasy. He strides through landscapes in which all men are mighty, all women beautiful, all problems simple, and all life adventurous. In such a world, gleaming cities raise their shining spires against the stars; sorcerers cast sinister spells from subterranean lairs; baleful spirits stalk crumbling ruins; primeval monsters crash through jungle thickets; and the fate of kingdoms is balanced on the bloody blades of broadswords brandished by heroes of preternatural might and valor. (5)

Another name, Gary Westfahl comments about heroes:

One might call the protagonist of any narrative its hero. However, the convention of describing flawed or despicable protagonists as "antiheroes" establishes that true heroes are not simply centers of attention, but objects of admiration and respect. Once, one called such men heroes and such women heroines, but feminists objected to the secondary status implied by the latter term, and now one usually refers to both men and women as heroes. (377)

Heroes are common in the fantasy genre as seen by remarkable examples from Bilbo Baggins from *Lord of the Rings* series to Harry Potter from *The Harry Potter* series. They are in every form of media and manner of genre. As they are heroes, there are also those which are different in comparison, namely the Anti-hero archetype.

1.6.3. Anti-hero

Anti-hero is an archetypal stance that somewhat falls into being a sub-archetype of the hero archetype. It saw popularity in both forms of literature and cinema in the early to late 1980s and grew popular in modern times. Anti-heroes can be somewhat characterized as being opposites or near-different variations as they either do not act or do not follow heroic attributes closely. They are often unsympathetic, unreliable, and cynical in their characterization and this led to the breaking of normative convention in modern narrative (Clute 60). Anti-hero can be also defined as someone who acts outside of norms and values as a hero and somewhat rebellious in the role of a hero (Triana 3). Anti-heroes are often discussed to have darker traits like narcissism, psychopathy and Machiavellianism, which is known as the Dark Triad (Jonason et al. 2-3). This attitude led to the Anti-hero becoming and reflecting modernistic attitude as the anti-hero character goes against traditional depictions and surfacing more in contemporary literature (Neimneh 14).

However, the term “anti-hero” has ambiguous meaning. The term saw change in form and meaning from the early rise of examples of this archetype and in usage in various genres in contemporary fiction. Murat Kadrioğlu in his article “A Genealogy of Antihero” writes:

“Antihero” is a difficult, ambiguous and contradictory term to explore, and thus it is a concept that evokes many possible interpretations. The reason for this is not only the puzzling nature of the term; the problem could also be attributed to the perception of another constantly changing term, namely the “hero”, from which “antihero” derives.... The perception of antihero, then alters in accordance with the transfiguration in hero or “heroism” and the term gains multiple meanings and connotations. (2)

The ambiguous nature of the term brought many definitions and categorization of the qualities to the anti-hero term. For example, J.A Cuddon in his book *A Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* explain “A ‘non-hero’, or the antithesis of a hero of the old-fashioned kind who was capable of heroic deeds, who was dashing, strong, brave and resourceful...” (41). A second definition also regarding the anti-hero comes from M. H. Abrams in his book *A Glossary of Literary Terms*: “The chief person in a modern novel or play whose character is widely discrepant from that which we associate with the traditional protagonist or hero of a serious literary work.

Instead of manifesting largeness, dignity, power, or heroism, the antihero is petty, ignominious, passive, ineffectual, or dishonest” (11). By these definitions, the antihero is an archetype of someone who is the opposite of a hero yet not a villain and portrays qualities that lead them to be regarded as a failure of a hero. However, with the advent of the 19th and 20th centuries, the definition and characterization saw a change as fiction evolved. Kadiroğlu discusses about this: “The nineteenth century, on the one hand, has set the ground for the twentieth century’s solitary characters through a fictional idealization of alienated individuals” (5). He discusses the term antihero and how the portrayal saw a change within the 19th century and prepared its ground for the 20th century as the antihero becomes cemented with its new portrayal of an antihero character. Novels like Dostoevsky’s *Notes From The Underground*, Kingsley Amis’ *Lucky Jim*, Joseph Heller’s *Catch-22*, and plays by Samuel Beckett are examples which Kadiroğlu categorizes in his article (6).

Christopher Vogler in his book *The Writer's Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers* written and published in 2007, gives a more detailed and modern explanation of the portrayal of the antihero archetype. Vogler begins the section with regarding anti-hero as:

Anti-hero is a slippery term that can cause a lot of confusion. Simply stated, an Anti-hero is not the opposite of a Hero, but a specialized kind of Hero, one who may be an outlaw or a villain from the point of view of society, but with whom the audience is basically in sympathy. We identify with these outsiders because we have all felt like outsiders at one time or another. (34-35)

In later parts in this book, Vogler divides the antihero into two categories regarding how it is portrayed in modern media. The first is, characters who are just like heroes in quality yet are either wounded or traumatized in some way and/or cynical due to past traumas. The second is, a tragic hero who is in the centre of the story who is either unlikeable or unadmirable with acts and actions that can be considered deplorable (Vogler 35).

From the opposite of a hero with negative qualities as a non-idealized and mocked figure, to an alienated and estranged figure from societal and traditional norms who walks a grey path not as a true hero or true villain, is the history and evolution of the antihero. With the latter category becoming the grounded term for the portrayal of an antihero various media be novels, television, and cinema. However, as stated before, the antihero as an archetype saw different portrayals in

different forms that apply to different literary genres. This genre in question is the fantasy genre and its various subgenres which grew from the main branch of the genre. For example, John Clute, a science-fiction and fantasy genre critic, discusses this in his book *The Encyclopaedia of Fantasy*, the portrayal of the antihero archetype in fantasy fiction. Clute writes in the section regarding the antihero archetype in fantasy fiction:

In the mimetic novel, an antihero is a character who behaves badly (Not necessarily unheroically), who (if he tells his own story) may be an unreliable narrator, who embodies and profits from the advent of social change, and who cannot easily be identified with the reader.

In fantasy, however, an unsympathetic protagonist is likely to be desired in terms which contrast him with a Hero. Because the Taproot Texts from which much fantasy derives deal either directly or at second hand with the heroic traditions, antiheroes in fantasy are very frequently defined as refusers of heroic commitments, and tend to appear in Revisionist-fantasy or Parody contexts...(48)

Anti-hero is a slippery term as the qualities and elements that make someone an Anti-hero change through time and variations either in genre or form of media, however, these are what makes someone into an Anti-hero, someone who is not an opposite or evil version of a hero yet a flawed, damaged or cynical variations that creates a different narrative surrounding heroes.

CHAPTER TWO

APPLICATION OF THE HERO'S JOURNEY

2.1. Departure/Separation act in Hero's Journey

This part of the Hero's Journey is the first act in the narrative frame, titled the Departure or Separation, though Campbell has used both terms interchangeably, consisting of five steps (Campbell 34). These steps in order are: 1-The Call to Adventure, 2-Refusal of the Call, 3-Supernatural Aid, 4- The Crossing of the First Threshold, and 5- The Belly of the Whale (Campbell 34). In this part, the subject texts, Michael Moorcock's *Elric of Melnibone* and Kentaro Miura's *Berserk* will be analysed, discussed with in-text examples from each text. This will be done in the order of each step, whether the step can be exemplified or not regards to the journey of the main hero of each text.

The first step of the Departure Act is "The Call to Adventure". This step acts as the starting point of the journey of the hero. This call can either be a metaphorical call, an actual call or a change that occurs in the life of the hero requires them to journey out of their mundane life. Also, this part can act as an introduction to the main hero and learn about them and their status before the call, and how they react to the call of their adventure.

Starting with *Elric of Melnibone*, in the first chapter of Book 1, introduction to the title character Elric, and additional information regarding the status of the hero, his surroundings, and his environment are given. As suggested by the title, the story starts in Melnibone, or another name The Dragon Isle, in the capital city "Immyr", The Dreaming city (Moorcock 4). The current emperor, Sadric the 86th, has passed and Elric is the sole heir to the throne of the Dragon Isle as the 428th Emperor of the Dragon Isle yet he is sceptical to be suited for this position as he is an albino. Two paragraphs go into detail about his bone-white skin, white-silver hair, ruby-red eyes, and slender arms while he sits on his ruby-red throne in his court (Moorcock 4). By potions, magic, and healing herbs he is to gain vigour and strength as his natural status ails him, yet this does not stop him from researching and reading every book

and learning every spell possible, making him an equal sorcerer to his late father (Moorcock 5).

The first step of the Departure/Separation Act can be exemplified by his status after the passing of his father Sadric the 86th and Elric as the sole heir to his lineage becoming the current Emperor of Dragon Isle. Elric's adventure starts with becoming the emperor, as he is the sole heir, and this change of status from heir to emperor, from a scholar sorcerer to Emperor is fitting to the first step. This change in Elric life and his status acts as a call to the start of his journey, or adventure by the step's name, a journey of the start of his rule as an Emperor and this change of his royal status acts as a call or a start of his journey.

In *Berserk*, the first chapter of Volume One, we get a very different start and introduction to the main character, the hero, Guts. It is different because the chapter starts with Guts having intercourse with a woman. Yet, the woman starts to change and transform into something grotesque and monster akin. In actuality, it was a demonic monster in the guise of a woman. As the monster tries to strike, Guts strikes back with his prosthetic arm and kills the monster (Miura 8-11). This acts as an introduction to the hero in this story. Guts is someone who fights and kills monstrous beings and shows that Guts is capable of in defeating and killing beings shaped in that manner. Next, Guts travels to a medieval castle town and enters a tavern. In the tavern, there is a group of soldiers that are harassing an elf-like fairy by using the fairy as a target to throw daggers at. Guts quickly takes care of them via his crossbow attached to his arm (Miura 12-18). Only one soldier is left and shoots him with his crossbow on his nose and pins him down to a table. Guts asks if he is a soldier of the town's castle and the soldier replies positively. Guts asks him to relay a message to his master: "The Black Swordsman has come" (Miura 19). As he finishes torturing the soldier, another one tries to strike him, but Guts quickly cuts him in half with his big sword. A description regarding Guts's sword: "It was much too big to be called a sword...Massive, thick, and far too rough. Indeed, it was like a heap of raw iron" (Miura 22-23).

The first step of the Departure/Separation Act is shown differently as Guts' introduction shown in two different manners, first him slaying a monster and secondly dealing with the soldiers in the inn, torturing one for information regarding whom he serves and cutting one in half with his massive sword. It can be speculated that Guts' call to his adventure is that he seeks someone or something. Yet, there is

no sign or evidence of change in his status, place, or environment. However, he is in search of something or someone that can be evidence of "Call to Adventure" as first he was in a forest at night then in the day he entered a town to seek information in an inn. As we move on with each step and each chapter of the graphic novel (Manga) we will learn more of what Guts is seeking. What Guts is searching for can be categorized as a call and this search can act as an adventure or journey in the first act of the Hero's Journey.

The second step of the Departure Act is "Refusal of the Call", suggested by the name alone is the act of refusing, questioning, and being sceptical about this call from the previous step that creates a change in the Hero's world, environment, status, and life. It is normal for the Hero to question and be sceptical about this call, it is natural, as they may not want this burden to go on a journey or feel frightened to change or switch from their previous position. However, this becomes futile in the end, and The Hero accepts this call and sets forth on their journey.

In *Elric of Melnibone*, this step is exemplified by Elric's rejection of Melnibonean values and traditions along with his feeling unfit for the role of the emperor. Elric is emperor because he is the sole heir and only child of the previous emperor. Elric feels that this role is an obligation in Melnibone traditions. Elric is well read, and this causes him to have a sense of morality that the Melnibones don't have as Melnibones separate themselves from the rest of humanity and think they are above humans. This morality and indifference to tradition caused ire among people, especially Prince Yyrkoon, Elric's cousin, who challenged him in a debate in his court. Elric being an albino and indifferent to Melnibone traditions caused Yyrkoon to want to dethrone and kill Elric. This intention causes Yyrkoon to debate with Elric regarding the role of the emperor and traditions that must be upheld, yet Elric as he well read, was able to shut down Yyrkoon and make him retire from the court (Moorcock 11-16).

This rejection of Melnibonean values and traditions and not wanting to fully suit the role of the emperor, causes Elric to reject this role and obligation. This rejection is caused by Elric's sense of morality that he develops through his self-education within his father's library and his estrangement due to his albinism made him to be in a position to feel estranged from other Melniboneans. Yet, Elric must be obligated to the role of the Emperor and rule the people that he is estranged from and

abide by traditions that he disagrees with, yet as the step suggests, Elric has to answer to the call of the journey and be suited into the role of emperor.

In *Berserk*, however, there is no sign of the "Refusal of the Call" step. Usually, in this step, the hero refuses, rebels, and rejects the call of the adventure or journey that creates a path for them to slowly transform into the hero of their story. Sadly, there is no sign of the step in *Berserk*. Following his exit from the inn after he kills a multitude of soldiers and tortures a soldier to obtain an answer and give the message to his master that he has arrived, Guts does not show any sign or any action like be called a refusal or rejection. Guts is keen on his mission to meet with the master of the castle and eventually confront him to kill him as it seems that be his goal in the first chapter. Guts does not show any sign of refusal or rejection in his path, yet he rejects Puck as he has saved him from the soldier. Puck tries his best to gain Guts' attention, yet Guts dismisses him (Miura 25-27). However, rejecting Puck can't be a sign of the second step as it has nothing to do with Guts' goal and his journey. As the second step suggests, the hero rejects, or tries to reject, this call to adventure. However, Guts' rejection of Puck's help cannot be a sign of the second step. This is the reason why there is no sign of the second step of the Departure Act.

The third step of the Departure Act is "Supernatural aid". In this step, the Hero gets aid from a supernatural source, and this aid can vary in form and how the aid is given. In form, supernatural forces could be a magical fairy, a wizard, a god or goddess, or angels to count a few. They come to the aid of the Hero in the first act either to grant them wisdom on the first step of their journey or bestow something upon them. What the supernatural being bestows could be an object of great power and magical properties or literal supernatural and magical powers and abilities that help the Hero move on to the next step in the first act.

There is no sign of the third step in *Elric of Melnibone*. This is because Elric himself already has supernatural powers as he self-tutored himself from a young age and a learned sorcerous spells from his late father's library. His sorcerer abilities already make a storm force to be feared, which Cymoril, Elric's lover and sister to Yyrkoon asks: "Do you think he plots to use sorcery against you?" (Moorcock 17). Elric answers back: "I would know if he brought a large sorcery against me. And he knows my power, I doubt if he would dare employ wizardry" (Moorcock 17). Elric is strong in sorcery which makes Prince Yyrkoon fear his abilities. Usually, this supernatural aid comes in preparing the Hero for their journey and bestows them

with power or a powerful object that will help them in their journey. Yet, Elric gets no aid or bestowment from a higher supernatural aid in the first act, as he is already powerful due to his magical abilities. Due to his magical abilities as a self-learned sorcerer, there is no sign of the third step in the Departure Act.

