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***Medieval Welsh History and the Revival
of Celtic and Greek Mythology in T.A.
Barron's Merlin: The Lost Years (1996)***

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Dedication

To my dear parents; my father who went through a lot so I get to study something that I love, and my mother who kept me in her prayers and was always there for me. To my precious younger brothers who surrounded me with love, support, and laughter. I dedicate this work to my beautiful family and friends, and to the one who never gave up on me even when I was at my lowest... and Hannan, I did not forget about you.

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Abstract

Fantasy literature shares a lot of similar patterns and characteristics with ancient myths, these patterns are known as “archetypes”. The analysis of archetypes in literature is the subject of a modern literary theory called “mythological criticism”, a theory which has roots related to history, mythology, and even psychology. This theory focuses on the concept of “the collective unconscious” which appeared as a psychological explanation to humans universal imagination that has been leading them to recreate ancient mythical symbols and themes. Although both fantasy and myths share the same aspect of unreality, some authors did a great job combining these two elements with real ancient history and documented facts. The historification of myth in T.A. Barron’s *Merlin The Lost Years* (1996), is what this research will be dedicated to explore, along with the conscious and the unconscious recreation of myths through patterns, themes, and characters of this novel. From the title of Barron’s book, the reader already expects to see much of the ancient Celtic myth of Merlin, however, it is not the only thing he ends up finding there. Barron uses intertextuality and archetypes to refer to Greek/Celtic mythology, and also to Welsh medieval history. This dissertation, therefore, aims to discover the relation between history, myth, and fantasy literature, through the analysis of *Merlin: The Lost Years* (1996). This analysis will sort out the related elements to medieval Welsh history, the Celtic, and the Greek mythology, and will also examine the way collective unconscious manifests itself in the recreation of mythological patterns.

Keywords: Archetypes, collective unconscious, Fantasy, historification, history, mythification, mythology.

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General Introduction

History and myth have always been present in fantasy works, despite them belonging to two different types of literature: the realistic non-fiction, and the fantastic fiction. In fantasy, the use of history and mythology contributes in constituting a prolific ground that has long invited various critical readings and studies. Ancient myths and history have become a rich source of inspiration for fiction writers who have brought these myths to life in the form of fantasy. One of the most famous histo-mythical revivals were about the Arthurian legends, in which King Arthur and his companion Merlin, were the center of many fiction works from the medieval era to modern days. From Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* (1136) till the modern works of *The king Arthur's Trilogy* by Rosemary Sutcliff in the 1970's, a lot was written about Merlin as the wizard and companion of the legendary king of Wales. However, only a little about this magician's past has ever been revealed. The origins of Merlin and his early years were all a missing piece of a puzzle which the American author Tomas Archibald Barron tried to fill. The *Merlin Saga* (1996-2011), was presented by Barron as an attempt to rewrite the missing pieces of a wizard's past, to bring a myth to life, and to show the development of a character that would grow to become not only the greatest wizard of all times, but also the main inspiration behind the majority of magical scenes in fantasy literature and adaptation of wizards. Merlin was in fact, considered to be the original base upon which modern literature presented the archetype of wizards. He was the Gandalf in J.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit / Lord of the Rings* series (1937- 1955), and the Dumbledore in J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* (1997-2007): The old, white bearded, wise, and powerful wizard with long robes and mysterious past; a figure that has appeared in hundreds and hundreds of fantasy works.

This particular book, *Merlin: The Lost Years* (1996), was not a subject of mythological criticism before, nor was it included in studies of mythical, or historical revivals. However, several myth-related analyses were made about modern literary works such as: C.W.

Sullivan's "*Celtic Myth and English-Language Fantasy Literature: Possible New Directions*" (1998), Lauren Haas "*The Revival of Myth: Allusions and Symbols in The Wasteland*" (2003), and M. Slabbert's "*Inventions and Transformations: An Exploration of Mythification and Remythification in Four Contemporary Novels*" (2006). The previously mentioned researches tackled various aspects such as mythification, mythical revivals, and the effect of Celtic and Greek Mythology on modern literature. Some other works tackling histo-mythical, and psychological archetypes in modern fantasy are: Carl Jung's *Man and his Symbols* (1964), *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (1981), and Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1968). Despite that there is a considerable number of mythical and historical fantasies, not many researches focused on the relation between history and myth in a single fantasy novel, or the conscious and the subconscious process of myth revival. It is also not that common to have history tackled in a fantasy work, especially that majority of fantasy studies are mostly focusing on either *Lord of the Rings*, or the *Harry Potter* series, often from a mythical or a psychological point of view.

Hence, the problem this research attempts to address is concerned with examining the interplay between history, myth, and fantasy literature in T.A. Baron's *Merlin: The Lost Years* (1996). It will specifically focus on explaining this interplay in terms of discovering shared elements and devices used in creating it. In order to achieve this, this dissertation employs mythological criticism as an analytical method for it allows the exploration of reoccurring myths and archetypes in the novel. It also offers a historical and a psychological background to the reasons behind the emergence of archetypes and the way they appear in fantasy writings through the conscious and the subconscious use of literary devices.

This study hypothesizes that modern fantasy can be deeply affected by history and ancient myths, which is a relation that can be manifested through the use of intertextuality, archetypes, and inspired characters and events from ancient times. This dissertation also suggests that human

collective unconscious is responsible for many archetypes used in literature, archetypes that have both historical and psychological bases.

In his *Merlin saga* (1996/2011), Barron dedicated 12 books to talk about the early life of Merlin as a young boy. The first book of the saga, *Merlin: The Lost Years* (1996) included a world full of imagination, but also history and myth, making Wales –which is the motherland of the original Merlin myth-, the starting point to this journey. Despite it being a fantasy work, some events, places, and even characters in the novel seemed to be either from ancient Greek or Celtic mythology. In fact, the whole book was full of intertextuality and references to these two specific civilizations. The novel also carries a set of historical clues depicting the medieval history of Wales, the population's lifestyle, and the socio-cultural and religious scene. Besides the obvious indicators of Celtic/Greek mythologies, the book carried some universal patterns related to the collective subconscious. These patterns existed in all heroic writings whether they were modern fantasies or ancient mythologies, which leave us with four main questions this dissertation is dedicated to answer:

- How can history, mythology, and fantasy literature be related to one another?
- In what way was the history of Wales implied in T.A. Baron's *Merlin: The Lost Years*?
- Which story elements in the book belong to ancient Greek and Celtic mythology?
- What are the universal subconscious archetypes used in the novel?

To answer these questions, a cultivated research is essentially adopted for it will allow us to conduct a critical analysis that seeks to clarify fantasy literature and its relation to both history and myth. It will also help explain the myth of Merlin in literature, along with other Celtic and Greek mythologies included in Baron's novel.

The first chapter will contain a contextual framework of the research defining fantasy

and historical fantasy. It will also be looking at the Celtic myth of Merlin from its early origins to its modern adaptations in literature. The concept of revival in literature will be tackled in this chapter as well, especially, the literature inspired from Celtic and Greek myths as well as historical revivals. At the end of this part, there will be an introduction to the author T.A. Barron, and his vision and motives behind his writing about Merlin.

The second chapter will be viewing the literary phenomena of historification of myth and the mythification of history that are used in works of mythological and historical revivals. It will also provide information on the literary device of intertextuality, which is repeatedly used in the novel to combine mythical and historical elements. The chapter will also contain an introduction to the term “archetype” and its relation to human psyche, ancient history, and modern fantasy. The presented theory in this chapter will be about mythological criticism, a theory which analyses literary texts in a context of myth, history, and human psychology. The concept of collective unconscious will be tackled in order to give a psyche-related explanation to the existence of archetypes in literature and the way they get transmitted through generations and different cultures.

The third and last chapter will be focusing on the scenes that were inspired from the real history of medieval Wales. It will also include an application of the previous theoretical framework in order to prove that T.A. Barron’s *Merlin: The Lost Years* is a mythological revival that combines two different mythologies; the Celtic and the Greek, with the history of medieval Wales. The chapter will also point out the universal subconscious elements used in the novel through archetypal themes and Joseph Campbell’s Hero Cycle.

Chapter One: Contextual Framework

I. Introduction:

During its early beginnings, the literary genre of fantasy was thought to be nothing but a form of escapism, and was mostly associated with children's literature. However, critics came to discover a greater depth and far more interesting thoughts and theories within this genre. The importance of fantasy is not only in the moral lessons given at the end of each story, nor does it manifest itself in the psychological struggle of characters alone. The other interesting aspect about fantasy can be the original source of patterns, characters, and the used themes as well. The effect of fantasy on readers is indeed, powerful and related to the human's psyche and his way of creating literary works. Such powerful impact could only come from deep rooted origins of this genre, origins that are not only related to literature, but also to the human's historical, mythical, and psychological heritage. Given the fact that the tackled book in this dissertation is a fantasy characterized by both historical and mythical imprints, this chapter will be dedicated to explore the meaning and origins of fantasy. It will also contain information on historical and mythological revivals with an extra attention paid to the literature concerned with the myth of Merlin, since he is the central character of the novel and one of the main Celtic myths tackled in this dissertation.

I.1. Fantasy Literature:

Fantasy is a genre in which the literary text is characterized by unrealistic elements that are often inspired from ancient folktales, mythology, and of course, the human imagination. According to Cambridge Dictionary, the word fantasy is defined in a literary context as an "imaginative literature," that is "often set in strange places with unusual characters and the use of magic". These unusual characters are often presented as humans with supernatural powers, unrealistic places created by the writer, and even gods and creatures that are inspired from ancient myths such as dragons, goblins, fairies, elves...etc. Although the

term fantasy was associated with a literary genre for the first time in the late 1940's, the existence of fantasy is in fact as old as humans first tales. Ancient epics like *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (2000 BCE), *Beowulf* (8th-11th century CE), and the ancient Indian *Mahabharata* (c. 3rd century BC–3rd century AD), were all passed through generations, yet, some other epics did not survive the test of time due to the absence of written documents. These tales were not exactly classified as fantasy, yet, they contributed to the creation of this genre. Old classics such as *Grimm brothers fairytales* (1812) were considered to be the founding ground of modern fantasy, along with the influence of gothic literature. Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) is a good example of a gothic novel introducing and popularizing a fictional character that is still used in nowadays fantasy. Although Grimm's fairytales often had very dark origins, they were presented to the young generations in a more child-friendly way. Stories like "Rapunzel", "Cinderella", and "The Little Red Riding Hood" were brought to light and continued to be rewritten and reproduced in plays and storybooks. Fantasy was of course not only for children, in the mid-1800s, John Ruskin's *The King of the Golden River* (1841), George MacDonald's *The Princess and the Goblin* and *Phantastes* (1858) were considered to be the first fantasy novels written for adults. Even though J.R.R. Tolkien was not the first to write fantasy, his famous works: *The Hobbit* and *Lord of the Rings* series (1937/1955) have gained him a worldwide recognition and had him considered as the father of modern fantasy.

