CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the discussion about the background of research, statement of problems, research purposes, research significances, previous study, and clarification of key terms.

1.1. Background of Research

Popular culture has fragmented into so many different forms, genres, audiences, tones, styles, and goals that it can no longer be effectively discussed as a single entity. A lot of so-called "popular culture" is produced for relatively small audiences who are familiar with and more or less passionately interested in the genres involved, even though some of it is produced in large quantities (and has some of the mass culture traits of the middle of the twentieth century that cultural critics of the era complained about). And a sizable portion of popular culture, like hip hop, does maintain connections to local communities. However, it is also constantly developing new connections across industries and strategies for marketing one set of items in relation to another. On the other hand, Romanticism is a different literature period. Romanticism, usually referred to as the Romantic movement or the Romantic age, was a literary, artistic, musical, and intellectual movement that began in Europe at the end of the 18th century and reached its height in most places between the years of 1800 and 1850. Romanticism was distinguished by its emphasis on emotion and individualism, secret writing, idealization of nature, mistrust of science, resistance to industrialisation, and exaltation of the past, with a strong preference for the medieval over the classical.

Popular literature and Romanticism are deeply intertwined, with many of the key tenets of Romanticism influencing the development of popular literature in the 19th century and beyond. One of the key aspects of Romanticism is the emphasis on emotion and individualism, which is reflected in popular literature through the development of complex and relatable characters. Popular authors such as Charles Dickens, Jane Austen, and the Bronte sisters created characters who were flawed and conflicted, but ultimately sympathetic and relatable to readers. These characters often struggled with societal norms and expectations, reflecting the Romantic emphasis on individualism and the human experience.

Another important aspect of Romanticism is the use of nature as a source of inspiration and spirituality. In popular literature, this is often reflected through the use of natural imagery

and settings. The Bronte sisters' moors, for example, became iconic symbols of the Romantic movement, evoking a sense of wildness and freedom that was often lacking in urban society. Similarly, the use of pastoral settings in the works of Jane Austen and Thomas Hardy reflected a Romantic interest in the beauty and simplicity of rural life.

Finally, the Romantic emphasis on imagination and the supernatural is reflected in popular literature through the development of genres such as fantasy and science fiction. These genres allow writers to explore new and imaginative worlds, pushing the boundaries of what is possible and tapping into the Romantic interest in the mysterious and unknown. Popular works such as J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings" and H.G. Wells' "The Time Machine" continue to capture the imagination of readers today, reflecting the ongoing influence of Romanticism on popular literature.

This study uses one particular board game or tabletop game of *"Dungeons and Dragons: 5th Edition"*. The fantasy tabletop role-playing game *Dungeons & Dragons*, also known as *D&D* or *DnD*, was created by Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson. Tactical Studies Rules, Inc. released the first edition of it in 1974. (TSR). Since 1997, *Wizards of the Coast*, currently a division of Hasbro, has been the publisher. The game's rules were initially based on a version of the 1971 game *Chainmail*, which was inspired by miniature wargames. The *D&D magazine* not only established the modern role-playing game genre and industry, but it also had a significant impact on videogames, particularly the role-playing video game genre. The writer chooses this particular series because it is the Gameplay and the mechanics in the *"Dungeons and Dragons: 5th Edition"* is the most accurate representations of how popular Romantic culture literature take place in it's unique forms.

With tie-ins, branding across forms has taken on more significance. Comics, games, books, movies, music CDs, music videos, and TV shows can all be based on the same characters and "brand." From an industrial standpoint, this is one of the factors causing consolidation as major media conglomerates search for 'synergies' in a venture that hasn't proven to be as lucrative as once anticipated. But the point is that segmentation and consolidation are contemporaneous dynamics that need not be viewed as being in opposition to one another.

Popular culture is simply a collection of ideas, standards, behaviors, objects, behaviors, goods, and practices that are prevalent in society at any given time and place. It can be used to describe, to mention a few things, things like art, literature, fashion, dance, film, television, periodicals, and ways of living. Pop culture involves a wide range of disciplines. Movies, music, television, video games, sports, entertainment news, fashion, and other technologies are the most widely used examples of popular culture. English literature that has gained widespread

and enduring popularity can be identified by its sales, frequent copying, appropriation of other cultural forms, and overall commercial success. Popularity is designed to be a synonym for success rather than an opposite of seriousness.

Many people play games through various media provided by game console manufacturers, such as *Playstation, Nintendo, Xbox*, etc. Another form of genre that often we found in our daily life is some tabletop games, such as *Monopoly, Snake and Ladders*, and *Dungeons & Dragons*. Game genres have begun to vary, ranging from those that can be played by children to adults, but not everyone thinks that through games we can learn a lot of new things such as history, how to count, solve problems, and learning a foreign language. The majority of games in the world use English and that makes a person's English language skills increase by frequently viewing English texts and conversations.

According to historians, board games date back thousands of years, predating even the written word and the civilisation of ancient Egypt. But even though the topics have varied, one thing hasn't altered: board games have always served to both reflect and better grasp the societal ideals of the time.