However, before *Berserk* shows no sign of the second step, The Third step is apparent as Puck comes to the aid of Guts. This happens after Guts is captured by the town knights, as they outman Guts in large numbers and he is brought to the castle dungeon to be tortured for answers. Guts is stripped, whipped, and tortured and does not answer anything despite the heavy torture he is induced. However, the only thing he says is that he knows that the Master of the castle is a monster that eats humans (Miura 28-36). Guts is lying down in the dungeon heavily wounded, however out of nowhere Puck appears with the dungeon key to rescue Guts, and with his elf fairy powers, he heals Guts' wounds: "Elves have many different powers...We can heal injuries, sense people's feeling, and some even say that we have the power to bring one happiness.." (Miura 48). However, this power isn't enough to heal the brand on his neck as it's a cursed brand.

Puck brings aid to Guts in time of need as he is wounded and trapped, making him unable to further his journey. As an Elf Fairy, Puck is small enough to be unnoticed and swipes the dungeon key to help him escape and as a supernatural being, Puck heals Guts wounds and explains what his kind are capable of as supernatural beings. This appearance of the form of Puck and his healing abilities is evidence of the third of the Departure Act as Puck aids Guts in his time of need.

The Fourth step is "The Crossing of the First Threshold" in the Departure Act. This step acts as the borderline of the fifth step and this borderline is the first challenge that the Hero must overcome. This line could either be physical or non-physical. By non-physical, it is meant that the borderline could be something that the Hero must overcome to themselves be a fear, a weakness, or a problem they must overcome to pass into the world of their journey and step into the last and fifth steps in the first act. By physical it is meant by something concrete and solid as an object. It could be a gate, land, portal, or realm that acts as a line to the start of their journey. When the hero passes it, their adventure or journey officially starts and goes into action and steps to the fifth and final step of the Departure Act.

In *Elric of Melnibone*, the fourth step can be exemplified in the fourth chapter where Elric and Cymoril's outing is interrupted by the captain of the guard as he

informs Elric that spies were caught trying to enter the isle (Moorcock 23). Elric goes to the tower where the spies are held and tortured by information about their motives. As Elric watches the work of the torturer named Doctor Jest, he contemplates and inspects the work of the doctor. The doctor is finished with the torture and comes to Elric with information regarding the motives of the spies. Spies were sent to inspect the route and then entered to sneak into the isle and if they did not return, the ships waiting for them were to set sail on the route they used. Elric starts preparing for the incoming ships and has his guard send a message to his generals and admirals to prepare for battle (Moorcock 26-28).

In an odd twist, Elric does not step in the threshold, as the news of foreign spies being captured is the moment where the threshold is crossed. Their capture and the information regarding the force of enemies waiting for them causes Elric to act as the emperor and this is the first challenge that Elric must overcome as the hero of the story and as Emperor that must protect his empire and its people. Taking action against this threat of invaders is the first action that Elric commits to and leads to the next step of the first act and preparing for the invaders can be considered as a crossing of the threshold.

In *Berserk*, Guts awaits in his cell with the keys in hand for the moment of action (Miura 56). Unlike in the previous section where Elric called to the threshold, Guts moves to the threshold, and this is where he acts. The noise of the townspeople and the brand on his neck starts bleeding notify the presence of demonic presence, which is the reason Guts came to the town searching for them (Miura 57). It is a massacre as a heavily armoured man in strange Armor on horseback leads his men across the town. However, Guts ambushes them and starts attacking them to reach their leader (Miura 62-63). As Guts is slaying them one by one, the man whom Guts is searching for finally approaches him. Guts finally comes across him and he mocks Guts as he is towering over him: "Are you the so-called "Black Swordsman" who has been hunting us apostles?...I don't know what you expect to accomplish. As a human you have no hope of defeating me... I laugh at the mere idea of it !!" (Miura 67-68).

By taking action in the town and dealing with the soldier until Guts' enemy approaches him, Guts crosses the threshold and comes across his first challenge, following the fourth step. The challenge is the demon in armoured human form calling himself "Apostle" and challenging him becomes his first step as a hero of the story. By defeating him and proving his capabilities as the hero of the story, Guts

moves to the next and final step of the Departure Act. Unlike Elric in the previous, Guts goes forward the borderline, the threshold, and action finally occurs as the step suggests.

The fifth and final step of the Departure Act is "Belly of the Whale". This step does not actually occur in the belly of a whale. This name is rather symbolic as the hero is in the middle of their role or in an environment where they commit acts of heroism. This belly is where this act and/or action occurs. By committing to their heroic role and becoming victorious over the challenge that awaited them, before crossing the threshold, The Hero does their first heroic deed and becomes deemed worthy as a hero. Their first act of heroism or action they take is to overcome their challenge and is a key to symbolically escape the belly of the whale.

In *Elric of Melnibone*, this is exemplified in the last two chapters where Elric and his army prepare to engage the invading force and Prince Yyrkoon, who aims for the throne, in the heat of battle challenging Elric. Elric and his army of Melniboneans are prepared to engage the invading force, whom they call "barbarians" as they see anyone who isn't Melnibonean. This is Elric's first battle as the emperor, and this battle is his first challenge to overcome as a hero of the story. His first challenge occurs in a naval battle as a ship of barbarians charges his ship and begins fighting with them (Moorcock 34-35). Elric is the first to jump to the deck of the barbarian ship as they charge his ship. Elric begins to slay the barbarians one by one until he reaches the captain of the ship. His battle against the barbarian captain is his first challenge as the hero, as the threshold is passed with the arrival of the invading force. His battle against the barbarian captain is tough as with each blow, the captain curses him, his people, and his traditions (Moorcock 36-38). However, Elric becomes victorious as he slays the captain: "After the captain had fallen face down on the deck, he hacked twice at the neck until the head rolled off the body, rolled to the side of the bridge, and was then kicked over the side so that it sank into the cold, deep water" (Moorcock 38). Elric slaying the barbarian captain and defending his Melnibonean honor is his first heroic act and becomes victorious in his first challenge, however, another challenge soon comes at the hands of Prince Yyrkoon. Prince Yyrkoon boils in anger as the barbarian's forces, and their ships begin to fall back and flee as they become close to defeat. Elric becomes weak as his strength becomes less due to not taking his medicine to help with his ailment caused by Albinism. Elric, not giving chase and not killing the rest of them, angers Prince

Yyrkoon and accuses Elric of not staying true to Melnibonean traditions and values (Moorcock 40-42). However, as they prepare to go back, a barbarian ship tries to ram them once again and invade Elric's flagship. A weakened Elric and Prince Yyrkoon defeat the barbarians; however, Elric becomes exhausted from battle. Elric asks for help from Prince Yyrkoon to help him rise from the ground of the ship, yet, Prince Yyrkoon does not help Elric and answers back: "You cannot command me, Elric. I am emperor now, you see" (Moorcock 45). Prince Yyrkoon rolls Elric close to the railing of the ship and has him drop down to the sea. Elric was able to defend his land by defeating the barbarian invaders and showing his status as a hero. However, he is unable to fend off the challenge of Prince Yyrkoon. As Elric falls to the sea, Prince Yyrkoon: "Farewell, Elric. Now a true Melnibonean shall sit upon the Ruby Throne. And, who knows, might even make Cymoril his queen? It has not been unheard of..." (Moorcock 46). Elric gets betrayed and defeated as he further sinks into the sea.

In an odd twist, Elric was able to defeat the barbarians and act out following the step and show his heroic attributes as Emperor and as the hero of the story. This is apparent in the fourth chapter, yet in the fifth and last chapter of the first part of the novel, Elric gets defeated. This is due to his albino ailment and his potions losing effect. Elric is betrayed by Prince Yyrkoon as he hopes to sit on the throne and abide with Melnibonean traditions and values as Elric is strange to them. Prince Yyrkoon becomes a greater challenge for Elric throughout the novel and with each passing step and act, this becomes Elric's goal to defeat Prince Yyrkoon. In this instance of the step, it can be said that it is "half acted out" as Elric defeats the first challenge as the hero to defeat the barbarians yet in the second challenge Elric becomes bested due to his ailment. This is how the fifth and final step is shown and exemplified.

In *Berserk*, Guts' first challenge in the story is his fight with the apostle. Here Guts shows his heroic attributes and actions to defeat the apostle, as it was his goal when he came to the town in search of him. Guts begins barraging him with a rain of arrows with his crossbolt and the apostle falls from his horse covered in arrows. However, he rises from the ground and Guts in response loses arrows once again (Miura 70-72). Guts goes to check on him, yet a giant snake-like tail hits him and falls back. The tail belonged to the apostle and rises back, transforms into a cobra/serpent-like monster, and challenges Guts once again (Miura 73-76). Guts get tossed around and injured heavily by the apostle transformed into a snake/serpent

monster. The apostle raises his hand to inspect him and taunts him. Yet Guts raises his iron arm and aims at the face of the apostle. This iron hand is a small cannon that blasts the apostle's face and slices him in half with his gigantic sword (Miura 77-83). Apostle with his face half-blown and his upper half torso cut into half, Guts asks him a question: "God's Hand...Where are the five members of the God's Hand?" (Miura 89). Unable to get a proper answer, Guts burns the apostle and dies as he burns. Guts leaves the now ruined town, littered with corpses, as he has killed the apostle, revealing "The God's Hand" being his actual goal of his journey as the hero of the story.

Guts becomes victorious and shows his heroic attributes and strength as he has defeated the Monster apostle. However, this is a bittersweet victory as the town is now in ruins due to the aftermath of the massacre caused by the apostle and his soldiers. Yet, as the steps suggest, Guts becomes victorious in his challenge as the hero of the story, yet this victory is a very dark one as his means of defeating the apostle are unconventional and no one is saved besides himself and Puck who begins following him and aiding with his supernatural abilities.

2.2. Initiation Act in Hero's Journey

This part of the Hero's Journey is the second act in the narrative frame, called the Initiation act, consisting of six steps (Campbell 34). These steps in order are: 1-The Road of Trials, 2-The Meeting with the Goddess, 3-Woman as the Temptress, 4-Atonement with the Father, 5- Apotheosis, 6- The Ultimate Boon (Campbell 34). Continuing with the pace of the previous section, in this part Michael Moorcock's *Elric of Melniboné* and Kentaro Miura's *Berserk* will be analysed, discussed, and given in-text examples from each text in the order of each step. Whether the step can be exemplified or not regarding the journey of the main hero of each text.

The first step of the Initiation Act is "The Road of Trials", with hero passing to the world or environment where their adventure or journey starts or continues, their heroic abilities, qualities, and strength are tested. Hence, the name suggests that their journey starts with trials where the hero is tested and proves their heroic worth. They may get aid from or a visit from a supernatural being they were visited before in the first act or a supernatural being they never encountered before. However, this supernatural being is there to help them with troubles they come across or help them

in a moment of grave danger. In some instances, the hero can continue the trials without supernatural aid, yet this supernatural being may appear to them depending on the status of the hero.

In *Elric of Melniboné*, following the previous chapter, Elric is betrayed by Prince Yyrkoon and is thrown into the sea. As he sinks further deep into the sea helplessly, Elric remembers an old spell that he read regarding a sea deity named Straasha (Moorcock 47). As he loses his consciousness, Elric chants an old spell, and Straasha answers his call and saves his life. Elric is thankful to Straasha yet begs that it was not his intention to summon him and have his life saved as he was unaware of ever chanting this spell. However, Straasha thinks differently, and this moment is shown like this: “I do not even ask that of you. I only voice what I would have wished, had this been reality and I was speaking, which I know is impossible. Now I shall die...” (Moorcock 49). Elric answers Straasha yet denies his request: “That cannot be, Lord Elric, for our destinies, are truly intertwined and I know that it is not yet your destiny to perish. Therefore, I will aid you as you have suggested” (Moorcock 49). As Straasha saves Elric from drowning, he promises that they will meet again as it is in his destiny. Elric’s next trial is to confront Prince Yyrkoon. He declares himself emperor by killing Elric and those who are loyal to the prince support him in this goal as they are loyal to whoever sits on the ruby throne (Moorcock 52-6). However, as the prince enters the throne room, someone else sits on the throne. Prince Yyrkoon, in terror, shouts at the person sitting on the throne, this person is none other than Elric. Elric sits on the ruby throne alive, after being saved by Straasha, and those who are loyal to him apprehend the prince and those who betrayed him by following the prince. The prince and those who have betrayed Elric are to be punished, however the biggest punishment would be of Prince Yyrkoon and the guard captain. The captain is to be executed by having his flesh flayed and cooked and the cooked meat is to be fed to Prince Yyrkoon during the victory celebration of their victory against the barbarians and to Elric returning. After Prince Yyrkoon eats the flesh of the captain, Elric will have the prince exiled (Moorcock 59-62).

Elric is in the world of his journey now, which is the journey of defeating Prince Yyrkoon and saving his love Cymoril from his grasp as he wishes to take the throne and her from Elric. As the step suggests, his first trial is to escape his fate of drowning deep in the sea and go back to the Dreaming Isle to defeat Prince Yyrkoon

for what he has done to him and for what he is going to do next. His first trial is to escape death by drowning and he summons the aid of a supernatural being to help him with this task. Straasha answers and aids Elric and bestows wisdom upon him regarding his destiny. Straasha saving Elric and bestowing his wisdom can be considered a supernatural aid, as suggested in this step. Elric is saved and passed his first trial and shows his sorcerer abilities by chanting a spell to summon Straasha. Both elements of the first step are exemplified by Elric getting aid from a supernatural deity and showing his ability as a magical hero to pass the trial of survival as he was drowning. His second trial begins as he returns to the Ruby Throne and confronts Prince Yyrkoon and those who have betrayed Elric. Punishment for them is that they become prisoners yet, the biggest punishment is of the guard captain and Prince Yyrkoon as the captain is to be killed by having his flesh stripped and cooked, and have the cooked flesh fed to the Prince and have him exiled. By giving these punishments, Elric passes his second trial and returns to the throne as emperor.