I.1.1. The Origins of Fantasy:

The origin of fantasy can be a complicated question that has multiple answers due to the various reasons behind the creation of such stories. It could be suggested that the origin of the first myths is derived from the human need to imagine and to create. The process of making mythical stories could also be seen as an attempt to provide pleasure as well as a form of escapism. Furthermore, myths were sometimes considered as a product of a religious need, a mean of control over those who believed in them, or a result of the human curiosity towards

natural phenomena and wanting to explain them. According to the British social critic and philosopher Bertrand Russell, myths could have been the way ancient humans explained things around them: “If a man is offered a fact which goes against his instincts, he will scrutinize it closely, and unless the evidence is overwhelming, he will refuse to believe it. If, on the other hand, he is offered something which affords a reason for acting in accordance to his instincts, he will accept it even on the slightest evidence. The origin of myths is explained in this way” (Russell 97). Human imagination and fantasy were considered as a basic, yet a very necessary human need, “Humans need fantasy to be human. To be the place where the falling angel meets the rising ape” (Pratchett 167). However, this need was also religious; many ancient religions were based on myths as a way of approaching the divine, “because there are innumerable things beyond the range of human understanding, we constantly use symbolic terms to represent concepts that we cannot define or fully comprehend. This is one reason why all religions employ symbolic language or images” (Jung 21). Fantasy was also used for entertainment as people gathered around a storyteller to hear about brave warriors, epics, quests, witches, gods, and magical creatures.

I.1.2. Historical Fantasy:

Historical fantasy is considered as one of the main sub-genres of fantasy literature. It is defined as a fiction that includes unnatural elements, such as magic, in a realistic historical narrative. Other subgenres of fantasy classified as Arthurian¹, Celtic, or Dark Ages² can also be considered as historical fantasy. The contribution of history to both ancient mythology and fantasy is something that cannot be denied nor overlooked. The philosophical essayist, novelist, and cultural critic C. Joybell.C argues that what is now known to us as myth, used to

¹: Literature Europe concerned with the legend of King Arthur

²: Early middle ages in western

represent history and facts to our ancestors:

Everything we consider today to be myth and legend, our Ancestors believed to be history, and everything in our history includes myths and legends. Before the splendid modern-day mind was formed our cultures and civilizations were conceived in the wombs of, and born of, what we identify today as fiction, unreality, myth, legend, fantasy, folklore, imaginations. (Joybell)

According to Joybell, history represents a crucial element in the creation of myths and fantasy as well. One of the most recreated historical fictions is the one concerned with Arthurian literature. Although there was no strong proof that neither Arthur, nor Camelot¹ existed, the Arthurian romances depicted a central era of medieval history, and had some actual historical figures. At the same time, the story of Arthur brought to light one of the most fundamental literary characters of fantasy featuring magic: Merlin.

I.2. Merlin Throughout the Centuries:

Being one of the most profound Celtic/Welsh myths, the legend of Merlin remained as a symbol of medieval magic and Welsh heritage. Although he was often associated with King Arthur, Merlin existed long before Arthur made an appearance in literature.

I.2.1. The Origins of Merlin: Nennius and Geoffrey of Monmouth

The first appearance of Merlin in literature was in the 12th century *Prophetiae Merlini* or *The prophecies of Merlin*, a Latin work by the British historian Geoffrey of Monmouth. It is believed that both the prophecies mentioned in the book, and Merlin himself were based on older Gaelic² and Anglo-Saxon folktales in which Merlin was described as a prophet, and a

¹: The castle associated with the legend of King Arthur

²: A Celtic language from Ireland, also spoken in highlands and islands of western Scotland.

wise man; “I am preparing to sing the madness of the prophetic bard, and a humorous poem on Merlin” (Geoffrey 1). Geoffrey was thought to be influenced by a medieval figure named Myrddin Wyltt, who was included in the 9th century History of Britain by Nennius who was a Welsh monk and a historian. Myrddin was introduced by Nennius as Welsh chief bard who witnessed the battle of Arfderydd; a bloody massacre between the armies of the Christian Rhydderch Hael¹ and the last Pagan² king Gwenddoleu³ in AD 573. According to ancient proud people of the South Welsh he gave laws, and to the chieftains he prophesied the future” (Geoffrey 1). *The Prophecies of Merlin*, therefore, was considered to be one of the first written books in which the character of the legendary prophet Merlin was introduced.

Geoffrey continued his writings making a link between the character of Merlin and the King Arthur for the first time in his book *Historia Regum Britaniae*(1130) or *The History of kings of Britain*. The book was later followed by a long poem in 1150 called *Vita Merlini* or *The Life of Merlin*, in which Geoffrey was mostly retelling the story of Merlin in a poetic form. The word “history” in the title *History of Kings of Britain* (1130), suggests that the work as referred to by Geoffrey was a historical writing rather than a work of imagination and myth. According to him, it was based on the translation of ancient Celtic poetry and historical writings about, what was indeed, a history of Britain. Geoffrey’s sources, however, were a combination of ancient poems in which the name Arthur was mentioned, stories which contained records of real battles in history, and mythic tales that allowed him to create chronicles in which history and myths met with fictional writings.

I.2.2. Arthurian Literature:

Geoffrey’s decision to make Arthur and Merlin characters in one series of events, did

¹: Ruler of Alt Cult, a Brittonic kingdom in north Britain

²: Those who practiced polytheism or ethnic religions

³: Brittonic king who rules southwest Scotland and north-west England

form an immortal pattern that would continue to spell ink even centuries after. The chronicles of King Arthur Pendragon and his advisor Merlin were translated to French by the poet Wace in 1155 CE. Wace, who added another element to the story; “the round table”, inspired other writers to draw on the fascinating tales of Camelot. The French writer Chrétien De Troyes was the first to write a series of romances that depicted Arthur’s stories adding more details and focus on other individuals like the knight Sir Lancelot and the love triangle between him, Lady Guinevere and King Arthur himself. De Troyes was also the one who introduced the “Holy Grail” as a part of Arthur’s quest. In the many years which followed, several books were written about Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, the magical sword, and other symbols were covered in various attempts to constantly rewrite the legend of Arthur and Merlin, and to keep the myths alive in many languages.

In the 15th century, Thomas Malory Gathered all previous information from works of history and fiction featuring the main characters of the Arthurian Legends in a work of his own called *Le Morte D’Arthur* (1485) or *The Death of Arthur*. Malory’s work was considered as one of the most important and complete writings about the Arthurian legends for it had the full story of King Arthur from birth to death. The book continued to be a source of adaptation even many centuries later. Arthurian literature varied from historical fiction, fantasy, and even satire like Mark Twain’s *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court* (1889), which was originally adapted from *Le Morte D’Arthur*. *The Story of King Arthur and His Knights* (1903), was a children’s novel written by the American writer and illustrator Howard Pyle. The book contained stories about the future king Arthur, Lancelot, and of course Merlin who was depicted as a powerful and a wise wizard who played the role of Arthur’s source of guidance, a role that was always given to Merlin in all literary Arthurian works. Examples of famous modern works concerning Arthurian legends are; *King Arthur and His Knights of The Round Table* (1953) by Roger Lancelyn Green, *The Mists of Avalon* (1983) by Marion Zimmer

Bradley, and *The Fall of Arthur*, which was an unfinished poem by J.R.R. Tolkien, originally published in 2013.

I.2.3. Fiction Featuring Merlin's Character:

Merlin was certainly more than a secondary figure in Arthurian literature. In fact, he became a central piece in many modern fantasies. Book series like Mary Stewart's *Merlin's Trilogy* (1970-1979) and *Merlin's Mirror* (1975) by Andre Norton, paid more attention to the legendary wizard. The famous magician continued to inspire literature, sometimes as a central character, others as an important back-story, or a figure which had a symbolic meaning in the plot. The American horror author Stephen King did mention Merlin or "Maerlyn" in his series of novels *The Dark Tower* (1982-2012), as an advisor of another equivalent to King Arthur.

Tales about the world's most famous wizard continued to nurture libraries as many authors became more interested in fantasy and magic. Even if their works were not always about the medieval era, King Arthur, or even Merlin himself, the image of Merlin was continuously brought out in shapes that were similar to what Nennius, Geoffrey, and other Arthurian authors painted. The figure of an old, white-bearded, wise wizard who usually accompanied the protagonist, a man who carried a long stick and wore long robes or a cloak, a man who gave prophecies and knowledge, a man like Gandalf in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* and *Lord of the Rings* (1937-1955), or Professor Dumbledore in J.K. Rowling's book series *Harry Potter* (1997-2007). The Potter series actually contained direct references to Merlin as a divine, powerful, and almost god-like wizard (the wizards society uses the expression; "Merlin's Beard!" as an equivalent to "Oh My God!", and "The Order of Merlin" was described as a very honorable and legend-like society that all wizards dreamt of joining).

I.3. The Revival of Myths in Modern Literature:

Myths were always considered to be the mirror of the human imagination, civilizations, and fantasies. The impact myths have on literature is huge considering the amount of studies about their origins and their effects on human writings. Myths are seen as a way of reflecting the humans' psychological needs and expressing their feelings. According to the psychoanalyst Carl Jung, "the essential function of the heroic myth is the development of the individual's ego-consciousness- his awareness of his own strengths and weaknesses" (Jung 112). Myths also provide more than enough ideas, themes, and symbols, inspiring writers to recreate these myths in their own ways, a process known as the revival of myth.

The Irish writer James Joyce was amongst the firsts who used mythical structure in their own writings. A mythical structure is considered to be one of the many ways a myth can be revived without necessarily using the same setting, but rather founding the work upon a similar structure and turn of events. Joyce's masterpiece *Ulysses* (1922), which referred to the Greek myth of Ulysses or (Odysseus), was considered to be the greatest work of modern literature. According to the poet and literary critic T.S. Elliot, Joyce's *Ulysses* "manipulates a continuous parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity", Joyce had "simply a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving a shape and significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history" (Elliot 177). Elliot was also one of the writers who popularized the use of myths in poetry. Elliot's *The Wasteland* (1922) was amongst the works which contained elements from Greek mythology.

By reviving myth in literature, Eliot offered his society its own revival by journeying back to the impetus of myth for remedies to societal ills. Joyce Leavell, one of Eliot's poetic brethren has said, "The assumption of the mythical method is that our culture and language once had a pervasive meaningfulness which has been lost in our increasingly rational and

discontinuous society, but that by recovering the lost myth from within our culture, poets can restore mythic unity to literature. (Haas 31)

The revival of myths in modern fantasy was also present in the form of retellings, which were described as an attempt to rewrite the same original myth but with further details including the author's own touch. One of the most famous retellings in the twenty first century is *The Song of Achilles* (2011) by Madeline Miller which retold the story of the Greek hero Achilles from the point of view of one of his close friend. Other works of revival had elements or characters inspired from ancient mythology and folklore instead of recreating their whole original stories which these characters emerged from.

I.3.1. Greek mythology in modern fantasy:

Being mostly a set of stories about gods, goddesses, heroes, and epic quests, Greek mythology certainly provided more than enough themes and symbolic references that are still used in modern fantasy. "The chosen one" idea of a hero came from early Greek myths in which the hero was someone who is predestined to be great. The power inherited by a god who was usually portrayed as a father or a mother to the main character, is something that was included in the legend of Hercules who was half mortal half god. This pattern where heroes were all mighty warriors and children of gods and goddesses was shown in literature featuring the imprint of immense strength and dominance in which the protagonist was either an heir to a king or a power figure; "The universal hero myth, for example, always refers to a powerful man or god-man who vanquishes evil in the form of dragons, serpents, monsters, demons, and so on, and who liberates his people from destruction and death (Jung79). The hero was also someone who possessed a supernatural gift, whether it was magic, or the ability to control the natural elements (Greek mythology had a god for each element).

Adaptations and literary revivals of ancient Greek myths were often presented in the form of fantasies, historical fantasies, comedies, romances and even political writings.