Besides, through the game, one can find out the Literary aspects even the genres itself presents, that appears from the character's game. Although historians are unable to trace the exact beginnings of board games, it is thought that they first appeared around 3000 B.C. According to journalist Tristan Donovan, early participants utilized them for spiritual reasons.

The author of *It's All a Game: The History of Board Games from Monopoly to Settlers of Catan,* Tristan Donovan, claims that these games "became a religious rite and a method to communicate with the dead." "Even though it was only random dice throws, it signified a voyage into the afterlife, and people thought it would be a way of understanding their own fate." Even in the 19th century, board games continued to have moral and religious overtones.

Through the 1980s and into the late 1970s, *Dungeons and Dragons* gained popularity. Since the end of the 1970s, there have been several video games, movies, and cultural allusions based on *Dungeons and Dragons* or *Dungeons and Dragons*-inspired ideas, characters, or experiences. Players of *Dungeons and Dragons* are (sometimes disparagingly) depicted as the pinnacle of geekdom, and they have served as the inspiration for a lot of satirical humor and geek culture. "On the online streaming service Twitch in 2017, 9 million people watched others play *Dungeons and Dragons*, immersing themselves in the world of the game without ever having to pick up a die or cast a spell." These *Dungeons and Dragons* television programs have become increasingly well-liked since the publication of the fifth edition.

One of the most watched *Dungeons and Dragons* programs is *Critical Role*, averages 21,978 viewers each week. *Critical Role* has a cast of professional voice actors playing *Dungeons & Dragons*. Midway through the cast's first campaign, the show began streaming in March 2015. After 115 episodes, campaign one came to a conclusion in October 2017, while campaign two, which debuted in January 2018, ran for 141 episodes until coming to a finish in June 2021. Several one-shots were broadcast during the lull in the two campaigns. The limited series Exandria Unlimited ran from June 2021 to August 2021 after campaign two was finished. On October 21, 2021, the third campaign made its debut.

(Picture 1.1 Critical Role cast)

Weekly comedy and adventure role-playing podcast *The Adventure Zone* is largely based on the *Dungeons & Dragons* game series and other role-playing games. The Maximum Fun network distributes the program, which is presented by Clint McElroy, his sons Justin, Travis, and Griffin, and their father. The family is seen in the regular episodes of the podcast working out puzzles, defeating foes, and leveling up their characters in a series of comedic and cinematic encounters. There are currently about 640,000 listeners of *The Adventure Zone*.
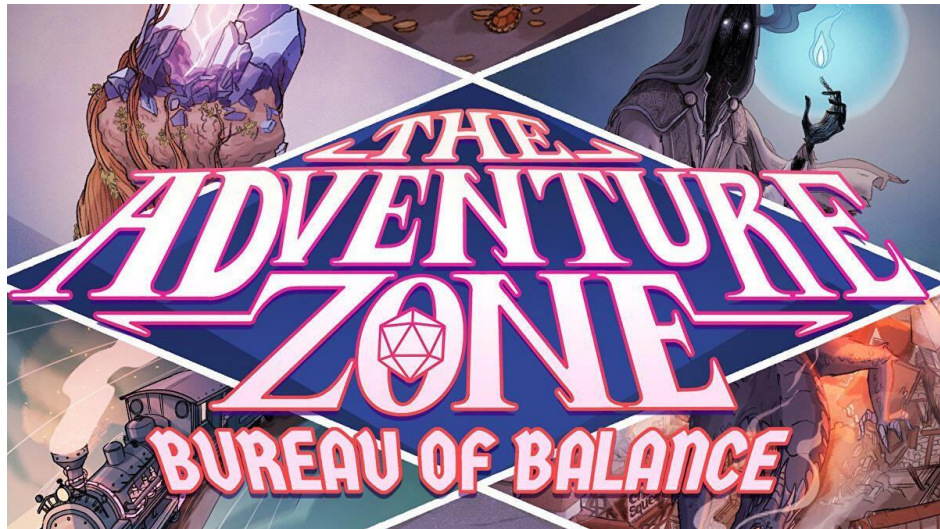
(Picture 1.2 The Adventure Zone Logo)

Dimension 20, a *CollegeHumor* tabletop role-playing game show. *Dungeons & Dragons: 5th Edition* is used in the majority of the games. Brennan Lee Mulligan serves as the show's regular Dungeon Master. The show's seasons rotate between main campaigns with a recurring cast that run seventeen episodes or more and secondary adventures with varying guests that only last ten episodes or less. Although simply a secondary source of their content, *Dimension 20* has approximately 554,000 subscribers and an average view count of 111,333 on YouTube.

(Picture 1.3 Dimension 20 cast)

Games have traditionally been used as literary allegories for life. Games can represent victory and defeat, life and death, secrecy and folly, strategy and chance. The numerous lessons a character—and, by extension, the reader—can learn from the various parts of these games

help the average reader understand what could otherwise be a profound and challenging story. From jousting in medieval times to *Monopoly* in modern times, a game can aid the reader in understanding the era. Games can reflect a person's social status, whether it be affluent, affluent people playing high stakes poker, intelligent hermits playing chess, or innocent kids playing hopscotch. A reader can follow any story with a greater understanding of the author's message because to games' symbolic character. Many authors, including Haruki Murakami, are well known for their dramatic use of symbolism.