In *Berserk*, the next chapter follows Guts in the aftermath of his fight with the apostle as he walks injured. Puck follows him yet his presence does not amuse Guts. As he walks in the rain, a horse cart shows up with an old man and his daughter, offering to give him a ride and have him sheltered from the rain (Miura 97-106). Guts warns them that evil spirits are haunting him and does not want anyone around him due to this. Despite this, Guts hops onto the cart reluctantly. As they pass through a dark forest, Guts is attacked in his sleep by a demon, and the atmosphere of the forest changes to a dark one. Skeletons rise from the ground in abundance and threaten Guts, the old man, and his daughter. The Horses are startled, and the old man's daughter tries to call them. Guts warns her but the girl gets impaled by a spear from a skeleton monster (Miura 123-8). Guts fights with the skeletons and defeats them one by one. However, Guts and Puck are shocked as they witness the girl's corpse being possessed by evil spirits and kill the old man (Miura 132-144). Despite being in shock, Guts kills the possessed corpse and fights with the skeleton monster until the break of the morning. The evil spirits mock and taunt Guts as it is futile to resist and fight them (Miura 160-1). After shouting at them, Guts continues this journey, and a sad Puck laments this situation.

The first step is shown in its half because there is no aid of a supernatural being, despite Puck being beside Guts, he is powerless to fight or aid Guts while he

fights with the skeleton monsters. Guts shows his heroic strength and abilities while fighting the skeletons, yet he fails to save the old man and his daughter. Guts' first trial was to protect them and defeat the skeleton monster. Guts defeats the skeleton monster yet fails at saving them the old man and the girl. The girl's corpse is possessed and kills the old man. Guts laments in anger that anyone close to him gets hurt and or dies due to his curse of being haunted by demonic forces. Guts passes the first trial in his journey by defeating the evil spirits and the skeleton monsters and shows his heroic strength. Yet tragically fails to save the old man and his daughter with the presence or aid of a supernatural being.

The second step of the Initiation Act is "The Meeting with the Goddess". In this step, the hero gets aid or support yet again from a supernatural force. This can either be the someone whom the hero gets aided in the previous act and steps, or someone new that the hero hasn't met before. As the name suggests, this can either be a female figure with a supernatural power or regardless of their gender someone who is in the god status or someone with supernatural abilities and wisdom. They can either grant their aid supernaturally or give them something that will be useful in the following steps. How they present themselves and how they aid the hero changes depending on the narrative, as the name of the step occurs in a literal manner or has a symbolic meaning as the hero with someone superior in status.

In *Elric of Melniboné*, there are three instances where Elric meets with a supernatural being. First is when Elric summons Straasha and gets his aid in saving him from drowning and promises to help them yet again (Moorcock 47). Straasha appears again later in the story as Elric asks for help from him in finding Prince Yyrkoon as he escapes his confinement after he tries to usurp the throne by throwing Elric into the sea to die by drowning and kidnap Elric's love interest Cymoril (Moorcock 64-7). Straasha bestows upon Elric a ship capable of sailing on water and land but warns him that Straasha and His Brother Grome, an earth deity, both claim ownership of the ship and he may try to take it. The ship will arrive to Elric soon and aid him in going after Prince Yyrkoon and saving his lover Cymoril (Moorcock 77-84). However, before meeting with Straasha again, Elric asks for aid from a new and different supernatural being. This being is Demon Lord Arioch, whom Elric's ancestors share a connection with. Arioch appears to Elric in exchange for his aid in finding Yyrkoon and Cymoril and appears whenever Elric calls to him, asking for his

loyalty and to serve him as his ancestors did. Elric obliges him to this deal and wants to find his lover (Moorcock 70-3).

Elric meets with two supernatural deities who hold immense power. The first is Straasha the sea deity while he is drowning and the second time when he asks for aid to Straash and bestows him with a magical ship that can sail both on water and earth. Straasha comes to Elric to help him yet again. However, a new supernatural being comes to Elric for the first time, which is Lord Arioch and in exchange for his aid, he asks for loyalty and servitude to him by Elric. These moments in the story are examples of how the step occurs.

In *Berserk*, Guts gets aid from someone as well, however, this person is no god or deity as it is a human being who holds knowledge and practices supernatural arts. As the step explains, this aid can either be someone with supernatural status or someone who holds the power and/or wisdom of someone in that status. Guts comes to a new town in search of an apostle to reach God's Hand. Here, Guts witnesses the execution of a girl under the charge of heresy. As Guts watches the execution, he sees The Count, another apostle, sitting there as he watches the execution of the poor girl. As The Count is sitting and enjoying the execution, he notices Guts and senses the brand on him. After the girl is executed for heresy, Guts leaves after he points to The Count as his next target (Miura 167-181). Soldiers soon follow Guts and try to arrest him by the order of The Count. Guts begins fighting with the soldiers, killing them one by one, until he meets with a formidable opponent who matches him in strength (Miura 183-208). As he fights, smoke bombs are thrown and soon a cloud of smoke surrounds them. Here, a hooded figure calls for Guts and helps him escape. The hooded person leads him to his hideout and introduces him as Vargas, a doctor who studies the dark arts. Here, Vargas reveals himself and shows his disfigured face and body and asks Guts to kill The Count as he also knows that he is no human. In a secret area in his hideout, Vargas shows an object he acquired from The Count (Miura 210-223). Guts after seeing the object recognizes it as a "behelit", a magical object used to summon God's Hand. Guts asks Vargas where he found this, and Vargas tells him that he found this object seven years ago when he was captured and tortured by The Count and had his wife and sons killed by The Count. Here, Vargas tells the horrid story of how The Count tortures and kills his victims and devours their corpses (Miura 6-15). Guts takes the behelit and bids farewell to Vargas after

they are ambushed by Zondark who is now transformed by The Count into a monster. Guts manages to defeat him and escape yet Vargas is captured.

Guts gets aid from Vargas to continue his journey in killing The Count and finding God's Hand. Vargas helps Guts in escaping from the town soldiers and aids him again by showing him the behelit and giving information about The Count. This is no supernatural aid, yet this comes from someone who holds information and bestows this information to Guts. After bestowing information and the behelit, a magical object, Guts continues to find The Count. By giving wisdom regarding The Count and his status as an apostle monster and giving him the behelit, Vargas fulfils his role by aiding Guts in his journey.

The Third step of the Initiation Act is "Woman as the Temptress". In this step, the hero encounters someone or something that entices the hero to stray from their goal and journey or temporarily halt them at the mid-point of their journey. In some cases, as the name suggests, this can be a female figure who tries to seduce the hero by halting them or straying from their goal. However, this enticement can also be something else that the hero gets captivated by, not an actual female figure but something not physical, like a spell, curse, or chant for example. This happens to halt or stray the hero from their journey and the hero must win over this seducing moment, whether the source is a female figure or not, or something taking over the hero and making them halt their journey.

In *Elric of Melnibone*, no female figure tries to seduce and entice Elric to sway from his goal to save his lover Cymoril and go after Prince Yyrkoon. As the step suggests, the hero is halted in the middle part of their journey by something that blocks or halts their journey. This can be something magical or some non-female figure or being that tries to stop the hero's path in their journey. Something akin to this category does happen when Elric sails on the magical ship given by Straasha. Straasha warns Elric before he gives the ship as he and his brother Grome both own the ship. As Elric and his crew sail the ship on earth passing through forests and lands, the ground begins to shake and surround the ship, halting their progress. Elric notices that this may be the work of Grome the earth deity. Elric beckons to Grome and pleads that they mean no harm to him and quarrel. Grome appears before Elric and demands that they return his ship. Elric pleads to him as it was given by his brother, and he needs the ship to reach his goal. Grome bargains that he wants something in return. Elric bargains with Grome and manages to keep the ship, yet

Grome would only allow the ship on water and not on earth anymore as it is Grome's domain and he does not want the ship to sail where he rules. Elric is displeased yet must go through with this deal and only sail on the water to reach Cymoril and confront Prince Yyrkoon (Moorcock 96-100).

The presence of Grome blocks Elric's path and halts his progress in his journey to save Cymoril and confront Prince Yyrkoon. As the ship also belongs to Grome, he wants it back, yet Elric needs it to reach his goal. Elric uses his magical abilities, calls and speaks with Grome to have him not halt his journey. As the step suggests, Grome's presence and using his god-like powers to control the earth, halts him and stops the ship from sailing. Elric manages to bargain with Grome yet with the price of not being able to sail on land anymore as the ship can sail both on land and water. Elric is not happy with this yet must manage this ordeal and continue his journey.

In *Berserk*, there are some moments where Guts is halted in his journey. Yet these are not something stronger and larger in presence blocking him. However, there are no female figure to seduce and entice him to stray from his path, or anything taking over Guts and stopping him from going through his journey. There are small moments where he is stopped yet Guts easily deals with them with his willpower and strength. To be specific, Guts comes across now monster Zondark and fights with the soldier guarding the throne room of The Count. When Guts enters the castle of The Count, He comes across Zondark blocking his path to reach The Count. Guts defeats Zondark but becomes injured in the process yet through his sheer willpower and strength endures the pain of his wounds (Miura 136-156). This injured state does halt his progress for a temporary time, yet Guts reaches the gate of The Count's throne room. Here, it is protected by knights and soldiers and Guts begins to slay them all before entering the throne room (Miura 168-182).

Guts is not seduced, enticed, overpowered, or slowed down in his journey. Yet having to slay Monster Zondark and the knights and soldier protecting the throne room are minor obstacles blocking his path to reaching The Count and finding God's Hand. In comparison to Elric whose path is blocked by supernatural powers and by a God, Guts' path is only blocked by a monster and a group of soldiers. Yet, these moments serve to block Guts and halt him until he meets with his foe.

The Fourth step of the Initiation Act is "Atonement with the Father". This is the step where the hero confronts a figure that is towering over them in strength and

power or someone who challenges them as their final goal, or someone blocking them in front of their goal. The word “Father” here is symbolic as in real-life father figures are someone who towers over us in our growth to adulthood. In this case, adulthood is symbolized here in becoming a hero to confront The Father in equal standing. The Hero must confront the figure here to finish their journey. The father may or may not act as the final obstacle of their journey or as an obstacle blocking their goal. This is where the hero’s big battle occurs and proves their growth as a hero and the power obtained through their journey.

In *Elric of Melnibone*, this moment occurs when Elric finally comes across Prince Yyrkoon after he chases into the “Shade Gate”, a portal that leads to another plain of existence. Besides the gate is Cymoril, however, she is enchanted with runes that put her in a deep sleep and only Prince Yyrkoon can remove them. Cymoril tried to stay awake and tell her brother’s plan to find the Rune blades, powerful and cursed swords cited in Melnibonean legends. Elric enters the shade gate with the wisdom bestowed by Arioch about the locations of the blades (Moorcock 111-5). Elric now makes his way to the cavern where the blade resides, along with the aid of a man named Rackhir the Red Archer whom Elric promises to save him from this realm, and journeys into the cavern (Moorcock 116-121). Elric and Rackhir, following the direction given by Arioch, enter the room where the two blades hang in the air with no support and find Prince Yyrkoon there. Here Elric would begin his duel with Prince Yyrkoon and defeat him before he takes hold of the blades (Moorcock 131-135). Elric finally confronts Prince Yyrkoon after he has chased him across the land and the other dimension where the magical blades reside. Here, as the step suggests, Elric’s battle against Prince Yyrkoon begins, and by defeating him, Elric hopes to secure the blade from harm and save Cymoril from her cursed deep slumber.

In *Berserk*, Guts finally reaches the throne where The Count resides. Guts attacks The Count; his attack is deflected by big monstrous appendices. These appendices are connected to The Count, and he soon reveals his monstrous form to battle Guts (Miura 195-203). The Count grows big and almost reaches the ceiling of the throne room. The Count transforms into a slug-like monster, towering Guts in size and strength. Guts begin to fight with the now monster-formed Count; however, the fight does not go in Guts' way as he is slammed, hurled, and struck by appendices growing from the Count's body, Guts is injured and almost at the mercy of the Count (Miura 207-233). Guts faces The Count, now transformed into a giant slug-like

monster, and begins his battle against him. Guts is overpowered and almost loses, yet Guts will overcome this ordeal in the following part of the story.

The Fifth step of the Initiation Act is “Apotheosis”. In this step, the hero goes through a transformation or gains and learns something new about themselves through a moment of new understanding or coming across knowledge that will help them through their journey and toward their goal. This can be a new power invoked from them or a release of experience accumulated through the journey of the hero. This step usually has the role of being the climax point of their journey and makes their transition into the next step easier.

In *Elric of Melnibone*, Elric gains something that will help him defeat Prince Yyrkoon. This object is one of the rune blades named “Strombringer”. The blade latches to the hand of Elric while the second blade latches to the hands of Prince Yyrkoon. The cursed and magical blade tries to overcome Elric and use him as a host, yet Elric overcomes the control of the blade and uses it to defeat Prince Yyrkoon and the second runeblade (Moorcock 136-139). Elric gains control of the magical cursed blade and turns into something new to defeat Prince Yyrkoon, however, Elric only wants to disarm Prince Yyrkoon, and the blade hungering for souls makes it hard for Elric to do this, and through his usage of sheer will and strength, Elric becomes someone new. Fuelled by this new form and control of the blade, Elric is ready to face Prince Yyrkoon.

In *Berserk*, there is no sign of this step occurring. Guts does not go through a change or gain a moment of clarity that will help him defeat The Count and reach God's Hand. Guts manages to get back up and continues his fight with The Count, as Puck tries to distract The Count. However, Guts does gain the upper hand against The Count. The Count's daughter, Theresia enters the throne room. As she enters the throne room she sees her father in his monster form. Terrified by his monster form, she tries to hide as he cries in fear. Guts sees this as an opportunity and uses his daughter as a shield. The Count is hesitant to attack and at this moment Guts using his cannon arm blasts The Count's face and with his remaining strength, decapitates his head. The Count is somewhat alive, and Guts begins to furiously stab The Count multiple times (Miura 23-53).

Guts using Theresia as a human shield is an underhanded move, yet he gains an advantage against The Count. This action does fit the step's category as Guts does not go through a change of self and status or a moment of epiphany that will help

him against The Count. Theresia being there may be considered as a moment of change. After learning that she is The Count's daughter, Guts uses her to his advantage, yet this action is not fitting to the step as there must be a personal change or moment of great epiphany affecting the hero. However, this moment serves to function as the climax of the story and leads to the next step.

The sixth and last step of the Initiation Act is “The Ultimate Boon”. This is the end of the second act where the hero reaches their goal in their journey. In this step, the hero's goal is fulfilled and gains victory in the objective of their journey. This objective may vary in stories such as rescuing someone or someone, retrieving or finding something of importance, and defeating a greater foe that brings danger.