Madeline Miller's *The Song of Achilles* (2011) could be considered as a good example of historical and mythical revival that won the Orange Prize for Fiction in 2012. The work represented a historical and a romanticized adaptation of Homer's Iliad. The influence of Greek myths was not always manifested in a clear and direct form.

I.3.2. Celtic Mythology in Modern Fantasy:

The use of Celtic mythology in modern fantasy was first popularized during the era of the Celtic revival, which is a literary, artistic, and cultural movement appearing first in the late 19th century in Ireland and countries in northwest Europe. This era, (also known as the Celtic twilight), witnessed a great interest in the Gaelic/ Welsh language, mythology, culture, and literature. Writers like Lady Gregory and William Butler Yeats became the main influence on the Irish literary establishment. They took it upon themselves to rewrite the Celtic heritage and to make it a part of a living culture and literature. The English poet and cultural critic Matthew Arnold believed that English literature had in fact taken "much of its melancholy from a Celtic source... and nearly all of its natural magic" (Arnold 1). Celtic literature seemed to have a very deep influence on the English writings, for they contained what William Yeats called "The Celtic Element", a pattern of natural magic which inspired many English and western literary works.

Ancient Celtic Mythology is, without a doubt, a source that preserved the cultural and historical heritage of the Irish and northwest European populations. Therefore, it became a central component in the works of mythical revivals. What started as an attempt to save history and cultural heritage slowly became a source of inspiration for many fantasy writers who found the magic and the mysteries they were looking for in the rich Celtic mythology. According to Yeats, "none can measure of how great importance it may be to coming times, for every new fountain of legends is a new intoxication for the imagination of the world. It

comes at a time when the imagination of the world is as ready, as it was at the coming of Arthur and the Grail, for a new intoxication” (Yeats 293-294). Perhaps, one of the most famous English works which contained a significant amount of Celtic elements was J.K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter* series (1997). Elements like magic, goblins, fairies, the concept of the veil between worlds, and even names of Celtic wizards and symbols were used in creating the world of *Harry Potter*. Some other Celtic revivals are: *Muse: Tails of Silver Dawns* (2018) by Kylie Quillinan, and *Daughter of Winter* (2020) by Corina Douglas, both works brought elements like the Druids¹, and magic, to life through fantasy.

I.4. T.A. Barron and the Rewriting of Merlin:

Tomas Archibald Barron is an award winning, and one of the best-selling novelists who is best known for his chronicles *The Merlin Saga* (1996-2011). In 2011, he won the de Grummond Medallion for a “Lifetime contribution to the field of children's and young adult literature”.

Barron was very interested in ancient mythology, especially Merlin’s myth. The author included a note in the first page of his book *Merlin: The Lost Years* (1996) explaining how he was curious about the past of Merlin, according to Barron, Merlin “is a mysterious and captivating fellow, this wizard who can live backward in time, who dares to defy even the Threefold Death... I realized that I wanted to get to know him better”. Barron conducted a lot of research about the historical and mythological background of the wizard and his homeland. On his official website, he posted: “For *The Merlin Saga*, I researched the legends of Merlin for a year before I could even begin writing. I started with the ancient Celtic text called the Mabinogian, and worked forward from there, reading all the ballads and stories I could find” (Barron). The *Merlin saga* was a result of “an unexplained gap” that Barron found in literature

¹: Religious pagan leaders, philosophers, and prophets.

about Merlin, he included in his note that “Merlin’s youth- the crucial, formative time when he most likely discovered his own shadowy origins, his own identity, and his own powers- was only fleetingly mentioned, if it was mentioned at all”. In most fantasy works, Merlin was introduced as a fully grown and a powerful figure with a mysterious past. This has left Barron with a lot of questions that he could only answer through writing.

The process of recreating a legend that is so deep rooted in Welsh and Celtic myths and history, requires a good knowledge about the historical, social, and the mythic aspects of medieval Wales, the motherland of Merlin’s legend. The author decided to start the chronicle with the same state of cluelessness he had about the past and secrets of Merlin; a young boy who is washed ashore and wakes up to find out that he has lost all of his memories! The journey of the young boy then, starts as he begins to search for his identity, family and his own destiny.

Conclusion:

It is concluded that the genre of fantasy is a result of several centuries of human imagination that was manifested in epics, myths, and folktales. Fantasy can be extremely rich in Greek and Celtic mythology as well as history. Real history did inspire many works of myths as well as modern fantasy. The specific myth of Merlin represents an enormous base that has hundreds of historical fantasies built upon. Both mythification and historication can work perfectly well in the Celtic revival of Merlin, for it has both mythological and historical roots. History can be implied in fantasy through various forms whether in the novels setting, characters, and plot points.

Chapter two:
**Conceptual and Theoretical
framework**

II. Introduction:

A large number of literary works contain elements and common symbols that are inspired from ancient mythology, these universal patterns are known as “archetypes”. The study of archetypes was first brought out to light by anthropologists¹ like as James Frazer, who noticed a lot of similarities between myths all over the world from different civilizations (ancient Egyptian, Greek, Celtic... etc.), and talked about them in his ground breaking book *The Golden Bough* (1890). Psychologists like Carl Jung provided further explanations to Frazer’s thoughts and gave some psyche-related elaborations to explain the reasons behind such similarities amongst myths from all over the world despite the huge time/place gaps between each one of them.

According to Jung, the collective subconscious is what produces the archetypes and initiates the universal imagination behind the creation of myth and fantasy. One of the main literary theories focusing on reoccurring mythical archetypes in literature is known as “mythological criticism”. Myths, therefore, are considered to be a crucial element that affects literary writings in both direct and indirect ways. Out of all literary genres, fantasy is believed to be the one with the richest mythical archetypes for it is a genre of vivid imagination that resembles legends and myths.

History, on the other hand, represents an element of a great impact on literary writings whether through its effect on the author or on the text itself, which shows in the mimicry of past events and the use of historical facts. History, therefore, exists within the literary work as it does outside of it. Fantasy, however, is usually associated with the unreal and the abnormal,

¹: Those who study the human aspects within past and present societies

but it is still very common to have historical setting and attempts to historify myths in fantasy, or to have the history itself fantasized. This chapter is dedicated to the exploration of the literary connection between the three elements: history, myth, and fantasy. It will contain an explanation of archetypes, mythological criticism, their relation to the collective subconscious, and the tools used in the creation of a literary combination of myths, history, and fantasy.

II.1. The Historification of Myth and Mythification of History:

Ancient mythologies and religions have their historical roots appearing as traces of old kings, battles, and historical sites. However, it is not always easy to tell if ancient people wrote things as they witnessed them or with the addition of their own imaginative touches and religious beliefs. Such blurred images with glimpses of history and myth inspired many writers to do the same with their literary works. Some authors brought myths to life by adding facts and real historical figures to their works, while others were interested in rewriting history with a touch of myth and fantasy. The two processes are referred to as: The historification of myth, and the mythification of history.

By mythification of history we mean adding elements of myth to a realistic historical setting or plot, which can be seen as “an aspect of the poetics of the contemporary novel. The result is a series of parallels” (Meletinsky 277). Whereas historification of myth denotes the process of recreating a myth as a literary work that involves history. The combination of history and myth is created through the marriage of ancient historical and mythic patterns in one text. This type of fantasy became very popular in the 21st century, a period of a great interest in historical and mythological revivals. Works that are concerned with the Arthurian romances, ancient Greek and Celtic retellings became the most tackled topics in literary criticism; “Celtic, Germanic, and other European mythologies were exhausted in popular

consciousness and paganism became sanitized and demythologized, myths became a source of a renewed poetic and literary inventiveness” (Meletinsky 259). Even though the earliest works of fantasy were not taken seriously in matters of literary analysis, the new depth provided by myth and history made this genre an important portal towards ancient cultures, myths, history, and even the human psyche. This intertwinement between history, myths, and different literary texts, was mostly built through the use of intertextuality, a tool which helped in combining such elements.

II.2. Intertextuality: A Construction Tool Combining History, Myth, and Fantasy

The use of intertextuality in literature is almost inevitable, for it represents an essential construction tool that allows writers to build meaning out of previous literary texts.

II.2.1. Intertextuality: A Definition

The word intertextuality refers to the shaping of a text’s meaning by previous texts. The references made by the author to other sources can be done deliberately, or without the author knowing or intending to make them. Intertextuality is defined as a “play on specific texts, styles, and conventions, resulting in semantic effects based on two-in-one discourse, such as dialogue, repetition, imitation, and quotation or reference to what has already been said” (Mitosek 390). Unless the author directly points out the existence of another literary source through quotations, or obvious hints, recognizing intertextuality depends a lot on the reader’s general knowledge and previous readings

The Bulgarian-French literary critic, psychoanalyst, and philosopher, Julia Kristeva was the first to use the term “intertextuality” in a literary study as she worked on analysing Ferdinand de Saussure’s semiotics which suggested some sort of a never-ending dialogue

between works of literature throughout time. Kristeva supported the idea that no text is fully independent in meaning, and that the way people understand any text depends on their previous readings. This idea was reinforced by T.S. Eliot who claimed that “no poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists. You cannot value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead. I mean this as a principle of aesthetic, not merely historical, criticism.” (Eliot 26). Intertextuality can be seen in literary works with few minor references to other texts, but also, is more likely to exist in retellings and recreations of previous works in the form of historical and mythical revivals.

Intertextuality has various shapes and forms, the most commonly used types of this device are:

a. Quotation: This means that the author would use directly the text as it is and put it between quotation marks.

b. Allusion: when the author directly refers to a text, a character, an object, or a pattern, without mentioning the source in which case it is up to readers to investigate further.

c. Claque: In literature, to claque means to borrow a sentence or an expression from another language and to translate its meaning while using it in one’s own work.

d. Pastiche: It refers to the act of imitating a certain style of work, which is common in creative arts such as painting, music, theatre and literature. The author can adapt a style or create a combination between two or more others. Pastiche is found in literary works that carry some types of characters or themes that are famous and recognized from previous specific authors and works.

e. Parody: A parody is an adaptation of another text in a comic and sarcastic

way, in other words, it is done through reviving a literary text and retelling it but as a satire.

f. Translation: Intertextuality can also be done through a translation of a text from another source of a different language.

g. Plagiarism: plagiarism here refers to the use of another author's language, expressions, and texts without any reference to the source or the existence of quotation marks or hints that show that the text is not original

II.2.2. Intertextuality in Histo-Mythological Fantasies:

The accuracy of setting in a fantasy work can create a better and a more realistic image in readers minds, even if the plot and themes were completely mythical. Such combinations of history and myth give literature a unique touch and make it more aesthetically pleasing and appealing to those interested in this type of revivals.

It is not so much that literature was born at a specific time, and then began to evolve on its own... The history of literature is the history of a continual process... formulas are created and reinforce each other. These are general formulas within the language itself, not literary language as such but an artistic agenda, exemplars of linkages, and models of images and genres. The result is a common background in which writers continually situate themselves. Although they transform the elements that are placed at their disposal, the link with the background is always present. (Meletinsky 2000: viii)

The link between history and myth, however, is not always something the author comes up with out of thin air. It is noticed that many myths were inspired from historical events, figures or even Biblical and Quranic stories. A good example of a historical/religious influence on myths and fantasy, is the prophet Moses whose famous miracles became a fuel to myths about

wizards and transformation powers. Arthurian legends as well were affected by the history of medieval Britain; they included records of real battles and names of real kings and places. These common patterns noticed in myths, historical writings, and fantasy, are known as “Literary archetypes”.