Damrosch (1985) states that Romanticism, usually referred to as the Romantic movement or the Romantic age, was a literary, artistic, musical, and intellectual movement that began in Europe at the end of the 18th century and reached its height in most places between the years of 1800 and 1850. Romanticism was distinguished by its emphasis on emotion and individualism, secret writing, idealization of nature, mistrust of science, resistance to industrialisation, and exaltation of the past, with a strong preference for the medieval over the classical. Romanticism was an attitude or philosophical orientation that pervaded numerous works of Western civilisation from the late 18th to the mid-19th century, including literature, painting, music, architecture, criticism, and historiography. The principles of order, tranquility, harmony, balance, idealization, and rationalism that characterized Classicism in general and late 18th-century Neoclassicism in particular might be understood as being rejected by Romanticism. In some ways, it was also a reaction against the Enlightenment, as well as against the overall rationality and physical materialism of the 18th century. The individual, the subjective, the irrational, the creative, the spontaneous, the emotional, the visionary, and the transcendental were all highlighted by romanticism.

In accordance with the theory of Romanticism emphasized the individual, the subjective, the irrational, the spontaneous, the emotional, the visionary, and the transcendental, including in *Dungeons & Dragons: 5th Edition,* Novotny (1971) states that the essential significance of the artist's right to express their emotions freely can be used to approach the nature of Romanticism. The German painter Caspar David Friedrich's statement that "the artist's feeling is his rule" best captures the significance that the Romantics put on emotion. William Wordsworth (1798) believed that poetry should start with "the spontaneous overflow of tremendous sentiments," which the poet then "recollect[s] in serenity," generating a fresh but related emotion that the poet can then transform into beauty. Therefore in this study, writer want to corelate the gameplay of *"Dungeons and Dragons: 5th Edition"* with Romanticism as the main focus of the study.

The object presented in *Dungeons and Dragons: 5ᵗʰ Edition* can be grouped into 3 aspects (narration, dialogue, character) and has many references and corelations into the concept stated above about romanticism. Each game session may have many kinds of character and personalities that we can analyse the Romanticism aspects of individual, the subjective, the irrational, the creative, the spontaneous, the emotional, the visionary, and the transcendental. Based on above reasons, the writer will analyse the portraits of Romanticism literature in this form of popular culture that appears on *Dungeons and Dragons: 5ᵗʰ Edition*. In addition, the writer will also try to contextualize the script that writer have prepared for the situation support of things that happened on the game.

1.2 Statement of Problem

The basic question for this research is to know what kind of Romanticism aspects that are contained or be portrayed in the game *Dungeons and Dragons: 5ᵗʰ edition,* in order to take the focus on this research clearly, the writer records several questions in the form of problem formulations with the aim of being answered in the research. The statement of the problem for analyzed are as follow:

1. What kinds of Romanticism concept that are found in the *Dungeons and Dragons*?
2. How does two different periods of literature can be portrayed in *Dungeons and Dragons* and How does the context of situation support the gameplay but still be a good resemblance of Romanticism in Popular culture era in the *Dungeons and Dragons?*

1.3 Research Purpose

The purpose of this research is as follows:

a. To identify the kinds of Romanticism aspects in the *Dungeons and Dragons: 5ᵗʰ Edition* and it's significance to both the story in the game and a popular literature.
b. To contextualize the events that happened in the game and corelate it with the concepts.

1.4 Research Significance

This work has both theoretical and practical value. The advantage of this research in the field of literary studies that emphasizes romanticism and also offers insight into works in the form of games that can be used as teaching resources in classroom learning is its theoretical value. The second practical benefit of this research is that it can be used as an alternative source or research object in a topic that explores examples of romanticism in contemporary popular

literature. By doing so, the study also makes the point that the game may be used and enjoyed as a teaching and literary study medium in which all literature genres can be included simultaneously.

The other significance of this research are stated as follows:

a. Can provide a clearer picture of the existance and the significance of Romanticism to the game session of *Dungeons and Dragons: 5th Edition.*

b. Can be considered as a process of learning and also delving deeper into Romantic period literature via the gameplay of *Dungeons and Dragons: 5th Edition*.

1.5 Definition Keyterm

To clarify the key terms used in this thesis, some definitions are disclosed as follows:

a. Romanticism

Attitude or philosophical orientation that pervaded numerous works of Western civilisation from the late 18th to the mid-19th century, including literature, painting, music, architecture, criticism, and historiography.

b. Popular Literature

A collection of ideas, standards, behaviors, objects, behaviors, goods, and practices that are prevalent in society at any given time and place. It can be used to describe, to mention a few things, things like art, literature, fashion, dance, film, television, periodicals, and ways of living. Pop culture involves a wide range of disciplines. Movies, music, television, video games, sports, entertainment news, fashion, and other technologies are the most widely used examples of popular culture.