In *Elric of Melnibone*, Elric reaches his goal of finally confronting Prince Yyrkoon. He defeats him by disarming him and defeating the hold of the second runeblade. After defeating Prince Yyrkoon, he begs for mercy as he does not want to be slain by a blade that eats the souls of its victims. Elric obliges him to undo the sleeping curse on Cymoril (Moorcock 138-140). Elric reaches his goal of finding Prince Yyrkoon in the shade realm. By defeating him, he secures that the rune blade isn't in the hands of those who would misuse its power. This is the goal given by Arioeh before Elric enters the shade gate. His other goal is to save his lover Cymoril and by sparing Prince Yyrkoon's life, he ensures that he will remove the sleeping curse on her.

In *Berserk*, Guts reaches his goal by defeating The Count. By using his daughter as a shield and blasting his face with Guts' cannon arm, he manages to decapitate The Count's head and stabs his monster head until he dies. It is a brutal way of defeating someone. Yet, Guts would reach his goal. While fighting, the behelit falls from Guts' pocket. While The Count is close to dying, he begs that he does not want to die, the behelit hears his plea and activates. Transports everyone in the throne room to another dimension. Here The God Hand resides, and they would appear before them. Guts' main goal was to find God's Hand and finally, he is now able to confront them and end the goal of his journey (Miura 55-61). Guts manages to overcome the goal of defeating The Count. Guts also manages to reach his ultimate goal of finding, reaching, and defeating God's Hand. Now what is left is to defeat God's Hand as it is Guts' goal.

2.3. Return Act in Hero's Journey

This part of the Hero's Journey is the third act in the narrative frame; The Return Act, consisting of six steps (Campbell 34-35). The steps in order are: 1- "Refusal of the Return", 2- "The Magic Flight", 3- "Rescue from Without", 4- "The Crossing of the Return Threshold", 5- "Master of the Two Worlds" and 6- "Freedom to Live" (Campbell 34-35). Continuing with the pace of the previous section, in this part Michael Moorcock's *Elric of Melniboné* and Kentaro Miura's *Berserk* will be analysed, discussed, and given in-text examples from each text in the order of each step. Whether the step can be exemplified or not regards to the journey of the main hero of each text, in the same method as the previous parts. This is the final act of The Hero's Journey.

The first step of the Return Act is "Refusal of the Return"; In this step, The Hero has achieved the goal of their journey in the second act's last step. However, the hero may not want to return yet or not return permanently to their old world or remove the mantle of the hero status. The hero here struggles to cope with this call to return and resist the call to return to their old world. In some cases, this refusal of return may be linked to their goal, or they are in bliss after achieving their goal and do not want this to end by returning.

In *Elric of Melniboné*, there is no sign or evidence of this step occurring. This is due to Elric wanting to return to his world. Elric wants to return to his lover Cymoril and save her from the cursed deep slumber casted by Prince Yyrkoon. By sparing the life of the prince, he agrees to lift the curse from her (Moorcock 138-140). Elric achieves his goal of defeating Prince Yyrkoon and bringing him back to the original dimension to save Cymoril from her deep cursed slumber and retrieve the magical blade from the hands of harm, as instructed by Arioch. Due to this, Elric has no moment where he refuses to go back as he wants to save Cymoril from her deep slumber.

In *Berserk*, there is a moment of refusal which plays out differently than what category of the step intends. Guts achieves two of his goals, the first being to defeat the Count and the second being to reach and find God's Hand. The main goal of Guts' journey was to find The God's, who are the ones who put the cursed brand on him and have a history and vendetta with one of the members, Griffith. Because of this reason, Guts refuses to back down, despite his injured state after his battle with

The Monster Count, and lunges at Griffith but Guts is weak to his supernatural powers (Miura 68-89).

The refusal of return occurs differently as intended. Guts refuses to back down from challenging Griffith. This refusal occurs as Guts wants to finish the main goal of his journey and confront The God's Hand and mainly Griffith. Because of this reason to defeat the God's Hand and Griffith, Guts refuses to return. The refusal occurs differently than what the step intends as the hero refuses to return to their old world and end their heroic journey. In this text, Guts' refusal happens in two ways, not wanting to yield after being pinned down by Griffith's godly powers and not wanting to return as his main goal is not achieved yet.

The second step of the Return Act is "The Magic Flight"; In this step, the hero gets ready to return and prepares for the road ahead. However, the hero must give back the magical boons and items given to them as they can't return with them to their old world. The hero either tries to reason and bargain with those who have given them these boons, or the hero tries to escape with the boons to keep them. This is the part where the hero gets ready for the next step, where the great climax of returning or great escape occurs.

In *Elric of Melnibone*, Elric gets ready to return by summoning Arioach and asking him to send them back to their old world. Yet Arioach is displeased with Elric. There is a reason for his anger is that Rackhir is there with them, and he is supposed to be banished in the dark dimension. Elric explains that Rackhir helped him in finding Prince Yyrkoon and the runeblades in exchange for saving him from the dimension. Arioach is not happy with Elric's decision. However, Elric threatens to leave the sword and never return to Melnibone and never use the sword in Arioach's name. Arioach abides with Elric's threats and bargains with him to have Rackhir pardoned and have Elric wield the runeblade in his name. In the end, Arioach accepts Elric's terms (Moorcock 140-4).

The step occurs differently here as instead of the hero bargaining with the giver of the boon to keep it, the hero bargains to leave the boon and threatens the giver of the boon. Elric threatens Arioach to leave the sword and never return to his old world as Arioach wants Elric to use the sword in his name and abides by his lineage's tradition of worship to him. Elric wins over Arioach and prepares to leave with his friend Rackhir and life-spared and defeated Prince Yyrkoon.

In *Berserk*, there is no sign of this step happening at all. This is because Guts' does not want to return as he finally confronts the God's Hand and has no boon or item that requires to be returned and no bargain with any higher force. Guts went on with his journey all on his own and with items of his own that he used to defeat his foes. He finally reaches the presence of the God's Hand and has no reason to ever return as he seeks revenge against them and Griffith (Miura 68-89). Due to these reasons, the step does not occur in this part of the story. This happens due to Guts' stubbornness and willpower to resist his fate and has no reason to back down from his confrontation with Griffith.

The Third step of the Return Act is "The Rescue from Without"; In this step, The hero returns to their old self with the aid of a supernatural or higher force. This could be someone they met before on their journey or the main supernatural being who aided them from the start of their journey. The hero here is either tired or injured from their journey and needs help to return, with supernatural aid the hero returns safe and sound to their old world.

In *Elric of Melnibone*, Elric summons Arioeh who has aided Elric before in finding Prince Yyrkoon and guided Elric through the shade gate and the world connected to the gate. Arioeh teleports Elric, Prince Yyrkoon, and Rackhir back to Melnibone. With all of them back to their old world, Elric is ready to go back to his lover Cymoril (Moorcock 140-14). The step occurs here with Arioeh teleporting Elric, Prince Yyrkoon, and Rackhir back to Melnibone and Arioeh aided Elric yet again.

In *Berserk*, the step does occur in a twist. Guts is almost swallowed by a swarm of demonic spirits as the five members of the God's Hand are watching. With the last drop of his strength Guts tries to shoot Griffith with his cannon arm yet Griffith blocks it with his powers. Guts is almost swallowed by the dark powers of Griffith. However, in an odd twist Guts and the others in the throne room are teleported back to their old world. Griffith and God's Hand teleport them back and Guts lies heavily injured after his confrontation with Griffith (Miura 151-163). The step does happen with Guts, Puck, and Theresia being teleported back from the dimension of the God's Hand. In an odd twist, rather than someone who aids the hero, the hero's nemesis helps them. Guts does not want this or any aid to begin with yet Guts and the others are back to their original world.

The Fourth step of the Return Act is “The Crossing of the Return Threshold”. This is where the hero is finally back to their old world and old state. However, the hero has trouble adjusting back to their old self and old world. This is where the hero in question tries to bring a balance to their inner self and balance both worlds of his pre-hero and post-hero state. In simple definition, the part where the hero’s adjusting phase starts when the hero returns from their journey.

In *Elric of Melnibone*, there is no sign of Elric having trouble or ever trying to adjust when his journey has ended. This is due to Elric already being in balance in both worlds and there is no phase of adjustment nor a moment of alienation where Elric feels weird or odd from returning from his journey. Another reason for this balance is that Cymoril also awakens, and Elric finally is in peace (Moorcock 145-146). Due to these reasons, there is no phase of getting adjusted or trying to find a balance as Elric is already in balance.

In *Berserk*, there is no sign of this step either. This is due to Guts being in a moment of imbalance and there is no act of Guts ever trying to rectify his life and bring a balance. Guts’ goal to reach and defeat the God’s Hand is fiercely abrupted when He, Puck, and Theresia are teleported back from the other dimension. As Guts could not fulfil the main life goal of his journey, there is no moment of trying to be in balance as Guts isn’t fulfilled at all. Because he was not able to defeat both the God’s Hand and Griffith. As his revenge is not solved, his life is imbalanced. Due to these reasons, there is no sign of a step occurring sadly. With life in imbalance and his goal not properly achieved, Guts is not able to balance his life or be in a moment of balance. The Fifth Step of the Return Act is “Master of the Two Worlds”. This is the moment where the hero finally achieves balance in both worlds. The world of the hero and the world of their beginning. This is a moment of bliss, relaxation, and joy for the hero and this step acts as the celebration moment where the hero celebrates the fruit of their labour as they achieve the goal of their journey.

In *Elric of Melnibone*, Elric, Prince Yrkoon and Rackhir are back in Melnibone after Arioeh teleports them from the demonic dimension. Elric and Prince Yrkoon go to lift the curse of slumber from Cymoril. Cymoril is now awakened, and Elric is back on the throne as Emperor, with this balance is restored in Melnibone. They celebrate this balance with a feast and plan their wedding, and Elric announces his new goal in life. With this achievement, Elric can plan for his new life

(Moorcock 145-148). With Elric achieving balance and serenity in his life, this step occurs with this example and fills the categories of the step.

In *Berserk*, there is no sign of this step either like the previous fourth step. This is due to Guts' life being imbalanced and full of tragedies. Guts could not defeat Griffith, his mortal enemy, and God's Hand who caused the tragedy in his life. Not only was he unsuccessful in bringing balance to his own life, but he was not able to bring balance to Theresia as well. With the Count dead and the castle in ruins, Theresia's life is ruined and scarred for life after she witnesses in the other dimension. She tries to take her own life, but Puck tries to stop her. The ground beneath her crumbles and almost falls. However, Guts saves his life. As Guts leaves, Theresia curses at him for the reason of imbalance in his life (Miura 164-180). Due to this reason, there is no sign of this step occurring as there is no balance in Guts' life nor others around Guts.

The Sixth and last Step of the Return Act is "Freedom to Live". This is the last step of the Hero's Journey and where the journey of the hero ends. With peace and balance restored to the life of the hero, they are back to having more human thoughts. These thoughts can be human feelings like fearing life and thinking of life, and as they are free from their hero obligations, they are free to think, live, and enjoy life freely as how they like. With the hero regaining the privilege of having these types of feelings and thoughts, they are in bliss and peace for the rest of their life.

In *Elric of Melnibone*, the step can be exemplified in the last part of the chapter and the epilogue of the story. Elric announces his new plans now that he has returned from achieving his goal. He would travel to lands different and far from Melnibone and learn more as Melnibone has been an isolationist island. However, with Elric gone someone must fill the throne and he appoints Prince Yyrkoon. Everyone, including his lover Cymoril, is in shock yet Elric must do leave his title and duty as their leader for the sake of his people (Moorcock 145-8). In the epilogue, Elric, with Rackhir tagging along with him, reaches a port town, and here is where Elric makes a new journey away from his home. Now Elric has brought balance to Melnibone and to himself by being in control of the cursed and magical sword. Now Elric being free to learn and educate himself more to save and change his land and people for the better (Moorcock 149-150).

From the start Elric had no intention of being Emperor and abide by Melnibonean tradition and values. He had no choice as he was the last heir of the

lineage. However, at the end of his journey, and tasting different things through his journey, Elric becomes a traveller and wishes to bring what he will learn back to his people. With balance achieved and Elric gaining freedom, he frees himself from the obligations of the role of a hero and the role of an emperor. With this freedom, Elric achieves bliss and draws a new path in his life.

In *Berserk*, this step occurs differently. Guts' could not achieve his goal of defeating Griffith and God's Hand. Because of this, Guts could not bring any sort of balance in his life. Yet, he is still free to continue his path and find another moment or way to find and reach Griffith and God's Hand again. Guts' main goal in his life is still there to be achieved and there is nothing that can stop or block this as Guts' is free yet not free from his tragic life. Guts' is free to continue, however he is also free to show feelings again. Guts showed no remorse or sign of frailty until the end of the arc of the story. As Theresia curses at him, Guts accepts them yet as Guts walks away from Theresia and begins again in his path, Guts tears up and begins to show signs of sadness as he turns away. Puck notices this in his face yet Guts hides his face from Puck, not wanting to show this side of him at all (Miura 180-2). A sign of his freedom in self yet no freedom out of his journey as Guts' goal continues to seek the God's Hand and Griffith and defeat both for what they had done. All that awaits are life of tragedy and hardships in his journey. This step occurs in a moment of half. This is due to Guts' goal not being achieved and not being free from the obligation of his journey, yet Guts is free to choose his path and free of showing his feelings and true face. A hard and tragic life requires having stern feelings, yet Guts was able to show a bit of his true self. Due to this, the step occurs in half and not fully as the category of the step suggests, yet the step is shown in its half.

CHAPTER THREE

THE DISCUSSION OF THE ANTI-HERO

3.1. Anti-hero Archetype in *Elric of Melnibone*

Elric is the main protagonist of the subject novel and in the series of novels written in the same universe by Michael Moorcock. *Elric of Melnibone* is somewhat regarded as a precursor of the Dark fantasy sub-genre and the antihero archetype in the fantasy genre and other sub-genres connected to the main genre. Elric is a very odd character, be in his portrayal, mannerisms, and his actions. This made him a somewhat different type of hero throughout the first novel in Moorcock's multiverse series. Because the term antihero was not cemented properly and the category of creating and writing an antihero character was very vague and ambiguous due to the term having the same manner. This chapter will use the early and newer descriptions in a mix of the term antihero and analyse its precursor status and difference from a classical hero archetype.