II.3. Literary Archetypes:

Literary archetypes represent the common patterns that are universal in all writings. When it comes to different ways of approaching literature, repeated patterns can be studied in mythological, historical, and even psychological approaches. The study of archetypes was first popularized by the Swiss psychiatrist and psychoanalyst Carl Jung, who is known for his psychological approach to the archetypal study.

II.3.1. Archetypes: A Definition

The word “archetype” is originally derived from the Greek words: “arché” which means beginning, and “typos” which means imprint. The Greek expression “archetypos” therefore, has a close meaning to the “original pattern” or imprint. In literature, archetypes represent patterns that are repeated in writings throughout times. According to Jung:

An archetype means a typos, a definite grouping of archaic character containing, in form as well as in meaning, mythological motifs. Mythological motifs appear in pure form in Fairytales, myths, legends, and folklore. Some of the well-known motifs are: the figures of the Hero, the Redeemer, the Dragon... the Whale or the Monster who swallows the Hero. (Jung 30)

In addition to types of characters, archetypes can include certain connections between elements, or reoccurring images and symbols.

In literary criticism, an archetype serves as an indicator of similarities and connections between texts. Archetypes represent a series of recurring imprints which fall under many classifications according to the nature of each archetype and the way it was implied in each text. An archetype can be a character, an image, a myth, a symbol, or certain connection between elements. Characters in literature for example, have twelve archetypes that either some, or all of them are found in all literary plots, these archetypes are: The lover, the hero, the outlaw, the magician, the sage, the explorer, the creator, the caregiver, the innocent, the jester (the humorist character), the everyman (regular background character), and the ruler. “Archetypes are typical modes of apprehension, and wherever we meet with uniform and regularly recurring modes of apprehension we are dealing with an archetype, no matter whether its mythological character is recognized or not” (Jung 208). An archetypal character is in fact, a universal character that is familiar to all readers through their experiences with previous readings and historical, social, psychological knowledge as well as their collective imagination¹ and unconscious. However, archetypes are not always recognized by readers, for it might take a certain level of knowledge to be aware of complicated patterns that are not known to everyone.

II.3.2. Archetypes in History, Myth, and Fantasy Literature:

Both history and ancient mythology have their great impact when it came to nurturing literary archetypes. The two sources: history and mythology are in fact full of patterns that fed the imagination and often helped readers to associate certain characters or imprints with actual images from their shared memory and collective imagination. Many literary works were inspired from history itself which contained a significant amount of archetypes coming from real stories about warriors, kings, prophets, and other deep-rooted tales in history. The

¹: Universal symbols and patterns that are commonly produced by human imagination

inspired from history itself which contained a significant amount of archetypes coming from real stories about warriors, kings, prophets, and other deep-rooted tales in history. The archetype of a “ruler”, for example, was mostly inspired from previous kings, priests, and authority figures in history. Having characters presented as prophets, was also a pattern that was documented in the past, whether about God’s prophets in biblical and Quranic verses, or other people who were blessed with, or pretended to have, the gift of prophecy and were very popular in royal courts as well as in merchants squares. These historical archetypes represent a part of the collective history of different nations throughout times, for they all experienced having a ruler, a prophetic figure, and their own local heroes. In his *Archetype: A Natural History of the Self* (1990), Anthony Stevens explains that “as the bases of all the usual phenomena of life, the archetypes transcend culture, race, and time. Thus, in Jung’s view... the mental events experienced by every individual are determined not merely by his personal history, but by the collective history of the species as whole” (Stevens 39). History, therefore, can be seen as a source of literary archetypes used in various writings.

Ancient mythology, on the other hand, had a lot to offer to literature, (especially fantasy). Some myths were more popular than others in fantasy adaptations, a good example of a well spread mythical archetype is Medusa, who was known in Greek mythology as a furious woman with a hair made of snakes who turned everyone who looked at her into stone. Medusa became a symbol for death and petrification, figures like her were repeatedly used in literature, making her a literary archetype in novels that had either her full depiction, or any other creature with the same effect as her, “Medusa, in effect, became the archetypal femme fatale: a conflation of femininity, erotic desire, violence, and death” (Kargolou 5). The petrification process itself became its own archetype and was shown in many works such as *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (1998) by J.K. Rowling, in which “The Basilisk” was introduced as a giant snake that turns creatures into stone-like figures and causes death to whomever encounters it face to face; “The basilisk kills people by looking at them. But no

one's died because no one looked it straight in the eye. Colin saw it through his camera. The basilisk burned up all the film inside it, but Colin just got Petrified" (Rowling 261). The Basilisk was also a Greek mythical reptile with a deathly effect on people; this showed how ancient Myths and modern fantasies share the same archetypes. However, the writer does not always intend to put archetypes in use, sometimes the process happens unconsciously which is why psychologists viewed the use of archetypes as a result of collective unconsciousness. Even if the author was aware of such imprints, he would still be using something that has a lot of versions in other works and myths throughout times and places, something that humans shared in their unconscious memories and imagination.

Archetypes are not only character-related but also events, symbols, and themes related. The importance of myth is huge in the archetypal studies for it represents one of the earliest forms of human imagination and literary oral/written creations. Symbols and patterns in myths are, according to psychology, something with a deep invisible impact on human's thoughts. These imprints got transmitted and reappeared repeatedly in human literary creations through what is known as collective unconsciousness and collective imagination.

II.4. Collective Unconscious and Modern Fantasy:

The founder of analytical psychology school, Carl Jung (1912), was the one who introduced and developed the concept of the collective unconscious. Jung believed that the collective unconscious is something people inherit genetically, "this collective unconscious does not develop individually but is inherited. It consists of pre-existent forms, the archetypes, which can only become conscious secondarily and which give definite form to certain psychic contents" (Jung 43). The collective unconscious was a revolution that changed people's view on memory, imagination, and ancient mythology. It is described as a universal hidden memory and perception of things that initiated and directed the human imagination towards

the use of specific patterns. According to Jung, “The collective unconscious consists of the sum of the instincts and their correlates, the archetypes. Just as everybody possesses instincts, so he also possesses a stock of archetypal images” (Jung 138). These shared patterns and situations evoke startlingly similar feelings in both reader and author (Britannica). The idea of collective unconscious is explained by Jung as a part of the human experience, imagination, and memory which individuals are not aware of, yet poses as a heritage.

The inherited psychological imprints are, according to Jung, responsible for many of the human habits, instincts, spiritual and sexual thoughts and behaviors. The universal unconscious is manifested through archetypes that are used in thinking patterns, imagination, dreams, and human creations such as architecture, cultural traditions, arts, and literature which is deeply affected by ancient mythology and legends. It was only in the time of Jung, that myths were explained through human psychology;

But the very fact that this process is unconscious gives us the reason why man has thought of everything except the psyche in his attempts to explain myths. He simply did not know that the psyche contains all the images that have ever given rise to myths, and that our unconscious is an acting and suffering subject with an inner drama which primitive man rediscovers, by means of analogy, in the processes of nature both great and small. (Jung 7)

Myths all over the world, despite the huge time and place gaps in between each one of them, do have a lot in common. The main source of all myths is indeed the human mind and imagination; however, it is quite interesting how all myths share many common archetypes that almost all civilizations around the world are familiar with. Archetypes such as heroes, wizards, hybrid creatures, and gods of natural elements were widely spread among ancient myths. According to Jung, all humans are somehow connected through mythology and the creations of their own unconscious minds, “there is good reason for supposing that the archetypes are the unconscious images of the instincts themselves” (Jung 44). Such patterns were the subject of the comparative literary critic Joseph Campbell’s studies on the common

structure of heroic mythical tales all over the world. Campbell discovered a certain plot pattern that is used in both heroic ancient myths and modern fantastical stories about heroes, a pattern that he called: “The Hero’s Journey” or “The Hero Cycle”.

II.5. Joseph Campbell’s Hero Cycle:

In his *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949), Joseph Campbell discusses the universal unconscious pattern of all heroic tales in ancient myths all over the world. Campbell introduced “The Hero Cycle” which represents the archetypal structure of heroic adventures and quests; a structure that exists in most ancient myths as well as it does in modern fantasies. The common starting points to these tales always talk about a hero who goes on an adventure to a mystical land and comes back after facing many challenges: “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” (Campbell 23). According to Campbell, both fantasy and ancient myths share the same characteristics of the heroic journey which begins with the hero being unknown in a quiet ordinary environment then receiving a call for adventure, and that is where the story continues according to the steps in the following illustration:



Illustration of the hero's journey

The stages mentioned in the cycle are:

- a. **The call for adventure:** a starting point to the story where the hero decides to go on his journey to achieve a certain goal.

- b. **Supernatural Aid:** which stands for the help that the hero receives from a supernatural source, this stage is often characterized by a meeting with the guardian(s) figure which holds power and blesses the hero with it, or helps him to develop it.

- c. **Threshold:** This stands for the beginning of the hero's transformation. This usually happens when the hero meets their mentor; another archetypal figure that holds wisdom and knowledge.

- d. **Challenges and Temptations:** This is where the hero is faced with tests and challenges that contribute in his growth. The hero usually succeeds in these tests with the help of his friends and allies.

- e. **Abyss:** Which is the highest point of events that puts the hero in a position of making

a life or death decision. Campbell describes this stage as a death and rebirth point where the hero may die and be revived literally, or in a figurative way where he makes an unexpected decision that shows the birth of a new part of him.

f. Transformation: This stage follows the rebirth of the hero who shows a positive change and transformation into a better version of himself.

g. Atonement: which is the stage where the hero fixes the broken situation and receives a positive feedback like forgiveness, gratitude, and celebration.

h. The Return: The final stage of the adventure in which the hero comes back home after achieving his heroic quest.

In addition to the stages of the hero's journey, the previous illustration shows some archetypal characters associated with both myths and fantasy literature. Characters like the hero, the mentor, and the helpers are found in epic myths like Homer's *Odyssey* (8th century BC) which is considered to be the first main inspiration behind Campbell's hero cycle. Such archetypes still exist in today's literature in many forms. Myth-inspired patterns as pointed out by Jung and Campbell, were what eventually laid the ground to the foundation of what is now called mythological criticism.

II.6. Mythological Criticism:

Mythological criticism is an analytical theory which, in the process of interpreting texts, focuses on recurring myths and archetypes. The origins of archetypal studies and mythological criticism are deeply related to and affected by social anthropology and psychoanalysis. Social anthropology focuses more on sorting out the similarities and common

patterns between ancient myths and studying them in a historical and social context. Meanwhile psychoanalysis focuses on the study of the human psyche and the reasons why humans imagine certain things that are unconsciously transmitted from generation to another.

II.6.1. Mythological Criticism and Social Anthropology:

The Scottish social anthropologist James Frazer was amongst the first ones to write about archetypes in his *The Golden Bough* (1890). Frazer's book was considered to be one of the sources one could sort out mythic, religious, and social archetypes from. *The Golden Bough* was concerned with ancient myths, religions, and thinking patterns of ancient civilizations. Frazer's theories are thought to be what inspired Jung in the first place.

According to the literary critic Herman Northrop Frye, *The Golden Bough* "is not only a great work of anthropology, but also a work of literary criticism" (Frye 109). In other words, Frye gave credit to Frazer for discovering the repeated patterns in ancient myths and religions throughout history which would later be used in the theory of mythological criticism.

