

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION & SUGGESTION

#### 4.2. Conclusion

*Between Two Fires* by Christopher Buehlman tells the story of Thomas, a knight turned to brigand who is searching for a way to get his honor back and reach absolution or forgiveness in the eyes of God. Thomas, together with a mysterious girl named Delphine and a troubled priest named Matthieu, roamed the desolated lands of middle-age France ravaged by the Black Death, trying to finish the girl's mission in Avignon. Along the way, they encountered many terrible devils and monsters trying to stop them from reaching Avignon. This journey is also Thomas' way to reach absolution and get his honor back. The author finds Thomas' journey to reach absolution interesting because by using Joseph Campbell's hero's journey/monomyth, the significance of Thomas' journey can be understood. Joseph Campbell's hero's journey has 3 phases and 17 stages in total and, although Thomas did not experience some of the stages, his journey to reach absolution still falls below Joseph Campbell's hero's journey/monomyth theory nonetheless.

The author discusses the kind of journey Thomas as a brigand/criminal has to go through in order to reach absolution. Is it a kind of journey that will put his

life in danger or not? Using Joseph Campbell's hero's journey theory, the author analyzes Thomas' hero's journey as a brigand trying to find absolution and its significance. During the journey, Thomas, Delphine, and Priest Matthieu face a lot of hardships. But, for Thomas importantly he also faces a battle within himself. A battle to end the cycle of hate that is driven by his need for revenge on the comte who had stolen everything from him. The author also analyzes the importance of the Biblical allusions contained within the novel. By relating to James George Frazer's theory about the connection between myths and religion, the readers are able to understand better about human beings' struggle to reach absolution as presented by Thomas in the novel.

One of the findings of this topic are Thomas does not experience some of the hero's journey stages. Such as the belly of the whale stage during the Departure phase, Thomas did not experience this stage in the novel because the author of the novel did not clearly put a line to differentiate the crossing of the first threshold stage and the belly of the whale stage. Both of these stages have similar goals which is to show the hero's resolve to take on the journey, except on the belly of the whale stage, this resolve is shown even more clearly by the author which did not happen in this novel. During the Initiation phase, Thomas went through all of the stages except the woman as the temptress stage. Although the temptress in this stage is not necessarily a woman, along his journey, Thomas did not meet any woman, man, wealth, etc. that could have strayed him from his true goal of reaching absolution. During the Return phase, Thomas experienced all of the stages except the refusal

to return and the magic flight stage. This is because Thomas did not refuse and never had any intention to not return to his old and peaceful life, because it can be understood that one of the reasons why he even took this journey is to reach absolution/redemption which will allow him to live his life better than he currently does. As for the magic flight stage, it is the stage where the hero must escape with the ultimate boon of the journey to the real world. But, since the ultimate boon in Thomas' journey is something very personal for him and cannot be taken away, which is absolution in the eyes of God, he did not experience this stage.

As for the importance of the Biblical allusions to giving a deeper understanding of the journey of human beings as presented by Thomas, it can be understood that the eight teachings of Jesus regarding forgiveness and redemption play a crucial part in this. These eight teachings of Jesus highlight the importance of forgiveness and redemption as a way for individuals to reach absolution as demonstrated by Thomas in the novel. Also, the role of the devils in the story plays an important role for Thomas and his companions along the journey, as they act as the enemies/obstacles for Thomas and his companions which also helps them develop as characters. This is quite similar to the devil's role in Christianity as they provide temptations to human beings. The Biblical allusions play a critical role in Thomas' journey for absolution. Thomas' journey and the Biblical references in it which emphasize Jesus' teachings and the role of the devils give a better understanding to the readers about his struggle to reach absolution or redemption and how universal his struggle was especially to the Christians.

## 5.2. Suggestion

The author realizes that there are other aspects of the novel that can be discussed. The author discussed the hero's journey aspect of Thomas' journey to reach absolution and get his honor back. Thomas' journey that turns him from a brigand into a friar sets a real example regarding the toughness of human resolve if they want to reach something. Other researchers can analyze this novel through other points of view or theories. Such as: historical—knowing that the story takes place in medieval France or during the Black Death, future researchers may utilize these settings for their research, socio-cultural—the influence of Christianity on the public's repercussions to the plague, and more. The hero's journey approach can even be used on another character such as Delphine as the girl blessed with divinity. The author hopes that this research will be useful and can give a deeper understanding of the hero's journey approach and mythology in this novel and in general.