Elric's difference is hinted at in the prologue of the first chapter and book one, as the novel is divided into three segments: book one, book two, and book three, and ending with an epilogue. The prologue hints at this difference:

On the island kingdom of Melnibone all the old rituals are still observed, though the nation's power has waned for five hundred years, and now her way of life is maintained only by her trade with the Young Kingdoms and the fact that the city of Imrryr has become the meeting place of merchants. Are those rituals no longer useful; can the rituals be denied and doom avoided? One who would rule in Emperor Elric's stead prefers to think not. He says that Elric will bring destruction to Melnibone by his refusal to honour all the rituals (Elric honours many). And now opens the tragedy which will close many years from now and precipitate the destruction of this world. (Moorcock 3)

The sentence "Are those rituals no longer useful; can the rituals be denied and doom avoided? One who would rule in Emperor Elric's stead prefers to think not. He says that Elric will bring destruction to Melnibone by his refusal to honour all the rituals (Elric honours many)" (3) hints at Elric's difference as a hero as heroes tend to abide

by rules and conventions as a protagonist. Elric not abiding by traditions and rituals is the first hint of his antihero quality as antiheroes don't follow set rules or abide by traditions. Another aspect of how Elric is different as a hero is exemplified by the paragraph regarding his description:

IT IS THE colour of a bleached skull, his flesh; and the long hair which flows below his shoulders is milk-white. From the tapering, beautiful head stare two slanting eyes, crimson and moody, and from the loose sleeves of his yellow gown emerge two slender hands, also the colour of bone, resting on each arm of a seat which has been carved from a single, massive ruby. (Moorcock 4)

Elric is an albino, his white skin, white hair, red eyes, and slender body is evidence. The difference in body and his ideals makes him a different hero. These ideals are reasons why Elric is different. Due to his frailty of his albino state that made him spend most of his life studying in his father's library. This is why Elric has a sense of "morality" as Moorcock explains. Not only is he well-versed, but Elric is also a well-learned sorcerer and studied herbs and potions to give him strength by consuming the potion he brews. This difference in Elric made him estranged from the majority of Melnibonean people as he is divergent in body but also in mindset as well. This divergence in mindset is also the cause of his not abiding by traditions, this tradition in question is his being the emperor of Melnibone and the sole heir of the previous emperor. Elric does not want to be an emperor, however, as the sole heir, he abides by this role unwillingly. This is the biggest evidence of Elric's antihero attitude, not only is he estranged from Melnibonean values and traditions, but he also does not want the role of the emperor. A usual hero would gladly accept these and do their duty as emperor, yet Elric is reluctant to do the role and to the values and traditions. This is the biggest evidence of his antihero role, as antiheroes do not follow rules or conventional roles. Elric has a foe, an enemy, who is not pleased with Elric's attitude and is unhappy with his duty as emperor. This foe is Elric's cousin, Prince Yyrkoon, Elric's cousin. Prince Yyrkoon is aiming for the throne, yet Elric knows of his ambitions and endeavors. Prince Yyrkoon is the complete opposite as he zealously worships the values and traditions of Melnibone and Elric's alienated stance on these values and traditions made him an enemy of Prince Yyrkoon.

Elric's antihero stance and qualities would get another example in chapter four as Melnibonean guards caught intruders trying to enter the Melnibone. Elric goes to the tower where the interrogator Doctor Jest, is torturing and questioning the

caught intruders. Elric watches as Doctor Jest is torturing them and extracting the information they need. Elric witnesses these cruel acts and does not do anything to stop them:

It was not that Elric was inhumane; it was that he was, still, a Melnibonean. He had been used to such sights since childhood. He could not have saved the prisoners, even if he had desired, without going against every tradition of the Dragon Isle. And in this case it was a simple matter of a threat being met by the best methods available. He had become used to shutting off those feelings which conflicted with his duties as emperor. (Moorcock 26-27)

This is an aspect of the antihero archetype, cruelty, and avoidance of human emotions. A usual hero would stop these acts and help the prisoners, yet Elric does not. Elric may have some human emotions like love for Cymoril yet mercy doesn't seem to be one of them as showing mercy would go against his role as Emperor of Melnibone.

Elric watches as Doctor Jest does his work as torturer until he gets the information he wants. In the end, the prisoners do not survive, and Elric learns of an invasion force coming to Melnibone. Elric prepares for this invading force and navy battle. They emerge victoriously and defeat the invaders, but Elric is weakened in the aftermath of the battle. Prince Yyrkoon seizes this chance and pushes Elric from the ship to the sea: "Farewell, Elric. Now a true Melnibonean shall sit upon the Ruby Throne. And, who knows, might even make Cymoril his queen? It has not been unheard of...".(Moorcock 46).

Elric, however, cheats death by unconsciously reciting a spell to summon the sea-deity Straasha who saves Elric from death. Prince Yyrkoon and those who are loyal to him march to the throne room as Prince Yyrkoon wants to claim the throne as emperor. However, Elric appears alive and well sitting on the throne. Elric as emperor sought to punish Prince Yyrkoon and those who had hurt Cymoril. Elric decides on the cruellest punishment for both Prince Yyrkoon and Captain Valharik, Cymoril's guard's captain. They were to celebrate the victory against the invaders with a feast and have Prince Yyrkoon join them: "The little pieces of Captain Valharik's flesh which our Doctor Jest will carve from his limbs will be the meat on which you feast. You may give instructions as to how you wish the captain's flesh prepared. We should not expect you to eat it raw, cousin" (Moorcock 62).

After the feast, Elric has Prince Yyrkoon exiled for his act, yet Prince Yyrkoon manages to escape and kidnap Cymoril. Elric begins to search for Prince Yyrkoon and Cymoril yet many months pass without any information about their location. Elric sought to get supernatural help yet this aid he seeks is from a demon-deity named Arioeh whom Elric's ancestors worshipped. Elric begins to summon Arioeh, and he succeeds in summoning the demon-deity. In exchange for his aid, he would have Elric serve him and abide by his will whenever he wishes. Elric accepts and gains information regarding the location of Prince Yyrkoon and his lover Cymoril. Though Elric abides by his ancestral traditions, he must do this to find his lover. However, the act of Elric summoning a demon-deity and getting aid from a source of evil is another evidence of Elric's antihero stance. A usual hero would get aid or ask for aid from a supernatural being, yet this supernatural being that Elric summons is evil, it is a demon-deity. Antiheroes in a usual manner either do or use methods of evil for their gain and ambitions. In this instance, Elric uses a force of evil for his goal of finding Cymoril and punishing Prince Yyrkoon for betraying him and kidnapping whom he loves. Elric abides with evil or methods of evil for the sake of his goal and this is an act to be only committed by the likes of an antihero.

After learning the information about the whereabouts of Prince Yyrkoon and Cymoril, Elric prepares to journey to their location with his group of soldiers to aid him. After asking for aid from Straasha and him lending Elric a magical ship that can both sail on land and water, Elric reaches Prince Yyrkoon but he escapes through a portal, a shade gate, that connects to another dimension. Near the portal is Cymoril cursed with magic into a deep slumber which the caster, Prince Yyrkoon can remove. Arioeh once more appears to Elric and commands him to pass through the portal and find the runeblades that Prince Yyrkoon seeks. Elric, with a new ally Rackhir, reaches where the runeblades are held in the other dimension. Before they would battle, the blades swoop up and take their place in Elric's and Prince Yyrkoon's hands. The blade tries to take control over Elric, yet he manages to resist the blade. With the blade, Elric defeated Prince Yyrkoon and with the aid of Arioeh, they returned to Melniboné. Prince Yyrkoon awakens Cymoril as Elric spares his life. Elric, Cymoril, and others celebrate their return, yet this celebration is short-lived as Elric announces that he will leave Melniboné and journey out and leave the throne to Prince Yyrkoon. Cymoril resists this idea, yet Elric is keen on this goal of his. In a typical hero fashion, Elric is victorious and returns home as a victor, yet Elric

reaches his selfish goal of not wanting to be emperor and leaves the role to his enemy Price Yyrkoon. Elric was different from the rest of Melnibone, to begin with, different in ideals, thoughts, and morality due to his secluded life in his library and learning magic. Elric tasted the outside world far from Melnibone and decides to go on a journey and bringing back what he learned would help Melnibone to change. Because Elric thought that Melnibone secluding itself from the rest of the world would not help the state of the island. To others, and especially to Cymoril, it seems selfish of him to leave his role as emperor and leave his people, yet this journey is for the betterment of Melnibone. Antiheroes are regularly selfish and keen on their own goals, due to the decision of Elric to leave Melnibone and his role as emperor is an example of this antihero act.

These examples from the text on Elric's actions are evidence of Elric's antihero stance. Antiheroes are often outsiders or people alienated from societal norms and thoughts, in this case, Elric is estranged due to his albino state and the illness that it brings and being well learned through his readings in his library. This made Elric gain a sense of morality and a type of thinking that is different from a regular Melniboneans. This difference is what makes him forsake and disregard Melnibonean virtues, tradition, and rituals. Elric must abide by them as emperor, yet he does not want to. Another aspect of antiheroic traits is cruelty. A normal/classical hero wouldn't be cruel or hide his human emotions, while an antihero does the opposite, and Elric's actions are evidence of this cruelty and being emotionless or semi-emotionless. However, the biggest aspect of Elric's antiheroic character is sparing Prince Yyrkoon instead of killing him for what he has done to him and to Cymoril. Finally leaving the role the emperor as he did not want this role to begin, by rejecting the rituals and traditions of a Melnibonean emperor. A classical hero would gladly accept the role of a leader and defeat his foe for the greater good, yet Elric's actions are the opposite of this, which becomes evidence of Elric's antiheroic character.

3.2. Anti-hero Archetype in *Berserk*

Berserk is an example of the early 90's change and modernization of fantasy fiction and fiction tradition. With its genre of Dark fantasy, and as well with the characterization of the antihero protagonist Guts acts as an example of this new

tradition in fantasy fiction and characterization regarding heroes, especially new characterization and change in the antihero archetype. The main protagonist, Guts, compared to Elric, is vastly different despite both being antiheroes. When *Elric of Melnibone* was first created, the term antihero was vaguer and more ambiguous, while in the early years between the 1990s and 2000s, the term antihero became more grounded in the term's explanation and description. This part of analysing Guts' antihero traits and characterization will be on this grounded level as the Antihero term loses its vague and ambiguous nature in the following years of fiction and writing.

The introduction of Guts in the first Volume and introduction arc is quite odd from a regular hero archetype stance and conventional character introduction. This oddness in introduction is due to Guts' being introduced having intercourse with a woman who is a monster in disguise, which Guts later kills the woman as she transforms into a monster. This introduction sets the tone of a dark story as elements of adult material, monster and murder are common qualities found in dark fantasy stories. Later, we get a better look at Guts' antihero qualities in the tavern scene where Guts kills the soldiers in the tavern with his crossbow and questions one with a crossbow bolt stuck to his nose and gives him a message: "The Black Swordsman has come" (Miura 19). More than his outer look clad in black armor, Guts' weapon is very unconventional from a type of weapon that a classical hero would wield: "It was much too big to be called a sword...Massive, thick, and far too rough. Indeed, it was like a heap of raw iron" (Miura 22-23). Guts is shown to be a man with violent methods and with unconventional weaponry, not only that he is clad in full black armor. This is an aspect of an antihero as they are not conventional heroes and are outsiders with methods and acts that don't fit into a classical hero archetype. This portrayal and act of Guts show his antihero archetype stance. However, there is another aspect of Guts' antihero archetype. He is cursed with a brand that when it bleeds and aches with pain, uses it to sense and locate demons and apostles who have obtained demonic powers. Not only do Guts sense demons and evil spirits, but they also sense him and either haunt him or attack him. Also, this brand haunts Guts with a vision of a monster embryo-like creature that haunts and torments him. This creates a tragic look upon Guts as antiheroes are also characters with tragic backgrounds and/or tragic events that change them completely.

Guts is also cruel and very cynical as a character and will do any means necessary to obtain his goal and to kill apostles. Guts makes his goal clear to Puck: "All I wanna do is kill the bastard, I don't care about anything else...Anyone who dies because they get caught up in someone else's fight is a small fry and who does not have the strength to survive in the first place, If someone can't live their life the way they please, they might as well die" (Miura 51-52). This lack of humane reason and emotion and selfish ambition is an aspect of the antihero archetype, as they are not conventional heroes and abide by classical hero norms.

Guts manages to come across the apostle he is seeking the town, The lord of Koka Castle who later transforms into a large snake-like monster. Guts manages to wound the apostle with his iron cannon arm and cut him in half with his large sword. As the apostle lay heavily wounded, Guts begins to torture him for information. However, Guts was not able to get the information he sought, the location of the five members of the God's Hand. Guts set the monster apostle on fire and leave the now-ruined town. Guts' methods are not conventional and are set far from a classical hero and do not show any mercy to his foes. Guts cutting the apostle in half in his monster form and setting him on fire as he dies, is evidence of his antihero stance.

Most of the arc of the graphic novel (Manga) is set in the order of Guts seeking apostles and killing those who get in the way of him reaching said apostle to seek the God's hand. Guts' journey leads to another town where the leader of the town, The Count, is also an apostle. Guts' brand begins to bleed when he approaches him in the town centre where an execution occurs. As usual, soldiers seek him to catch him, but Guts handles them, and amidst the battle, Guts is saved by an unknown person who throws a smoke bomb to create a diversion. This man is named Vargas and tells them the monstrous backstory of The Count and how he tortures and eats people as he did to him and his deceased family. Later in the chapter, Vargas is captured and executed. Guts is unable to save him as soldiers wait for him to appear in the town centre. However, Guts does not even want to save Vargas: "I Just came to watch...to watch him die...In the shadows pats the castle gate, it is a trap. As soon as I approach the execution stand, hundreds of troops will burst out. You think I'm so noble that I'll just walk right into their trap?" (Miura 92-93). Guts respond to Puck in this manner as Puck wants to save Vargas, but he is unable to do it. This is another piece of evidence of Guts' antihero archetype stance as a classical hero would save

Vargas as he did help him but in the case of Guts, his goal of killing apostles and reaching The God's Hand is more important than any other goal or task.