Mythological criticism was based on using universal symbols and stories to give meaning and mythical dimensions to the analysed text. Both Jung and Frye believed that in this theory, the author's work is considered as an attempt to rewrite a myth. Whether this attempt is clear from the choice of the topic, or more indirect or even partial through the use of some patterns and symbols that are inspired from ancient mythology

II.6.2. Mythological Criticism and the Human Psyche:

In order to understand the subconscious way a myth can be represented in literature, one must firstly know how the human psyche contributes in the creation of myth. According to Jung, the collective unconscious keeps the shared memory and psyche among humans and manifests it through dreams and imagination.

A group experience takes place on a lower level of consciousness than the experience of an individual. This is due to the fact that, when many people gather together to share one common emotion, the total psyche emerging from the group is below the level of the individual psyche... The psychology of a large crowd inevitably sinks to the level of mob psychology. If, therefore, I have a so-called collective experience as a member of a group it takes place on a lower level of consciousness than if I had the experience by myself alone.

(Jung 47)

The shared experience among a large group of society, therefore, has its effects on their psych and imagination, it affects the myths they create, and the generations they raise. In order to explain how an archetype in myth can be a result of the human psychological experience, we can go back to the archetype of petrification in Medusa's myth. Being an evil and a scary creature, the first human reaction to such being would be fear. It is common all over the world that fear can cause some people to freeze; the human's first instinct would be to pause for a while before deciding whether to fight or flight. The same idea of fear and terror was behind the creation of the mythical archetype of petrification in ancient mythology. Therefore, the psychological explanations given by Jung depend pretty much on this idea.

Conclusion:

The historification of myth and mythification of history provides common patterns between myth, history, and fantasy literature. The patterns can be included through the use of intertextual linkages and archetypes, whether the author was conscious of his attempts, or completely unaware. Archetypes can be studied using mythological criticism; a theory based on the study of mythology, history, and psychology. The study of archetypes can prove the existence of a connection between literary works and ancient mythology, a connection which manifests itself in the human subconscious mind, and a mind that creates images and patterns that

are as old as time. Campbell's hero's journey represents an example of the universal path heroes have in both myths and fantasy literature, which can be used as a device to point out the collective structure of heroic plots all over times and place.

Chapter Three:
History and Myth in *Merlin: The Lost
Years* (1996)

III. Introduction:

Baron's *Merlin Saga* (1996-2011) is considered as one of the most popular fantasy Collections that focused on recreating the legend of Merlin, along with other ancient Greek and Celtic myths. The first book of the series *Merlin: The Lost Years* (1996), contains an introduction to a world of myth where the young main character Emrys, (later known as Merlin), goes through many adventures leading him to learn more about his past and also his future. The book carries a significant amount of references to Welsh history, and also, Celtic and Greek mythology.

Being a recreation of the Celtic/Welsh myth of Merlin, it is quite normal to find other Celtic Myths involved in the novel. These myths are referred to through names of characters, creatures, and even story patterns that inspired from both Greek and Celtic mythologies. The use of Greek mythology might seem irrelevant since the main tackled myth of Merlin, and the setting are all purely Celtic. However, the author came up with this unusual connection and tried to include it in the plot as an attempt to create a combination of two different mythologies. The use of mythological archetypes in the novel is accomplished in two different forms: the conscious and the subconscious. Even though the author directly points out elements from myths through intertextuality, some of the archetypal themes, characters, and patterns were derived from the collective unconscious.

Baron's use of history in *Merlin: The Lost Years* (1996) came naturally as the novel included a myth of a specific timeline indicated in historical writings and fictions. This timeline had to be respected in order to give his work a realistic historical aspect. According to T.A. Barron, "extensive research is a must. If I as a writer am going to convince you, as a reader, to come with me to some fantastic place or time, I must first win your confidence, your trust. The only two ways to do that are: first, to engage every one of your senses fully;

and second, to do my research” (Barron). Things like historical facts, medieval Welsh lifestyle, ethnic groups, religions, languages, and mentality are depicted and reinforced within the setting and plot of the novel. The historical, mythological, and psychological analysis of Barron’s *Merlin: The Lost Years* (1996) will be focusing on:

- a) Medieval Welsh historical references in the novel.
- b) Celtic and Greek myths representations and inspirations.
- c) The universal use of archetypal themes and characters (using Carl Jung’s collective unconscious, and Joseph Campbell’s “Hero Cycle”).

III.1. Medieval Welsh History in T.A. Barron’s *Merlin: The Lost Years*

The myth of Merlin and its historical/mythological retellings, did always refer to a specific period of time and an even more specific place that were considered to be the original land and time of Merlin. Carmarthen town in Wales, and the period of King Vortigern’s reign, were all indicating the setting of Merlin’s first appearance “as a boy from Carmarthen. He is sought out at the advice of King Vortigern’s wizards to become a blood sacrifice for stabilizing the foundations of a fortified tower” (Goodrich 5). Medieval Wales, therefore, is the setting that needs to be respected when writing about Merlin. The myth of Merlin himself has its historical roots as well; a man who is similar to Merlin did really exist in Welsh historical records. The historicification of myth in the novel is accomplished through the use of some specific descriptions of the medieval Welsh society, places, religions, lifestyle, and even dialects and languages.

III.1.1. Merlin in Welsh history:

It is not a coincidence that Barron chose the name Emrys for the young protagonist

in his novel. The famous Merlin created by Geoffrey of Monmouth was inspired from two medieval Welsh characters, one historical and one mythical. The historical Merlin was based upon the medieval warrior and king Ambrosius Aurelianus (or Aurilius). “Then Merlin, who was also called Ambrosius, said...” (Geoffrey 140). Aurelianus was a Brittonic war leader who fought against the Saxons during the 5th century. Emrys, is in fact, Welsh for Ambrosius, “Emrys, also known as Ambrosius Aurelius” (Strong27), who appeared in many historical writings such as *The History of Kings of Britain* by Geoffrey of Monmouth, *A History of Britain* by Nennius, and *On the Ruin and Conquest of Britain* by Gildas which is considered to be the oldest historical document about the sub-Roman Britain. In his *The Mammoth Book of Merlin* (2009), Mike Ashley explained that “the character of Merlin is called Ambrosius, presumed to be Ambrosius Aurelianus, the general or leader of the British” (Ashley 5). Historical records mentioned the bravery, strength of Ambrosius, and victories against the Saxons. Ambrosius or Emrys, later became the master of Vortigern’s fortress which later carried his name “Dinas Emrys” or “Ambrosias’ fortress”, a castle which also had many myths based upon.

According to Nennius, Emrys or Merlin was a Welsh boy who lived during the time of Vortigern the last Pagan king of the Britons. Given this information, one can have a good general idea about the historical setting that should be respected when writing about Merlin. The wizard’s story “becomes entwined with a number of recorded historical events that may at least give us a starting point to identify when he lived. We are told that he was about eight or nine when Vortigern’s soldiers found him, and this followed the Saxon invasion of Britain under Hengist. Hengist’s arrival in Britain is usually dated to about AD 449” (Ashley 12). Geoffrey’s writing made Ambrosius, Emrys, or Merlin, a character which jumps back and forth from history to myth.

III.1.2. The Roman Invasion of Wales: Traces and Repercussions

The Roman invasion of Wales which began in 48 AD and ended in 383 AD brought many changes to the rural, Celtic, and Pagan Wales. The Welsh population was subject to an immense powerful empire of knowledge, wars, economy, and Christianity. The historical setting in the novel focused on the medieval Welsh characteristics. The results of the Roman invasion, political decisions, and even departure were shown in the novel through various forms.

a) The Depiction of Different Dialects and Languages in Medieval Wales:

The period following the Romans departure from Wales in 383 AD was marked by a great diversity within the society which had a Roman, Saxon, and Gaelic combination. Barron referred to this diversity in the very first part of the book: “Where did that word come from?... I must have picked it up from the village square, where numerous dialects -Celt, Saxon, Roman, Gaelic, and others even more strange- collided and merged every day” (Barron 17). The various dialects used in Wales were a result of wars, trade movements, the Roman previous occupation, and the settlement of the Anglo-Saxons who came to Wales as mercenaries to protect them against the Picts and Scotts¹ invasions. However, the Saxons ended up settling in Wales against the will of its people; “The terms of the agreement involved the Britons providing Saxons with supplies... Over time the Saxons grew dissatisfied with their pay, when the Britons refused to meet their demands; they broke their foedus and began to plunder the lands of their employers” (France 146). The settlement of the Saxons was also the reason behind having many Saxon names to Welsh villages and places.

b) Emerging Cities and Social/ Religious Unsettlement:

Even after the Romans departure, the Welsh environment continued to be effected by

¹: People who lived in Northern and Eastern Scotland

the great empire: “The spirit of Rome remained, though Rome itself had fallen” (Edwards 20) The novel pointed out that many cities were only created on the bases of previous Roman roads and markets, as Emrys described his new town which “existed only because of an old Roman road... Although the road had once carried streams of Roman soldiers, it now carries mainly vagabonds and wandering traders” (Barron 19). The Roman leftovers and landmarks were something Barron made sure to refer to in various occasions in the story. Barron’s novel instantly put readers in the scene of a medieval Welsh society with specific traits that were indeed, historically accurate. “Five years in this place, and it still did not feel like home.

Why? Perhaps because everything, from the local gods to the local names not feel like home. was changing. Fast” (Barron 18). The unsettled situation of Wales after the Roman departure was manifested in the story through shedding light on the changing names of places and gods (meaning religions) as well, for the original ancient Welsh society was Pagan, but after the Roman invasion, Christianization began to take place along with the arrival of Jewish minorities and other different religions and ethnicities. “The wandering of nations has never really stopped. The Celt was followed by his cousins -the Angle and the Saxon. These, again, were followed by races still more closely related to them- the Normans and the Danes and the Flemings. They have all left their mark on Wales and on the Welsh character” (Edwards 9).

The local names changed due to the various dialects and languages, yet, the Saxon names were the often mentioned ones in the text, for they represented a large portion of the society in Emrys’s town, Gwynedd:

The newly arrived Saxons had already started to call Y Wyddfa, whose icy ridges towered over everything, Snow Hill or Snowdon. Likewise, people were now calling this region, long known as Gwynedd, the country of Wales. But to call it a country at all was to imply a kind of unity that did not really exist. Given the number of travellers and dialects that passed through just our little village every day, Wales seemed to me less a country than a way station. (Barron 20)

Gwynedd was in fact a Welsh Roman successor state that emerged during the Anglo-Saxon settlement in Britain. The previous quote was revealing more than the Saxon existence in Gwynedd, it was also pointing out the socio-political unsettlement and the lack of unity in medieval Wales which followed the Roman departure and the Saxon invasions. Wales seemed to have lost the sense of unity and stability which made the author compare it to a way station which had people of different origins coming and going bringing their dialects, religions, and cultures.

c) Racism, Discrimination, and Fear of Sorcery:

Another indicator of the medieval Welsh social scene was showed in the novel through the depiction of the Welsh mentality and beliefs. Being a Roman descendant was a source of pride to individuals at that time, because of the richness and glory of the Roman Empire, the advanced lifestyle, and the huge military force it had.

The Saxons, on the other hand, were viewed as an unwanted category of unfaithful people, who took over lands they did not deserve, “Upon them shall come the Saxon people, fierce in war, who shall again cruelly overthrow us and our cities, and shall violate God’s law and his temples” (Geoffrey 27). Barron found a way to portray this complexity and the sense of superior Roman and inferior Saxon through the side character Dinatius, who was described in the novel as a wicked teenage boy who bullied everyone and claimed to have a Roman Father: “Once he badly burned the arm of another boy who had dared to question his Roman ancestry” (Barron 20). The main character, Emrys, also stressed on the medieval beliefs about the Saxons when he confronted Dinatius saying: “I mean that you should not call somebody else bastard, since your father was just a Saxon mercenary who rode through this village one night and left nothing but you and an empty flask in his wake” (22). Even though the Saxons started to represent a majority in Emrys’s village, no one of the seemed to like them.

Medieval Wales was not only a place of ethnic discrimination but also religious intolerance and a growing hatred towards Pagans, Jews, and any other spiritual orientation that was not derived from the Christian church. These social aspects were a result of the “Romanization”, a term defined as:

A series of processes by which conquered regions and peoples became integrated into the Roman empire... „Romanisation“ has a long history, but its use and appropriateness have become increasingly fraught in recent decades. The term was coined by Haverfield 1905 and was heavily influenced by Mommsen’s work on republican Italy in the 1880s. It defined the process by which the native population of Britain came to adopt Roman material culture and social forms in their varied incarnations. (Reynolds)

One of the central aspects of Romanization in medieval Wales was Christianity, the religion that became dominant at that time. Old followers of Paganism and druids were mostly accused of doing the devil’s work and were hunt down and tortured. Even though, before the Romanization of Wales, druids “were the priests, wizards, and philosophers of the Celtic peoples of Ireland, Britain, and Gaul” (Green 5), they became less and less welcomed by the time Christianity ruled all over Wales. The character of Branwen, Emrys’s mother, spoke about the fast-changing medieval welsh society when she told her son: “I have never known a time like this... invasions from across the sea, mercenaries whose loyalties shift overnight. Christians at war with the old beliefs. Old beliefs at war with the Christians. People are afraid. Deathly afraid. Anything unknown becomes the work of demons” (Barron 37). The author referred to the religious scene and the growing fear and hatred towards druids and sorcery in a scene where Branwen was tending to an “elderly monk who had slipped on the wet stones of the mill bridge and gashed his arm”, the old man accused her of witchcraft and doing the devil’s work:

Branwen muttered a Christian blessing, which seemed to please him. When she followed it with a Druid chant, however, he scolded her and warned her against

blasphemy. She replied calmly that Jesus himself was so devoted to healing others that he might well have drawn upon the wisdom of the Druids as well as others now called pagan. At that point the monk angrily shook off her bandage and left, though not before telling half the village that she was doing the work of demons. (17)

The religious discrimination in medieval Wales was also shown in another passage where Barron told an incident about a young Jewish boy who got beaten by the other kids, which was totally normal at that time, “we can then see the treatment of medieval Jews -including their legalized murder by the state on the basis of community rumors and lies- as racial acts, which today we might even call hate crimes” (Neuberger). When Emrys told these kids that it was wrong to harm a person, one of the boys replied: “That’s no person... That’s a Jew... You’d best not defend the Jew. People might wonder whether... Whether you come from the same stock” (Barron 29). Being a Jew or Pagan was something that directly put individuals as second grade citizens in medieval Wales, no matter how peaceful they seemed.

d) The Church of Saint Peter: A Historical Site in the Novel

One of the main historical sites referred to by Barron in *Merlin: The Lost Years* (1996) was the old church of saint peter. The church served a shelter and an escape to both Emrys and his mother after being accused of witchcraft and almost got killed by the villagers. The book had clear indications about the name of the church and location. Branwen told her son: “You and I... are at the Church of Saint Peter. We are the guests of the nuns who live here. It is they you hear singing.” (Barron 41). The church was in fact a real site in Carmarthen town in Wales which dates back to 1107 AD, and continued to be the only church in Carmarthen until the nineteenth century.

St Peter's is one of the largest parish churches in Wales, built of local red sandstone and grey shale. Its recorded history dates from 1107...The story of St

Peter's goes back even further, for the church stands on the site of a 1st century gateway built by the Romans to defend their fort of Moridunum here. The circular shape of the churchyard suggests that there was a Celtic church here as early as the 6th century. (Ross)

Barron pointed out the location of the church through Emrys who told his mom that Saint Peter was “in Caer Myrddin... that is several days travel” (Barron 41-42). Caer Myrddin, which is Welsh for “Merlin’s fort”, is more commonly known as Carmarthen, a town situated in the south west of Wales on the banks of the Towy river. Carmarthen town was in fact the oldest town in Wales and one of the earliest homes of Christianity in the Roman/Welsh era.

III.2. Greek mythology as a source of reference in the Novel

Barron included some Greek myths in his novel through the use of allusion, making characters refer to myths, gods and heroes. The main stream of events in the book was mostly concerned with Celtic mythology, however, Barron included another equal stream of thoughts referring to Greek myths, through comparing them to events that the characters went through or heard about.

III.2.1. Greek Gods and Heroes in the Novel:

The constant use of allusion in *Merlin: The Lost Years* (1996) referred to different Greek gods, creatures, and heroes that were mostly narrated by Branwen, Emrys’s mother, who used to read these stories to her young son.

The only times that Branwen, if that was really her name, would show even a hint of her true self were when she told me stories. Especially the stories of the ancient Greeks. Those tales were clearly her favorites. And mine, too. Whether she knew it or not, some part of her seemed to come alive when she spoke of

the giants and gods, the monsters and quests, in the Greek myths. (Barron 16)
Emrys was deeply affected by these stories to the point that he compared his new friend Rhia, to the Greek heroine Atlanta:

_ “You’re like ... Atalanta.” Rhia slowed a bit, her expression quizzical.

_ “Who is that?”

_ “Atalanta... A heroine in a Greek legend who could run so fast nobody could catch her until somebody finally tricked her with some golden apples”. (74)

Emrys here was referring to how fast Rhia was, and how mysterious and serene she seemed to be. There was also a short dialogue between Emrys and Branwen where he compared her to the Greek goddess Athena: “You were wonderful. Really wonderful! And you appeared just in time, out of empty air. Like one of your Greek gods -Athena or somebody” (32). Branwen then replied “More like Zeus, I’m afraid” which showed how both were using Greek myths as a way of expressing thoughts and describing things. Emrys recognized Zeus and didn’t need any explanations since he directly commented “You mean you showered them with thunder and lightning” (32). Both Athena and Zeus were documented in ancient Greek mythology, “Athena (Minerva) Olympian goddess of wisdom and war. Athena appears through-out Homer’s Iliad and odyssey...” (Roman and Roman 90), and “Zeus (Jupiter, Jove) Olympian god of the sky. King of the Gods. Son of the Titans Cronus and Rhea” (521), Knowing that Zeus was the Greek god of the sky, Emrys made that reference asking Branwen if she “showered them with thunder and lightning” while she her answer was: “instead of wisdom” (Barron 32) referring to Athena, the Greek goddess of Wisdom and war.

III.2.2. Mount Olympus and Y Wyddfa:

Both Branwen and Emrys, tended to have a different way of seeing the place they lived in. Perhaps because of their deep knowledge about Greek mythology, their different ways of living. Once they had a conversation comparing their local mountains of Y Wyddfa

to something as magical and divine as the Greek mountains of the Olympus; “But surely the Greeks mountain Olympus is not the same as our mountain Y Wyddfa” (Barron 33). In Greek mythology, Olympus was “the mountain that was considered the home of the gods” (Taft 14). It is also a real mountain in Greece that was snow topped and covered in mist just like Y Wyddfa.

III.2.3. The Dryads and Hamadryads:

The way characters tended to fantasize about regular objects in their town in Wales was something quiet noticeable in the book. Emrys for example talked about how the forest trees seemed alive just like mythical trees that were able to move and talk; “I’ve felt as if the trees, the oldest trees especially, were alive. Not just like a plant, but like a person with a face. With a spirit... Like the dryads and hamadryads” (Barron 34). The Dryads and hamadryads were mentioned in Greek Mythology as some sort of nymphs, “the nymphs are Hamadryads, tree nymphs from the tree shadowing the spring... Hamadryads were tree nymphs, and Dryads were specifically connected with oak trees” (Roman and Roman 244-340). Later in the story, Emrys got invited into one of the sacred magical trees which gave him food and shelter.

III.3. Celtic Mythology: Inspiration and Adaptation

Baron’s *Merlin: The Lost Years* (1996) was in fact inspired from the original Celtic myth of Merlin and the earliest writings about him, such as Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *History of The Kings of Britain* (1135). Therefore, it was quite normal to find other recurring myths from a Celtic source.

III.3.1. Merlin in Celtic mythology:

The name Emrys as given to the main character in T.A. Baron's novel was inspired from the historical figure of Ambrosius (as mentioned previously); however, there also was a mythical Merlin who represented one of the deepest roots related to the legend. The wizard Merlin might be mostly recognized for his important role in the Arthurian legends as King Arthur's guide; however, his usual depiction was based on a combination of historic and legendary figures: Ambrosius Aurelianus and Myrddin Wyllt.

Myrddin's story was about a Welsh chief bard who went insane after witnessing a bloody battle, and received the gift of prophecy while wandering alone in the woods. "In Welsh mythology, the warrior Myrddin (who becomes the magician Merlin in the Arthurian material) went mad from the horror of the battle of Arfderydd and retreated to Scotland, where he both healed himself and discovered his prophetic powers" (Monaghan 306).

Myrddin even gave prophecies about his own death which he describes as "triple death", a prophecy which was fulfilled when he was attacked by a group of furious villagers who impaled him and threw him from a cliff where he died from stabbing, falling, and drowning.

Merlin's traditional story in Celtic myth was about a boy born from a mortal woman and a demon father who, according to Welsh Mythology, was the reason behind Merlin's magical powers and ability to predict the future. "Merlin the Briton was held famous in the world. He was a king and prophet; to the proud people of the South Welsh he gave laws, and to the chieftains he prophesied the future" (Geoffrey1). According to the earlier 9th century book *Historia Britonum* by Nennius, a young prophet named Merlin lived during the time of king Vortigern, whose attempts to build a fortress on the top of a hill kept failing. "Vortigern, the mid-fifth century British king who... gave orders for the building of a fortress or tower.

Whatever the masons built during one day, however, disappeared into the earth by the next. For some reasons, the walls kept falling down as soon as they were built" (Goodrich 130). Eventually, one of the king's seers told him that he needed the blood of a fatherless son to nurture the bases of the fortress. The child was brought to the place and started giving

prophecies revealing that under the spot where Vortigern wanted his fortress, there was a lake in which two dragons were fighting; a red dragon who represented the British, and a white dragon, representing the Saxon invaders. The boy predicted the victory of the red dragon that will, like the British, push the invaders to the sea back to where they came from. Later on, the famous fortress would become the castle of Ambrosius Aurelianus. The story is considered as one of the oldest explanations given about the red dragon in the Welsh flag. The elements of prophecies and magic were present in the novel as the young protagonist had some special powers and could predict things moments before happening. “I wondered. I did sometimes seem a step ahead of other people in sensing what was about to happen” (Barron 20). Emrys, could in fact predict events and control things as well.