Guts finally reaches the castle of The Count in the later part of the story. After fighting the obstacles blocking his path to The Count, Guts reaches the throne of The Count. The Count transforms into a giant slug-like monster and begins to fight with Guts. The Count manages to heavily wound Guts and he is almost close to killing him, The Count gets distracted by His daughter, Theresia, as she enters the throne room to witness his father's monstrous form. Guts seizes the chance and uses Theresia as a shield against The Count, as The Count is unable to strike, Guts uses his cannon arm to blast the face of The Count and beheads him with his big iron sword. Guts drags the head of The Count in front of Theresia and begins to stab him furiously as Guts tortures him to death by stabbing him. This act of Guts is very unhandled and cowardly as he uses an innocent and frail girl as a shield against The Count and by trickery manages to defeat him. Also, Guts shows cruelty and fury to his foes just as he did to now defeated Count. A classical hero wouldn't use such a method, yet antiheroes are prone to unconventional methods and cruelty, this acts as evidence of Guts' antihero stance.

In a twist, Guts and others in the throne room get teleported to the dimension where the God's Hand resides, with the power of a behelit which Guts acquires from Vargas. Here, we learn of Griffith, the fifth member of the God's Hand and former friend of Guts, as he betrayed him and put the brand on him as a sacrifice for his ascension to godhood. Guts' journey was to reach them and defeat Griffith for what he had done. Yet, Guts is powerless against Griffith's godly powers. The Count gets consumed by evil spirits as punishment by the God's Hand and Guts, and Puck and Theresia get teleported back to their realm. Theresia affected by this event pleads to die after what she has seen. Guts answers back to Theresia: "Go Ahead, Kill Yourself" (Miura 168). Guts looks down upon weak people and gives a very crude and terrible response to Theresia after what she has seen. A classical hero would console her yet as an antihero, Guts, acts the opposite of this. The platform beneath Theresia crumbles and almost falls to her death. Guts saves her and Theresia curses at him as all that has happened is his fault and wishes to kill him. Guts continues with his journey as he leaves the castle, yet Puck manages to witness Guts being sad and crying. It is an odd twist of Guts' antihero stance, yet this shows that Guts has some human emotions and shows his tragic outlook on his character.

These examples from the text on Guts' actions are evidence of Guts' antihero stance. In comparison to Elric, Guts shows more prominence in modern antihero qualities. Guts does show examples of classic antihero qualities like being an outsider, being cruel and emotionless yet also shows modern attributes that Vogler describes in his book. Guts show both aspects of a modern antihero, being a wounded or broken character due to past traumas that trigger a great change in character. Guts is a broken hero who is on a journey to kill his foes as his past haunts him and his cursed brand attracts evil spirits and demons. This trauma made him cynical, cruel, and emotionless as there isn't a moment of peace in the inner world of Guts and the outer world as he is haunted by visions and appearances of monsters, demons and spirits alike. As he is a broken or wounded hero, he is also a tragic hero as he was betrayed by his close friend Griffith and branded by God's Hand as a sacrifice for the ascension of Griffith to godhood. Guts survives this and his major goal of his journey is to get revenge for what Griffith has done. This creates a tragic aspect to Guts as an antihero as they are often the way they are due to tragedies that occurred in the past or the present in their life.

3.3. Elric and Guts Through The Lens of Hero's Journey as Anti-heroes

In the previous two sections in this chapter, the anti-hero archetypal elements and qualities have been discussed about Elric and Guts. This chapter aims to analyse and discuss both anti-heroes through the lens of Hero's Journey to see their growth and change as hero characters. Yet, this may be difficult as Elric and Guts are not traditional hero characters and somewhat deviate from the standard in hero focused literature. In this chapter, these problems will be discussed and see how Elric and Guts become anti-heroes within the Hero's Journey frame. The Anti-hero discussion will be in the order Elric first and Guts second. Examples of their actions from their respective texts will be given and detailed within each step of the Hero's Journey that appear in their texts.

3.3.1. Elric's Journey

Starting from Elric, he is more akin to a traditional hero, as a precursor of the anti-hero archetype, yet shows differences in character. He is an albino, and his difference is emphasized in the first chapter. Elric, being an albino, is not often seen

as a quality in hero stories and this difference acts as an alienating agent against the people of Melnibone. However, Elric's story follows Hero's Journey, and his every choice and act exemplifies the narrative cycle. Yet, his choices and the outcomes of those choices have driven him into the archetype of Anti-hero.

Elric follows the steps of "The Call to Adventure" and "Refusal of the Call" in the Departure Act. Elric is called to being the emperor of Melnibone and rule over its people. His adventure is to be an emperor, yet he refuses this role. Elric does not want to be emperor, however due to being the last in the lineage of previous emperor, he must accept this role. In this sense, the call is forced upon Elric, thus the refusal of this role is a very natural reaction for Elric. This brings forth the first look at Elric as a Hero and as an Anti-hero. He is the hero as he is the emperor and is an anti-hero because he refuses this role and wishes to leave his home island.

The third step "Supernatural Aid" comes with the ability of Elric as a powerful sorcerer. Through his childhood, Elric was enclosed in his father's private library where he read many magical tomes and books from around the world. Elric educated himself with this information from these books and fuelled himself to become a powerful sorcerer. It is not often seen to see heroes as having magical powers, as these come from other magical characters who aid the hero.

The last two steps of the first act occur when barbarians infiltrate Melnibone and when battle erupts when those barbarians invade Melnibone. These steps are "The Crossing of the First Threshold" and "The Belly of the Whale". This is where the peace of the island is broken and disturbs Elric. Melnibone prepares for war, and they emerge victoriously against them in the end. However, something happens amidst the battle is what changes the course of Elric's journey, he is betrayed by Prince Yyrkoon and shoved into the water from the ship they battled on. This is where the first act of Hero's Journey ends and follows the steps of Act two.

The first step of act two, The Initiation Act, "The Road of Trials" occurs as he is betrayed by Prince Yyrkoon, Elric summons The Sea-God Straasha as he is drowning. The Sea-God saves Elric from drowning and pledges his power to help him. This aid from a godly being is what saves Elric and with him being saved, Elric's adventure gets changed. Elric wants revenge against The Prince and wanting revenge is something more akin to the goal of an anti-hero. A Hero would not want revenge as they are beacons of good. Elric wanting revenge is one of the example types of evidence of Elric's anti-hero stance. Elric's journey has been changed into a

revenge journey and becomes the trial which he must overcome. Elric manages to return to the ruby throne room and catch Prince Yyrkoon. Another example of Elric's Anti-hero element shows itself here. Elric punishes those who betrayed him, yet the biggest punishment is to have the guard captain killed and have his flesh cooked and fed to Prince Yyrkoon. Elric managed to have his revenge against the prince, yet something happens that, again, changes Elric's Journey. Prince Yyrkoon escaped and kidnaps Cymoril, Elric's cousin and lover. Here, Elric's Journey transforms from a revenge journey to a rescue journey where he must save Cymoril at all costs.

This is where the next step, "The Meeting with the Goddess" occur and Elric seeks aid from a supernatural being. This time, he summons Lord Arioch and pledges his service and worship to him. Arioch asks Elric to find the runeblade and pledge his service to him with the blade. Lord Arioch is goldy figure, yet he is an evil and chaotic god. He wishes Elric to wield the runeblade and slay his foes in Arioch's name. This is where another anti-hero attribute of Elric is shown as he pledges himself to a dark godly being. However, Elric also asks aids from Straasha as well and he bestows a ship that capable of to sail on land and sea. Yet Straasha warns Elric of his earth deity brother Grome who will stop him to take the ship. Elric shows growth as a hero to ask aid from two supernatural gods, yet one is evil, and the other is good.

In his journey, Elric is stopped by Grome, here the step "Woman as the Temptress" occur and Grome tries to take away the ship. Elric bargains with Grome and only allows the ship to sail on the sea. Elric manages to save the ship and continue his journey to save Cymoril from Prince Yyrkoon. After journeying long and far, Elric finds Prince Yyrkoon and challenges him. However, the prince escapes to the shade realm. Elric needs to find him as the prince cursed Cymoril to deep slumber and only he can remove it. Elric chases after him into the Shade realm and manages to find him in the chamber where the runeblades reside.

This is where last three steps occur in this part of Elric's Journey. First "Atonement with the Father" step where Elric confronts the prince, second "Apotheosis" where Elric equips the runeblade named Stormbringer and gains news powers from the blade and transforms, and "The Ultimate Boon" where Elric finally defeats the prince and becomes victorious. Elric, however, spares Prince Yyrkoon life. This an odd act for Elric as all the chaos and problems happening is caused by

the prince, yet instead of killing him, he spares his life. This is where the second act ends in Elric's Journey and where the third act starts in Hero's Journey.

Third act, The Return act, is where Elric's Journey ends as he is victorious in two goals, first defeating the prince and second gaining the runeblade which Arioeh asked. The first step, "Refusal of the Return" should happen here yet there is no sign of refusal coming from Elric. In Hero's Journey, the hero would try to resist and refuse to return to their old state, the starting point of their journey. Yet, Elric shows no sign of refusing to return, instead he wishes to return to save Cymoril from her deep cursed slumber caused by the magic of the prince. Second step "The Magic Flight" occurs when Elric summons Arioeh to transport them back. Then, "The Rescue from Without" happen when they are teleported back to their old world and "The Crossing of the Return Threshold" follows as Elric is now master and Victor of both journeys, which are journey of revenge and journey of saving Cymoril as the prince removes the curse from her. Then what follows are the last two steps in this act, "Master of the Two Worlds" and "Freedom to Live". Elric is now at peace as his journey is over, yet Elric is ready to fulfil his ultimate wish. Elric announces that he will leave the throne to Prince Yyrkoon and instead will travel the world. This is Elric's ultimate wish, to leave his role as emperor and travel the world as an adventurer.

Elric's journey is about obtaining freedom. His goals in his journey were to set Melnibone in peace and with it, to leave his home and travel the world which he read in his books as a child. In his journey, he slayed many enemies, killed demons and defeated his antagonist who caused chaos in his life. Elric's wish seems selfish as he leaves the throne and role as emperor to the enemy he spared, yet this act of his is another aspect of his anti-hero archetype. As an anti-hero, throughout his journey, Elric did acts of evil like watching the torture of spies, killing barbarians and demons, and pledging to an evil god. These are acts of anti-hero. However, he did also acts of good that are close to the traditional hero. Saving his home from invading barbarians, saving Cymoril and sparing the life of his enemy. Elric, in this sense, is a grey character as he does acts that are considered evil and good. This is an element of his as a precursor to the anti-hero archetype. Through his choices in his hero journey, Elric shows how a grey character he is and balances both sides of good and evil as an anti-hero.

3.3.2. Guts' Journey

When compared to Elric, Guts is a very different type of anti-hero. He is much more violent and darker figure. His hero's journey is quite more edgy as it contains more violence and action against foes and minions of evil. As Elric is a grey character, Guts is a dark character and incorporates much darker characteristic seen in modern fiction and darker narratives. Hero's Journey will be used to explain and give evidence of his darker character with examples from his manga text.

Guts' introduction, start of the first act, is given very differently as he is first introduced having sexual intercourse with a woman. However, that woman turned out to be a demonic monster, which Guts kills after she transforms. This is the first part of the "The Call to Adventure" and second part of this step occurs in the when Guts enter the inn to find soldiers toying with Puck. Guts quickly kills them and tortures one of the soldiers for information. Relay that he has come for the apostle lord of the town. This where we get introduced to the reason of his adventure, to hunt down and kill the apostles. From this, we can understand that Guts is a very dark hero and his adventure, or journey, is with darker intentions of murder and violence against those who are against him and those who are with the apostles. Another aspect of his anti-heroism is his exterior, how he looks like as hero. He wears a black armor and calls himself the "black swordman" while wielding a very large and thick iron sword. It is an unconventional weapon, yet strong enough to fight against the demonic power fuelled apostles.

Then, Guts gets captured and sent to the dungeon of the town's castle. However, what follows is not evidence of the second step "Refusal of the Call". Because there is no refusal of the adventure and journey happening at all. A typical hero in hero's journey would try to refuse the burden that the journey entails. Guts, on the other hand, has no type or sign of refusal of his journey. What happens in the dungeon is that Guts gets tortured and sent to rot in a cell while being injured. Here, Puck arrives and tries to help Guts by using his elf-fairy powers. This is where the third step "Supernatural Aid" occurs, and Puck heals Guts' wounds. Puck is a very naïve elf-fairy and creates a contrast between himself and Guts. Puck symbolizes good in life, while Guts symbolizes the bad, or the dark, in life.

Then, the third step "The Crossing of the First Threshold" happens and witness Guts' battle against the apostle lord. This where, we get introduced to the

lord and learn and see what apostles are. Before him, Guts battles his knights one by one. After dealing with them, Guts is ready to fight the apostle. This is where “Belly of the Whale” step occurs, and the full power of an apostle is witnessed. The Lord transforms into snake like demon and fights Guts. Guts wins the fight with his metal prosthetic cannon arm. As the lord lays dying, Guts asks of the Five members of the God Hand. This where Guts’ journey is broadened, his journey is to seek the God Hand, the godly beings behind the powers of apostles and control demonic monsters. This is where the first act of the hero’s journey ends and learn more about Guts’ journey. His journey paved with violence and revenge. He commits violence against people and things who step in his path and fights and kills apostles to reach the God Hand, the reason of all the problems, trauma, pain in his life.

Guts’ journey continues and enters the second act of hero’s journey. Guts encounters an old man and his daughter who offers him a ride on his carriage. Guts reluctantly accepts their offer. Here, Guts get attacked by evil spirits and skeletons. This where the “The Road of Trials” step happens. Guts fails as an evil spirit possess the girl’s dead body and murders the old man. Guts fails to save both of them yet manages to defeat the evil spirits and skeletons that attacked him. Guts’ trial was to save the old man and his daughter. However, Guts fails to do this. Guts was only successful in defeating the evil spirits and skeletons. Tragedy occurs again as Guts is unable to save those who tried to help them. Those who become entangled with him gets a tragic end.

Guts arrives at a new town where another apostle resides and rule over it. Here, Guts meets someone who becomes a great aid to him. This is where the “The Meeting with the Goddess” occurs and Guts meets Vargas. Vargas is a doctor who studies the dark arts and relays great information about The Count to Guts and gives him a “behelit”, an object connected to the God Hand. No godly figure aids Guts, instead it is a human figure with magical knowledge.

After Guts receives the behelit, they get attacked by Zondark, who is now transformed into a demon monster, and The Count’s soldiers try to stop Guts from reaching to him. This where the “Woman as the Temptress” step occurs. There is no actual female figure who comes to seduce or persuade Guts. Instead, there are moments when Guts fights with the soldiers and Zondark who acts as a hurdle blocking Guts’ path.