III.3.2. Dagda and Rhita Gawr:

Barron symbolized one of the ancient Celtic mythical battles, by describing a scene in the beginning of the story where Emrys witnessed a fight between two animals: a wild boar and a large stag “Out of the bushes behind the ancient oak bounded an immense stag... the stag lowered its great rack of antlers... the stag leaped at the boar. But the beast swerved aside just in time to dodge the thrust. As the boar careened and snarled ferociously, the stag leaped once again...” (Barron 11). The battle between the two animals was not a random event the author came up with in the story; it actually represented the ancient Celtic myth of Dagda and Rhita Gawr in which they both had the same fight while transforming to these two animals.

Branwen later mentions the story to her son: “In a famous battle with his supreme enemy, an evil spirit named Rhita Gawr, both of them took the forms of powerful beasts. Rhita Gawr became a huge boar, with terrible tusks and eyes the color of blood..And in that battle, Dagda became... A great stag... Bronze in color,...eyes as deep as the spaces between the stars” (35). In Celtic mythology, Dagda was the father figure to all druids, a god of strength, fertility, and magic, he was an “Irish god. This ancient Irish divinity was called „the good god“, because he

was good at everything... Dagda was an artisan and a diviner, a husbandman and a warrior and a wise king, all at once” (Monaghan 113). On the other hand, Rhita Gawr was a Welsh evil giant who lived on top of a mountain.

III.3.3. Emrys’s Mother: Branwen

The name of Branwen itself was an intertextual hint to those familiar with Celtic mythology. The real name of Emrys’s mother was in fact Elen, however she chose Branwen out of an ancient Celtic myth. “How like her to choose a name from legend. Yet it grieves me to hear that she chose such a tragic one” (Barron 147). The myth chosen by Elen was about Branwen the daughter of Llyr, for she believed she had the same tragic life as hers: “You remember it? Then you remember how Branwen came from another land to marry someone in Ireland. Her life began with boundless hope and beauty... And ended... with so much tragedy. Her last words were, Alas that I was ever born” (38). Just like Branwen in Celtic mythology, Elen was a beautiful maiden who married someone from a different land, and in this case, someone who was not even a human like her : “ She came here... because of her love for a man of Fincayran blood. A man from this world, not her own” (146). Branwen was a “Welsh heroine or goddess... the daughter of Llyr and sister of the great Hero Bran the Blessed. She was given in marriage to king Matholwch of Ireland, but when her half-brother Efnisien insulted the Irish people by mutilating their horses, Branwen was put to work as a scullery maid in punishment” (Monaghan 56). Both Branwen and Elen have faced a lot of obstacles and sorrow. Branwen’s marriage did not bring piece, same way Ellen’s relationship with Emrys father was considered a threat, Elen had to escape with her son for his life was threatened.

III.3.4. Rihannon: The Celtic Goddess

The name given to Emrys's friend Rhia was also inspired from an old Celtic myth, "Rhiannon is my full name, though I don't know why. The trees call me Rhia" (Barron 74). Celtic mythology described Rhianon as a horse goddess who was one with nature and was gifted with the ability to speak to living creatures, an ability Rhia seemed to have in Baron's story as well: "Of course! Just as I speak with the birds and beasts and rivers... naturally. Everything has its language, you know" (73). In Celtic mythology, Rihanon had a special relation with birds, she "possesses natural power. Her birds' songs can heal the wounded, wake the dead and lull the living to sleep of death (Ford 70-72) The name Rhianon "may have meant „Great Queen“ as she is repeatedly associated with horses" (Rees and Rees 45). In the original story she later takes a white mare form and is called "Mare-Goddess" or "Muse-Goddess" (Graves 385), while in *Merlin: The Lost Years*, she is only a friend who helps Emrys along the way with her abilities to communicate with trees and living creatures.

III.3.5. Celtic mythical Creatures in the Novel: Goblins, Dwarfs, and Giants

Some of the characters Barron used in his novel were creatures found in Celtic mythology like goblins that were portrayed in the story as evil creatures, "There are warrior goblins. They used to stay underground, in their caves. But now they run free, and they kill just for pleasure" (Barron 99). In his *Sutton Companion to British Folklore, Myths, and Legends* (2006), Marc Alexander described goblins in Celtic mythology as creatures that "have the most sinister reputation in the popular mind... Small, malevolent and extremely ugly in appearance" (Alexander 169). In the story of Emrys, goblins were the servants of an evil king who hired them as his warriors, "six huge warrior goblins stepped out of the mist... Their thin eyes glinted beneath pointed helmets, their muscular arms protruded from shoulder plates; their three-fingered hands grasped the hilts of broad swords. Beads of perspiration gathered on their gray-green skin" (Barron 118). Another creature Barron used was "A tiny little man... A dwarf" (Barron 108). In Celtic ancient tales, dwarfs were describes as short,

chubby, woods creatures who are often friendly Shim. “Dwarfs or little people found in most Celtic lands were immigrants from Scandinavia or Germany, where they were common folkloric characters resembling trolls. In Irish lore dwarfs were either fairies or simply short people... shapely small versions of normal-sized humans” (Monaghan 142). Emrys’s friend was a friendly gentle dwarf who later transformed, into a giant, another Celtic mythical creature.

Giants were in fact an important symbol of the Celtic heritage, the famous Stonehenge in Wales, was thought to be built by giants who were under the control of Merlin the wizard. “Giants” Dance British mythological site. This name is given to Stonehenge in the geographical commentary of Geoffrey of Monmouth in 1136 C.E. According to many legends, Stone Circles were formed when witches or other supernatural creatures danced on a Christian holiday” (Monaghan 213). Barron used this relation in his recreation of Merlin’s story by making Shim a giant who served Emrys and fulfilled the prophecy of the giants dance. “Where in the darkness a castle doth spin, small will be large, ends will begin, only when giants make dance in the halls every barrier crumble and fall” (Barron 116). The prophecy written by Barron was referring to the famous Welsh cite of Stonehenge, as well as to the mythical Celtic creatures: giants.

III.4. The Collective Unconscious: Archetypes in the Novel:

The archetypes used by Barron in *Merlin: The Lost Years* appeared in the form of themes, character types, and the plot structure.

III.4.1. Archetypal themes in the novel:

According to Jung, “the fantasy was not invented as a sort of allegory. It was part dream, part spontaneous imagery” (Jung 198). This refers to how humans all over times and

places did share a common pattern of imagination and dreams, the same way they shared common patterns of myth. The themes treated in fantasy were, like the old myths, derived from the same source of collective universal unconscious, therefore, a heroic fantasy such as *Merlin; The Lost Years* was no exception. Some of the archetypal themes used in the novel were:

a) The Hero and His Quest:

The main theme in *Merlin: The Lost Years* was concerned with the hero and his quest. A very popular starting point in ancient Greek mythology, where the hero has to start an epic journey towards a mysterious place to fulfill his quest. In his book *Man and His Symbols*, Carl Jung clarified that “the myth of the hero is the most common and the best-known myth in the world. We find it in the classical mythology of Greece and Rome, in the Middle Ages, in the Far East, and among contemporary primitive tribes. It also appears in our Dreams” (Jung 110). Many ancient Greek heroes like Hercules, Odysseys, and Achilles had similar journeys that share the same starting point, archetypal characters, and themes. The hero at the beginning of the plot was always introduced as a character living in the shadows, until something initiates the long journey to another world of adventures. This pattern was found in fantasy as well, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s stone* for example, started with a normal orphan boy with no idea about who he was until he received a letter from Hogwarts; a school of witchcraft and wizardry. Bilbo, in *The Hobbit*, also had the same normal beginning where his days are all similar until he met Gandalf who invited him for an adventure. In the ancient Greek myth of Odysseys, the hero had a normal life in a Greek Island, a life which changed forever when he had to join the Trojan War.

In *Merlin: The Lost Years*, Emrys was introduced as a young boy who lost his memory and had to start a whole quest to find out who he was and where he came from: “My life will

be worth nothing if I stay here... If you cannot, or will not, tell me where I came from, then I must find out myself” (Barron 51). The way other characters in the novel, like Rhia, saw Emrys was very similar to the universal pattern of a hero; as the long waited hope and rescuer, “for you is the Drama’s only hope” (128). As common as it was in the collective unconscious and myths, the hero represents the only escape for the world or the society he lives in, he is the long waited savior of people, and the only hope they have.

b) The Search For The Father:

Searching for the father as an archetypal theme can be either literally, or figuratively, when the character lacks a father figure that provides protection and guidance. In Greek mythology, the myth of Telegonus was a good example of the hero’s search for his father:

Telegonus, in Greek mythology, especially the *Telagonia* of Eugammon of Cyrene, the son of the hero Odysseus by the sorceress Circe. Telegonus went to Ithaca in search of his father, whom he killed unwittingly... Telegonus returned with Odysseus’s widow, Penelope, and her son (his half-brother) Telemachus to Aeaëa, Circe’s island, to bury Odysseus. (“Telegonus | Greek Mythology” Britannica)

Like Telegonus, Emrys had to find his own father even though the contexts of the two stories were different. In the original myth of Merlin, the father was also an absent unknown figure which what Barron chose to keep in his book, yet, only in the first half of it. “You told me once that you knew my grandfather. Did you also know my Father? ...Was he, well, not human? Was he ... a demon?” (Barron 52). Emrys later ended up sailing to the mythical isle of Fincayra to find his father who turned out to be under the control of a vicious king.

The search for the father is an unconscious universal theme that reflects a lot about

the psychological struggles of the character. In most cases, the character who lacks, and seeks the father figure, is a lost, unstable person in need of guidance and safety. It is only natural to have this element in Emrys, for he was a lost, strange, bullied, and a very short tempered, unstable character.

c) **Magic and Prophecy**

Magic represents a crucial theme in fantasy as well as myth. It is also a phenomenon which existed in history and had various responses to it. From people burning witches and wizards, to them secretly reaching for the services of magic, Celtic mythology, had various representations to the theme of magic and fortune telling which was mostly linked to the druid tribes in Wales. The druids were familiar with such sensual and spiritual practices that were mainly inspired by nature and the four elements. These practices and ceremonies gave them power, wisdom, and the gift of prophecy which is why almost every pagan king had a druid advisor in the pre-roman era. Historically, “Druids were rather the philosophers and divines of the Gauls; and, as what we know of their opinions and practices is somewhat remarkable” (Macbain 45). In *Merlin: The Lost Years*, the druid practices and magic were regarded as the work of the devil: “When she followed it with a Druid chant, however, he scolded her and warned her against blasphemy” (Barron17). Being the greatest wizard in Celtic mythology, Merlin’s representation in a fantasy novel had to contain a strong magical theme which was shown in all the chapters of the novel. The young Emrys, “Who would have powers even greater than his own. Whose magic would spring from the very deepest sources. So deep that, if you learned to master them, you could change the course of the world forever” (Barron 36) was a character who processed magic inherited from his father.