Guts finally reaches the throne where the The Count waits for him, this is where they will battle. The next step “Atonement with the Father” happens here as it was Guts’ goal to fight the apostle. The Count transforms into a giant slug-like demon to fight Guts. Guts is almost defeated by The Count. However, the tide changes as The Count’s daughter enter the throne room. This where “Apotheosis” happens, and Guts uses her as a shield. Guts defeats the The Count and the last step “The Ultimate Boon” happens in two segments. First is the victory against The Count and second is when the behelit activates and transport those in the throne room to the realm where the God Hand resides. This is how the second act ends in Guts journey and enters the last and third act. Guts paves his way to The Count with violence. He is cruel to people around him and punishes those who oppose him in his journey. This is one of the anti-hero qualities, yet the biggest example of this is when he uses The Count’s daughter as a shield. This act is very opposite of a hero and to a great extent strays Guts to the side of dark heroism.

The third act begins in the realm of the God Hand. Finally meeting with the God Hand is Guts’ ultimate goal. To exact revenge for all the chaos and pain in his life caused by them. The first step “Refusal of the Return” occurs with Guts getting ready to fight Griffith and The God Hand, yet Guts, Puck and Theresia get transported back from this realm and “The Magic Flight” occurs. However, the next two following steps “The Crossing of the Return Threshold” and “Master of the Two Worlds” does not occur and there is no evidence of these two steps in his Guts’ journey. What follows is the “Freedom to Live” step as Guts fails to defeat and get his revenges against Griffith and The God Hand. Guts acts cruel against Theresia, who is shocked and traumatized by the events that just happened. Theresia almost falls to her death and Guts saves her. As He walks away to continue with his journey, Theresia hurls a series of insults towards him and wishes she died instead of him saving her. Guts seems unbothered by this, yet Puck sees him actually showing some form of emotions.

Guts’ journey is of revenge and he continues on to follow this path. Guts showed many moments of being examples of the anti-hero archetype. As an anti-hero, Guts is dark, cruel, violent and sadistic. Shows no mercy for his enemies and uses every tactic possible to defeat them and induce pain against them. He is a form of evil that is fighting another form of evil. Another aspect worth noting is the absence of some steps in Hero’s Journey. Perhaps his anti-hero attitude is cause of

absences of some of the steps. Because of these reasons, Guts is dark hero, very opposite of a traditional hero in the spectrum of good. No path of grey balance of good and evil in his character and only the path of dark heroism being apparent in his archetype. Through his dark acts, decisions and goals, Guts exemplifies himself to be a modern interpretation of the anti-hero archetype.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE DISCUSSION OF DARK FANTASY GENRE

4.1. Dark Fantasy Structure in *Elric of Melnibone*

Elric of Melnibone is regarded as an early precursor example of the Dark Fantasy subgenre within the Fantasy community and fandoms. Though it does not embrace modern examples of the now-established genre, when it came out it was different from classic fantasy themes and tropes. Though it is different from the established fantasy genre at the time, the novel shows examples of heroic fantasy, or sword and sorcery which is the name used for this subgenre in America, and supernatural and horror. This mix of these genres makes *Elric of Melnibone* an early example of Dark Fantasy and this part will focus on these elements to exemplify the signs of Dark Fantasy genre elements, themes, and narrative structure as an early example of Dark Fantasy and shows its evolution from when subgenre witnessed its first early examples.

In the early parts of the novel, the elements of the Dark Fantasy subgenre are exemplified less in the first part of the novel. However, we get some examples of its fantasy elements with the introduction of Elric being a powerful and well-learned sorcerer and the location of Elric's kingdom, Melnibone, The Dreaming Isle, set in a faraway land from other lands in the novel. The setting of the novel shows its fantasy elements with the introduction of the setting of Melnibone and the introduction of Elric, the main hero, as a powerful sorcerer-emperor. This introduction sets the fantasy mood of the novel, and the majority of the fantasy elements are shown with depictions of magic both by Elric and Prince Yyrkoon, along with deities showing their magical might. Yet in the following parts of the novel, the Dark Fantasy subgenre begins to show itself.

The horror aspect of the Dark fantasy subgenre becomes apparent in Book One-Chapter four, when Melnibonean guards capture intruders entering The Dreaming Isle. They are taking them to the tower of Monshanjik where prisoners are held and tortured by Doctor Jest, the chief interrogator. Here, four prisoners are held and tortured with cruel methods to gain information about their intentions (Moorcock 23-28). Here we get a detailed description of Doctor Jest's work: "Doctor Jest

returned to his charges and, reaching out with his free hand, expertly seized the genitals of one of the male prisoners. The scalpel flashed. There was a groan. Doctor Jest tossed something onto the fire... Doctor Jest ran fingers and scalpel, tongue, tongs and pincers over the bodies” (26).

The horror aspect of the Dark Fantasy genre begins to show with the methods of Doctor Jest with the depiction of gore and cruelty as an element of the horror genre and the work of Doctor Jest shows the horror aspect of the Dark Fantasy subgenre. Another example of this horror aspect is shown when Elric orders Cymoril’s guard captain to be cooked and fed to Prince Yyrkoon as punishment for what he had done to Elric and for betraying Cymoril: “The little pieces of Captain Valharik's flesh which our Doctor Jest will carve from his limbs will be the meat on which you feast. You may give instructions as to how you wish the captain's flesh prepared. We should not expect you to eat it raw, cousin” (Moorcock 62). These two scenes show horror elements in Dark Fantasy with cruel and gory depictions and with these types of scenes where the “Dark” aspect shows itself.

Supernatural is another aspect of the Dark Fantasy subgenre and this can be shown with a few examples of ghosts, spirits, gods/goddesses, demons, curses to count a few. In the novel, the supernatural aspect shows itself with three instances of god-like beings making an appearance before Elric. First is Sea-deity Straasha, he makes his appearance before Elric when Prince Yyrkoon pushes him to the sea to drown and unconsciously summons the sea-deity: “The leading figure had a turquoise beard and hair, pale green skin that seemed made of the sea itself and, when he spoke, a voice that was like a rushing tide” (Moorcock 48). With the aid of Straasha, Elric escapes his fate of drowning and takes him back to Melnibone. The second appearance is when Elric summons the Dark Deity and Lord of Chaos, Arioeh to ask for help in locating Prince Yyrkoon when he escapes and Cymoril who is kidnapped by Prince Yyrkoon. In shape, Arioeh is very different as he first appears as a silhouette, then as a fly, and later changes his form:

A beautiful youth stood where the fly had hovered. The beautiful youth spoke in a beautiful voice--soft and sympathetic and yet manly. He was clad in a robe that was like a liquid jewel and yet which did not dazzle Elric, for in some way no light seemed to come from it. There was a slender sword at the youth's belt and he wore no helm, but a circlet of red fire. His eyes were wise

and his eyes were old and when they were looked at closely they could be seen to contain an ancient and confident evil. (71).

Elric swears to serve Arioch in exchange for aid and information regarding the location of Prince Yyrkoon and Cymoril. The third appearance of a deity is the earth-deity Grome:

The figure was the colour of earth and looked like a vast, old oak. His hair and his beard were the colour of leaves and his eyes were the colour of gold ore and his teeth were the colour of granite and his feet were like roots and his skin seemed covered in tiny green shoots in place of hair and he smelled rich and musty and good and he was King Grome of the Earth Elementals. (97).

The three appearances of these deities set the supernatural tone of the novel and show signs of Dark Fantasy subgenre attributes.

Elric, in book three, travels through the shade-gate chase after Prince Yyrkoon and is ordered by Arioch to seek the rune blades before Prince Yyrkoon obtains them for himself. The dimension where Elric travels to sets the supernatural horror tone as Dark Fantasy is a mix of three genres: fantasy, horror, and supernatural. Supernatural elements may be shown as tame and not horror-bound, while in some cases, supernatural elements are bound to horror elements. The dimension that Elric enters is a realm of darkness, with no sun, moon, or stars and a barren wasteland, where there is nothing, but dead trees riddled with formations of rocks and mountains (Moorcock 116-117). Elric contemplates after witnessing the state of this dimension: "It was a world which seemed to have been drained of all life, where Law and Chaos had once battled and, in their conflict, destroyed all" (Moorcock 117). This dark and barren dimension sets the supernatural horror aspect of the Dark Fantasy subgenre as a dead world with eternal darkness that is supernatural yet also creates a sense of horror. Elric's journey in this dimension is riddled with supernatural encounters until he confronts Prince Yyrkoon at the location of the rune blades. The first of these encounters is when he enters the city of Ameeron, where demon-like monsters cut Elric and Rakhir's path. They only utter their names as Pig, Snake, and Thing, they were sent by Prince Yyrkoon to stop them. One of the surviving monsters tells the location of Prince Yyrkoon and the path of reaching him is a tunnel under a marsh. However, the tunnel was not like any other tunnel which Rakhir comments: "It is like flesh" (Moorcock 132). The tunnel

moved and narrowed with each path they took until they reached a small opening that led to the chamber of the rune blades. These examples given from *Elric of Melnibone* act as evidence to the supernatural horror aspect of the novel in the Dark Fantasy subgenre.

The examples given from the text make up the evidence of subgenre elements and themes regarding the Dark Fantasy subgenre stance, the narrative structure of a Dark Fantasy story becomes apparent. A Dark fantasy story applies these elements and themes to create a grand narrative structure with the addition of basic or classic fantasy elements, for example magic, magical blades, a setting in distant lands, and heroic battles. However, the supernatural and horror aspects often seen within Dark Fantasy stories. The appearance of God-like beings and travels to another dimension and travel within this dimension set the supernatural tone. While the horror aspects are created with depictions of gore and graphic violence and non-human-like monsters and demons and the depiction of death sets the horror tone. These aspects create evidence of the novel being a Dark fantasy novel and set the narrative tone and structure according to these examples. These make up the narrative structure of a Dark fantasy and the text, as a precursor to the subgenre, represent these narrative elements.

4.2. Dark Fantasy Structure in *Berserk*

Berserk is one of the popular modern examples of a Dark Fantasy story within the Japanese Anime and Manga, along within the fantasy community. The text represents the subgenre well as a modern interpretation of the subgenre as it is properly termed and described in modern literary tradition. In comparison, *Berserk* is darker in tone and does not inhabit the classical fantasy stance that *Elric of Melnibone* does as an early example. Supernatural and horror aspects of the Dark Fantasy subgenre are more evident in comparison. Though the graphical novel (Manga) shows fantasy elements as a Dark Fantasy story, the fantasy aspect is darker than a classical fantasy genre story. This part of the analysis will focus on the elements, themes, and structure as a modern example of the Dark Fantasy story and analyse with examples as evidence of this concrete interpretation of a modern Dark Fantasy story.

In fantasy elements, the manga is set in a medieval fantasy land, yet it is somewhat void of high and classical fantasy depictions. However, the graphic manga does have these high fantasy elements and is exemplified by Guts as a fantasy hero wielding a giant and thick iron sword that he can only wield due to his strength and Puck an elf-fairy aiding Guts throughout the graphical manga. However, these fantasy depictions are at a low level compared to *Elric of Melnibone* due to the time of its writing fantasy genre at the time was full of high and classical fantasy elements and depictions, and Dark fantasy was not grounded much at that time, regarding terms and depiction of the subgenre. The Darker elements and tone are exemplified by depictions of supernatural and horror elements and tone, and the number of scenes of actions and violence against those who serve the monster-demon apostles and themselves which Guts battles against.

This amount of battle scenes is due to the influence of the sword and sorcery genre, or heroic fantasy. Dark fantasy combines with classical fantasy, yet sword and sorcery genre is more apparent in Dark Fantasy texts containing action and violence. *Berserk* exemplifies this with Guts acting in violence, for example in the tavern scene where he kills the soldiers serving the apostles whom Guts is searching for and in the second town where The Count rules where Guts gets ambushed by his soldiers (Miura 12-22; 183-208). Scenes of actions and battles are normal and abundant in fantasy texts, yet the amount of violence and gore depictions are constant and depicted in a dark tone which is constant in Dark Fantasy texts. Due to this, *Berserk* fits into the modern Dark Fantasy category and qualities of fantasy depiction in the subgenre.

The supernatural and horror elements in question are abundant in *Berserk*. This can be witnessed in the first supernatural aspect regarding the brand on Guts' neck. This brand lets him sense the presence of evil spirits and demons, especially the apostles. Not only can Guts sense them, but they can also sense him, haunt him and attack him. This brand was put on him by the God Hand as a means of sacrifice, yet Guts survived this event and is on a journey to seek them and Griffith for what they have done to him. However, Guts is also haunted by the presence of a fetus-like creature due to the brand, and this creature appears only to him in several chapters of the graphic novel (Manga) (Miura 41-43; 117-121, Miura 108-111).

This is not the only case of supernatural element depiction as Guts battles with supernatural foes through the first arc of the graphic novel (Manga). First is at

the start when Guts is having intercourse with a woman, who transforms into a demonic monster, which Guts makes quick work of by killing her (Miura 5-9). The second is against the Lord of Koka Castle in the first town when he transforms into a snake-like monster and defeats him by cutting him in half and then burning him as he extracts information regarding the God Hand (Miura 75-92). The Third is when Guts gets surrounded by skeletons possessed by evil spirits (Miura 130-132). The Fourth is two instances where he fights against the knight Zondark. After his defeat against Guts, The Count transforms him into a monster with multiple appendages and sharp-clawed tentacle arms (Miura 19-23). Zondark first appears in Vargas' hideout to hunt down Guts and second when Guts enters The Count's castle and this is where Guts defeats the tentacle monster Zondark (Miura 36-66; 136-154). The Fifth is when Guts finally encounters The Count and he transforms into a giant slug-monster that towers over Guts in immense size and height (Miura 196-210). The sixth and final is when Guts, Puck, and Theresia get transported to the realm of the Five God Hand with the power of the behelit, Guts finally encounters Griffith in his god-like form as the fifth member of the God Hand (Miura 67-74).