III.4.2. Emrys and Joseph Campbell's Hero Cycle in The Novel:

The application of Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey to *Merlin: The Lost Years* showed a perfect fitting into the universal imagination. When it comes to fantasy, the use of archetypal characters and planning is inevitable for "All the works of man have their origin in creative fantasy. What right have we then to depreciate imagination?" (Jung 67). The journey of Emrys as a hero was the same hero's journey introduced by Campbell:

a) The Call for Adventure:

Emrys's longing for discovering his origins made him chose to sail away following nothing but his instinct. His mother did not stand in his way, even though she wanted him to stay. "All things must fly when they are able" (Barron 51), was the statement with which Emrys announced his departure to Branwen. The adventure really started when Emrys reached the land of Fincayra, and met his allies and friends, Shim and Riha. The protagonist's friends were lonely, misunderstood, and needed him as much he needed them. "This is an example of one of the ways in which the adventure can begin. A blunder- apparently the merest chance- reveals an unsuspected world, and the individual is drawn into a relationship with forces that are not rightly understood" (Campbell 46). Each one of the allies in the novel had their own struggles and contribution to the story.

b) Challenges and Temptations:

During his journey, Emrys faced a lot of challenges, starting from his temporary loss of sight, the storm he had to power through in the midst of waves, to being chased by the goblins, and almost getting eaten by a giant spider. This stage also included meeting what Campbell described as "mentor" or "guide". The archetypal figure providing guidance is almost described the same way everywhere; an older, and a wiser man. "For those who have

not refused the call, the first encounter of the hero-journey is with a protective figure (often a little old crone or old man) who provides the adventurer with amulets against the dragon forces he is about to pass” (Campbell 63). In this story, the mentor was given the name Cairpré, an old man who had “tangled brows, streaked with gray, sprouted like brambles above his eyes. He wore a flowing white tunic, with a high collar that nearly touched his chin” (Barron 142). According to Campbell, “The hero is covertly aided by the advice, amulets, and secret agents of the supernatural helper whom he met before his entrance into this region. Or it may be that he here discovers for the first time that there is a benign power every-where supporting him in his superhuman passage” (Campbell 89). In the novel, Cairpré was the mentor figure who was much older than Emrys, possessed knowledge, experience, and wisdom.

c) The Point of Revelation:

The revelation point is where events reach their peak, and the hero finds himself challenged by his surroundings. It was described by Campbell as the point of death and rebirth which can be either a literal expression or figurative. The peak in *Merlin: The Lost Years* was when he and his friends had to stand face to face with the goblins and Rhita Gawr’s men. Emrys had also to stand against his own father who joined the enemy, which was a big test to him. The death in this point was not the death of the hero, but a figurative death of his poor judgment, ego, and old beliefs, “one may pass from the infantile illusions of "good" and "evil" to an experience of the majesty of cosmic law, purged of hope and fear, and at peace in the understanding of the revelation of being” (Campbell 126). The revelation in this novel was Emrys’s understanding of his father’s situation that led him to join the powers of evil, and the way the young protagonist switched from hatred to forgiveness when he attempted to save him. “Let us imprison him, not kill him... he is also my father” (Barron 215). Emrys did not let any harm to get to his father despite his terrible deeds, which showed an emotional growth

and an ability to control his feelings.

d) Transformation and atonement:

Emrys changed in ways that he became more aware of his powers and able to control them better, he got to save his father despite his anger and disappointment in him. According to Joseph Campbell, “atonement requires an abandonment of the attachment to ego itself” (Campbell 120). The change and transformation happened when Emrys abandoned his revenge and chose to get over his ego to forgive and to offer a second chance.

e) The Return Home:

After the long journey everyone went through, there was a point where they all had to head home. Emrys was relieved to find home in people that he got to know along the way “You may not have found your true home. But I think you have found a few friends” (Barron 218). Since Baron’s work was only the first part of a 12 books saga, the adventures were of course destined to be continued. According to Campbell, “when the hero-quest has been accomplished... the adventurer still must return with his life-transmuting trophy. The full round... requires that the hero shall now begin the labor of bringing the runes of wisdom” (Campbell 179). Each one of the adventures Emrys gone through (or will be going through in the next books), provide wisdom and power which he will be offering people in the future.

Conclusion:

The historical investigation and mythological approach to analysing T.A. Baron’s *Merlin: The Lost Years* (1996) proved that Baron’s work was indeed, a mythological revival that included medieval Welsh history and both Greek and Celtic mythologies. The historical

and mythical elements presented in the novel were manifested in two different ways: The direct, conscious use of history and myth through intertextuality and histo-myth inspired characters, places, and patterns, and also, the indirect, universal unconscious use of myth through archetypes and plot structure.

General Conclusion:

It appears that both myths and history have always contributed in the creation of fantasy literature through inspiring writers and providing their works with archetypes, settings, and even character names and events. The human collective unconscious was proven to be the source which initiates the creation of some imaginative patterns, as well as the bowl which preserves these images and passes them through generations from different times and places. The preserved patterns and archetypes continued to develop and to appear and reappear in humans creative arts and writings. The studies of archetypes and mythological criticism were all based on historical and psychological grounds, for the archetype is, after all, a result of ancient societies myths, religions, lifestyles, and the psyche inherited from them.

The analysis of T.A. Barron's *Merlin: The Lost Years*, a fantasy novel which was originally published in 1996, showed that the work contains a real part of the medieval Welsh history. Barron referred to some major changes that happened to the Welsh society during the post-Roman era. The historical, cultural, and religious scene was depicted in the novel through highlighting the experiences of some major and minor characters. Things like the Roman roads, markets, churches, and even social classism and way of thinking, became the base of a society which Barron has put as starting point to his novel.

Writing about Medieval Wales was not really a matter of choice to Barron, for the main character in his work actually belonged there. Merlin's mythical and even historical origins were all from the same place and same era; medieval Wales. Merlin, or Emrys, was inspired from the medieval historian Geoffrey of Monmouth's description of the wizard who accompanied the great king Arthur, a wizard with both historical and mythical roots. In his 12th century *The Prophecies of Merlin*, *History of Kings of Britain*, and *The Life of Merlin*, Geoffrey shed the light on a major figure which became a universal archetype to all magic-

related modern fantasies. The use of intertextuality in the text has helped Barron to make links between history, myths, and his own imagined events which were, after all, inspired from ancient Celtic and Greek mythology.

The revival of Greek and Celtic myths in the novel was accomplished in both conscious and unconscious ways. Barron intended to recreate the Celtic myth of Merlin and to use mythical creatures as well. He also intended to refer to Greek mythology every once in a while in his book. However, there was a significant amount of archetypes derived from the collective unconscious which links old myths to the human subconscious, archetypes that were used in fantasy and heroic fictions since the beginning of time. Some universal themes followed in the novel were related to the image of the hero himself, being the long waited one, and the one who is predestined to be great. The search for the father was also a universal theme in many myths and fantasy works where the protagonist is often an orphan or someone who lacks a father figure, a theme which helps in reinforcing the journey of self-growth the hero is supposed to go through. Another collective subconscious pattern in the novel was present in the plot structure itself, a structure which followed the exact plan Joseph Campbell pointed out in his hero cycle. Joseph's cycle depicted the universal plot of ancient heroic myths and modern fantasies, a structure which starts with a call for adventure and ends with the hero achieving growth, wisdom, and having to return home eventually. The cycle presented archetypal characters that were also crucial in ancient myths and modern fantasies, characters like the mentor or guide figure, allies, and friends.

In conclusion, history, myths, and fantasy literature are proven to be connected through what Jung calls "universal archetypes" and "collective unconscious". The human shared experience and psyche results in common imaginative patterns that are inspired from real historical experiences and mythical writings. The universal pattern of the hero cycle introduced by Campbell reinforces the idea of a one single ground which human fantasy is

based upon. The connection between myths, history, and fantasy, inspired writers to recreate myths and history through fantasy novels, using literary devices such as archetypes and intertextuality to form a complex plot and setting that has a little bit of both documented facts, and imagined myths and fantasy.

Appendices

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ملخص:

يشارك الأدب الخيالي في الكثير من الأنماط والخصائص المتشابهة مع الأساطير القديمة ، وتُعرف هذه الأنماط باسم "النماذج الأصلية". تحليل النماذج الأصلية في الأدب هو موضوع نظرية أدبية حديثة تسمى "النقد الأسطوري" ، وهي نظرية لها جذور تتعلق بالتاريخ والأساطير وحتى علم النفس. تركز هذه النظرية على مفهوم "اللاوعي الجماعي" الذي ظهر كتفسير نفسي للخيال الموحد للإنسان الذي أدى إلى إعادة إنشاء الأساطير القديمة. على الرغم من أن كل من الخيال والأساطير يشتركان في الجانب اللاواعي، إلا أن بعض المؤلفين قاموا بعمل جيد في الجمع بين هذين العنصرين مع التاريخ القديم والحقائق الموثقة. تأريخ الأسطورة في رواية ت. أ. بارون "مرلين: السنوات الضائعة" (1996) ، هو موضوع هذا البحث، إضافة إلى إعادة الصياغة الواعية واللاواعية للأساطير من خلال أنماط وموضوعات وشخصيات هذه الرواية. عنوان رواية بارون يوحي بالفعل إلى أنه يحتوي على إحياءات عن الأسطورة الكلتية القديمة لمرلين ، ومع ذلك ، فهو ليس الشيء الوحيد الموجود في الرواية. استخدم بارون التناص والنماذج الأصلية للإشارة إلى الأساطير اليونانية / الكلتية ، وكذلك إلى تاريخ وايلز في العصور الوسطى. تهدف هذه الأطروحة إلى اكتشاف العلاقة بين التاريخ والأسطورة والأدب الخيالي ، من خلال تحليل "مرلين: السنوات الضائعة" (1996). سيقوم هذا التحليل بفرز العناصر ذات الصلة بتاريخ وايلز في العصور الوسطى والأساطير اليونانية و الكلتية ، وسيطرق أيضًا إلى الطريقة التي يتجلى بها اللاوعي الجماعي في إعادة إنشاء الأنماط الأسطورية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: النماذج الأصلية ، اللاوعي الجماعي ، الخيال ، التأريخ ، التاريخ ، الأساطير ، الأساطير.

Résumé:

La littérature fantastique partage de nombreux modèles et caractéristiques similaires avec les mythes anciens, ces modèles sont connus sous le nom d "archétypes". L'analyse des archétypes en littérature fait l'objet d'une théorie littéraire moderne appelée "critique mythologique", une théorie qui a des racines liées à l'histoire, à la mythologie et même à la psychologie. Cette théorie se concentre sur le concept de "l'inconscient collectif" qui est apparu comme une explication psychologique à l'imagination universelle des humains qui les a amenés à recréer d'anciens symboles et thèmes mythiques. Bien que la fantaisie et les mythes partagent le même aspect d'irréalité, certains auteurs ont fait un excellent travail en combinant ces deux éléments avec l'histoire ancienne et des faits documentés. L'historification du mythe chez T.A. Barron *Merlin: Les Années Perdues*(1996) est ce que cette recherche se consacrera à explorer, ainsi que la recréation consciente et inconsciente des mythes à travers les modèles, les thèmes et les personnages de ce roman. D'après le titre du livre de Barron, le lecteur s'attend déjà à voir une grande partie de l'ancien mythe celtique de Merlin, cependant, ce n'est pas la seule chose qu'il finit par y trouver. Barron utilise l'intertextualité et les archétypes pour faire référence à la mythologie grecque/celtique, ainsi qu'à l'histoire médiévale Galloise. Cette thèse vise donc à découvrir la relation entre l'histoire, le mythe et la littérature fantastique, à travers l'analyse de *Merlin: Les Années Perdues* (1996). Cette analyse traitera les éléments liés à l'histoire médiévale Galloise, à la mythologie celtique et grecque, et examinera également la manière dont l'inconscient collectif se manifestera dans la recréation des modèles mythologiques.

Mots clés: Archétypes, inconscient collectif, Fantastique, historification, histoire, mythification, mythologie