As these supernatural moments occur throughout the manga, moments of horror also occur along with the appearances of such supernatural moments. Monsters, evil spirits, hauntings, demons, and evil gods are common appearances in modern Dark Fantasy stories, and with the appearance of these supernatural occurrences, the sense of horror is created within the text. These instances of the appearance of supernatural moments, or supernatural horror moments, solidify the elements that make a story into a Dark fantasy story. The occurring moments in the manga are supernatural moments that also create a horror tone in Dark fantasy stories. These types of scenes and instances are common in modern Dark fantasy stories, and they create a darker tone of fantasy with it. As these supernatural horror scenes occur, the main character must battle them and defeat them. These battles can be either very gruesome, gory, or graphic as is common in modern Dark Fantasy stories. In this view, *Berserk* portrays the modern Dark Fantasy elements and tone in an appropriate manner. With these elements and tone, the narrative structure of a modern Dark fantasy story becomes apparent. As a dark narrative, it is structured around the encounter of particular supernatural moments that create a sense of horror with the depiction of heavy violence, graphic and gory content, with the appearance of monsters, creatures, and supernatural people or beings. With these encounters,

fight, and battles against forces which occur with violence and graphic imagery, moments occurring in this manner as evidence of a modern Dark Fantasy story.

4.3. *Elric of Melnibone* and *Berserk*'s Structure Through Hero's Journey

Hero stories can be recognized and witnessed in various genres, yet these stories can be different when the genre is different than traditional fiction. Darker and grim stories, compared to traditional stories, are very different in their narrative structure. In this context, dark fantasy narratives are perceived differently than traditional fantasy narratives. Dark fantasy text can have hero stories, yet the heroes in texts of this sub-genre they are very different. Due to the heroes being different than traditional hero characters, the narrative shapes and changes around the type of hero that is in darker and grim texts.

4.3.1. *Elric of Melnibone*'s Narrative

Elric of Melnibone is a precursor text to the dark fantasy subgenre and shows examples of the anti-hero archetype in early fantasy settings. In settings, it is akin to high fantasy elements like magical foreign kingdoms and involvement of magic and supernatural elements. Elric's story as a hero's journey is about change at first. Elric does not want to be the emperor to his island empire. This is due to his estrangement from early age and self-education from books from his father's private library. Elric morally feels different from his people as he had educated himself with literature from around the world. However, he must uphold Melnibonean values and traditions. This is where Elric's anti-hero attitude is manifested. As an anti-hero, Elric is different from tradition and because of this, he does not want to become emperor. However, the narrative changes when problems occur in the island kingdom.

Spies enter the kingdom and alert Elric of an incoming invasion of barbarians. One of the dark fantasy elements shows itself in the torture scene. Elric watches the cruel and grotesque torture of the spies. Elric watches as they die and does not do anything about it. After all, they are enemies who wish to harm Melnibone and Elric as the emperor must do what is necessary to protect his home. Barbarians arrive on ships and Elric, and his soldiers prepare for battle. Action

scenes are common in dark fantasy texts as their roots go back to the Sword and Sorcery genre, as a genre that focuses on scenes and moments of action and combat.

The narrative shifts when The Prince Yyrkoon betrays Elric and pushes him to the sea. Elric is saved by chanting an old spell and is rescued by the Sea-God Straasha. Elric vows for revenge for this act of the prince. The narrative of change shifts to a narrative of action. Elric takes action to punish the prince, yet another problem occurs in the story. The prince kidnaps Cymoril and Elric must chase them to save his lover. Elric summons Lord Arioch, to ask for help. This is where another dark fantasy elements occurs with the appearance of a dark god. Arioch informs Elric of The Prince's intentions and commands him to obtain the runeblade. Dark or Evil Gods are very common in dark fantasy narratives, and the heroes in those narratives are often connected to them as they give boons and aid to them. However, in this case Elric is connected to a Dark God.

With the aid given both by Arioch and Straasha, Elric journeys to find Cymoril and Prince Yyrkoon. As Elric is almost close to catching The Prince, he escapes to the shade realm. This is where the dark fantasy narrative shows itself fully. The Shade Realm is a realm where it is controlled by the forces of chaos and darkness and demons roam in this realm and the realms is barren, dark and lifeless, where demons control the realm and inflict misery and pain. Elric is not alone though; he is aided by Rackhir the Red Archer in exchange for his freedom from this realm. They battle and kill many demons along their way to the location of the runeblades. The final battle is between Elric and The Prince, which both wield the runeblades. Elric is victorious yet spares the Prince's life. They escape the shade realm with the aid of Arioch and return to Melnibone.

Elric announces that he will leave Melnibone to travel the world and leave the role of emperor to Prince Yyrkoon. Cymoril protests this decision, yet Elric announces that this decision is for the betterment of Melniboneans. They are too cut-out from the rest of the world and Elric must travel to revert the attitude of his people. This is where the journey of Elric ends with him leaving Melnibone. The Dark fantasy narrative shows itself in many moments within Elric's Journey. Scenes of torture, murder and acts of evil are evidence of the dark fantasy narrative. However, the biggest evidence is the shade realm. A realm of chaos and demons are something connected to the sub-genre. The narrative changes in many moments of Elric's Journey yet changes back to the first narrative, from change to revenge and

back to change. Elric wants to change his life, he does not see himself fit to be an emperor. In the end of his journey, he achieves his goal. He brings a change in his life and now wishes to bring change to others in Melnibone. Above all, the narrative is a Dark Fantasy narrative full of darker subject matter and High Fantasy elements with magic, supernatural being and gods and magical swords. Yet, through Elric's goal, it shows itself as a narrative of change, leaving roles destined and obligated by rules. Elric wants to change these rules and his destiny. In the end, Elric achieves these goals in his journey and becomes victorious.

4.3.2. *Berserk's* Narrative

Berserk is a great example of a modern Dark Fantasy narrative. The narrative shows itself in many moments as evidence to elements attributed to the sub-genre and through the scenes of action, violence and Guts' acts and decisions. Due to this, the narrative is a full revenge and violence narrative. The narrative is strengthened by Dark Fantasy elements appear in the journey.

First example of violence is exemplified when Guts enters the inn to deal with soldiers who were torturing Puck. Guts kills them and inflicts pain on the last surviving one. Guts' journey goal is revenge and to have his revenge, he uses violence as solution to his problems. However, Guts is also a traumatized hero. He is stricken with pain and chaos in his life caused by Griffith and the God Hand. Guts covers his trauma with justified violence and uses this violence to reach his goal. This is how the narrative is shaped, around trauma and violence with the aid of Dark Fantasy elements.

Guts' battles are against Apostles and their minions. The first apostle, transformed into a cobra demon monster, is the biggest recipient of Guts' violence. Guts hates apostles, this hate is shown in his violent actions against them. Guts cuts, dismembers and explodes his enemies with his cannon arm and this does not change whether his foes be human, monster or demon. These are common in Dark Fantasy narrative as the action is very violent and gory, and full of horror creatures.

There are many other moments of Dark Fantasy violence in Guts' journey. Against evil spirits and skeletons when he is travelling with the old man and his daughter, The Count's soldiers and Zondark, who is transformed into a demon by The Count. They all receive the full force of Guts, become subjected to fantasy

violence. The Second apostle, The Count, is the biggest hurdle before Guts reaches the God Hand. The Count transforms into a giant slug demon and towers over Guts. Guts only manages to defeat him by using his daughter as a shield. In the moment of death, The Count activates the behelit, transport everyone in the throne room to the realm of the God Hand. Guts finally reaches his revenge goal, yet he is powerless to do anything. Everyone except The Count gets transported back to the throne room, and due to this Guts could not reach his goal of revenge. His journey goal was to get revenge against the The God's Hand, yet he fails. Guts goes back to search again, and his journey continues to take revenge for all the pain and suffering in his life.

This journey of Guts is of violence and trauma and the narrative shift to these with the aid of Dark Fantasy narrative elements. There were many moments and elements attributed to the sub-genre and are fuelled by Guts' revenge journey. The narrative mainly focusses on two things, the violence and the trauma of Guts. Guts is a traumatic anti-hero, and this trauma causes him to be a pessimistic, amoral and violent hero. The narrative focuses on this aspect of Guts and the revenge goal. In this sense, Dark Fantasy inhabits revenge goal as a normal issue as the sub-genre is constructed on such subject matter. In this context, the narrative is constructed around Guts' revenge journey caused by the The God's Hand and Griffith, as the main cause of his suffering.

CONCLUSION

Hero stories are quite common in every type of literature and media. They are often bound by tradition and a sense of normalcy in traditional literature. Yet, there are types of heroes and texts that are far from tradition and different in their structure. Anti-heroes are different than traditional heroes witnessed in standard literature and media forms. Anti-heroes also spotted in texts and narrative that deviate from the standard. In this case, they are common in Dark Fantasy, a sub-genre of the Fantasy genre. It is important to discuss what distinguishes this type of heroes and texts that deviate from standard and tradition with the help of analysis methods. This method, Hero's Journey, has been extremely helpful in analysing Anti-hero archetype and Dark Fantasy narrative. This is the goal of this thesis, to discuss and analyse anti-heroes and Dark Fantasy as forms that deviate from tradition.

This study follows with the introduction of the information regarding the theory of Hero's Journey, the subject texts, anti-hero archetype and Dark Fantasy sub-genre. The thesis focuses on two primary texts, Michael Moorcock's *Elric of Melnibone* and Kentaro Miura's *Berserk*. These two texts are important for their anti-hero portrayal and representation of the Dark Fantasy sub-genre. *Elric of Melnibone* is one of the early examples of the subgenre and inhabit early representation of an anti-hero in fantasy fiction. While *Berserk*, follows more modern interpretation of the sub-genre and the anti-hero archetype. The thesis follows with the analysis of Hero's Journey in each text. Then follows, chapter three about the anti-hero archetype analysis and discussion and chapter four about the dark fantasy sub-genre narrative analysis and discussion.

Hero's Journey has been helpful to understand the story of each text and see how the narrative is shaped around each character and their journeys. It was also helpful to understand what makes a character an anti-hero and what makes a text a Dark Fantasy text. The method was used to see which steps of the Hero's Journey are apparent within each text. In comparison, the first text had most of the steps apparent, while the second texts had lower steps when compared, which are meeting the writing tradition and publication standards of the time. *Elric of Melnibone*, was written in the early 1970s, when fiction, specifically fantasy fiction, had some

connection to tradition and later shifted to more modern fiction writing in the following years. Due to this, more steps in Hero's Journey are seen in the first text. However, *Berserk* is more modern compared to *Elric of Melniboné*. *Berserk* was written and published in the 1990s, when fiction was far from traditional fiction and genres. This is also when the sub-genre of Dark fantasy fully flourished. Due to the modernization of fiction, *Berserk* had less steps within the text. This is the outcome of the application of the method and result of the second chapter.

The following chapters are about The Anti-hero archetype and Dark Fantasy sub-genre. In summary, anti-heroes can be described as morally corrupt or ambiguous heroes. Dark Fantasy is described as fantasy with horror elements yet does not give full description regarding which fantasy and horror elements are needed to be fully seen as Dark Fantasy. There are many aspects and nuances about the portrayal of an anti-hero and Dark Fantasy sub-genre. The goal of this thesis is to give proper and full explanation to them both through the method of Hero's Journey as a tool to analyse heroes and narratives and give representation to the primary texts used in this thesis to academia.

In Chapter three, it can be seen that Elric and Guts are example anti-hero representatives, yet in comparison to each to other, both are different. Despite both being anti-heroes, they are very different in comparison due to two reasons, Elric is a precursor and Guts is a modern representation. First, Elric is a precursor to the archetype and Guts is a modern interpretation of the archetype. Elric is a grey character who inhabits light character qualities and dark character qualities, while Guts is fully dark as a character. To give further explanation, Elric is considered to be "grey" due to him acting as a border between good and evil acts and choices. He kills people and monsters yet does acts of good by saving Cymoril from The Prince. He lets the torture of the spies happen, while preparing to defend his home from barbarian invaders. He gives his allegiance to a dark god yet does this to save his lover. Through these acts, Elric is a grey anti-hero, someone who is both good and evil at the same time. While Guts, is fully "dark" as an anti-hero. His acts and actions are cruel and evil in choice. He kills demons and monster along his journey, yet he affects the innocent around him and cause their demise. He defeats the first apostle, yet the town is in ruins, and the people of the town are dead. He kills animated skeletons and evil spirits yet fails to save the young girl and his father who offered him a ride in their horse cart. He defeats the last apostle yet ruins the life of his

daughter. With these choices and acts, he fully embodies a darker characterization. Both characters also become anti-heroes through Hero's Journey and through their acts and goals they achieve. Elric achieves to save Cymroil and defeat The Prince. However, Guts fails his goal to defeat Griffith and the God Hand. They become anti-heroes through these acts and are exemplified through each step they take in the Hero's Journey. Each of the anti-hero's journeys are different as well. Elric's journey is about change. He wants change in his life and change for the people of Melnibone. His acts and choices within his journey are done to achieve this goal. In the end, Elric reaches this goal. Guts' journey is about revenge, he wants only revenge for the pain and suffering in his life caused by the members of the God Hand, especially Griffith. However, Guts does not reach his goal.

In chapter four, Hero's Journey was used to understand Dark Fantasy narratives. Dark Fantasy is very different from traditional fantasy yet the sub-genre inhabit elements that are akin to fantasy with a mix of horror elements, horror elements like murder, gore, monster, supernatural beings and demons. Both text's narratives are full of these elements, yet when compared to each other, show varying degrees of difference. First off, *Elric of Melnibone* is lighter on the horror aspect. There are supernatural moments happening in the text, yet horror aspect of the sub-genre is what makes it different than traditional fantasy. The text is divided into two segments, Elric's world and The Shade realm. In Elric's world, horror elements are less, on the other hand, in the shade realm, horror elements are more apparent. The fantasy setting is more forward than dark elements in its narrative. In *Berserk* dark and horror elements are more forward. Every action scene is horrific and full of gore and violence. These elements are what makes Dark Fantasy as a darker variant of the fantasy genre. Also, important note that both narratives are shaped around the main character's journeys. Elric journey is about change, while Guts' journey is about revenge. These character goals set the tone of each narrative. Due to this, *Elric of Melnibone* is less dark and more fantasy, while *Berserk* is darker and less fantasy.

In conclusion, with these results of each analysis in the following chapters, the elements and qualities that makes the primary texts representation of the sub-genre of Dark Fantasy and Anti-hero archetype are shown and explained. With this analysis, this thesis hopes to add more information regarding this sub-genre and archetype, which are popular in modern fiction and popularized in pop-culture. With the usage of *Elric of Melnibone*, as a precursor to the sub-genre and archetype, and

Berserk, as a modern representation of the sub-genre and archetype, this thesis hopes to be an evidence that popular texts and pop-culture can be used in academic studies and with their usage, give academic representation to the primary texts used in this thesis. With the analysis and discussions in this thesis, it is hoped that this thesis becomes one of the examples of this subject and pave the way for the usage of popular texts in academic studies and discussions.

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