Course Rationale

This course offers pupils an opportunity to engage with the rich tradition of Western Mythology, particularly focusing on the monomyth idea developed by Joseph Campbell, which is sometimes also known as ‘The Hero’s Journey’.

The monomyth is a literary theory, and it is Campbell’s attempt to assemble the themes common to mythic stories across a variety of cultural traditions. While other scholars have developed, and even simplified, Campbell’s initial theory, the central pattern of separation, initiation and return remains.

A hero ventures forth, slays some great dragon or rescues a princess, before returning home and sharing gifts with his community. Does this sound familiar? Joseph Campbell would certainly expect it to; this is a really basic example of what a monomyth looks like.

A key term in our course will be ‘mythopoesis’, another word for mythmaking, as we will be examining the ways in which writers have adapted and appropriated traditional myths for modern retellings.

We will use the lens, provided by Campbell’s literary theory, to investigate these stories, while also analysing the theory itself. One particular problem we will look to address is the lack of women, or of structures related to women; as in the myth’s Campbell (and others) was focusing on, women weren’t heroes. In line with this, we will look at a selection of related theories in order to better understand the uses and limitations of Campbell’s approach to understanding myths, whilst also looking to more recent conceptions and understandings of the hero/heroine in order to address the above problem.

Pupils will be expected to complete a homework assignment after each tutorial and the final assessment will be a 2000 word university-style essay titled:

“How useful is Joseph Campbell’s Hero With A Thousand Faces as a tool for literary criticism?”

Leah Phillips

PhD Candidate, The University of Warwick
Contents

(Pages 5-15) Tutorial 1 – Literary Theory: An Introduction to Joseph Campbell’s Monomyth

- Objectives
- What is Literary Criticism?
  - Text: What is Literary Theory by Jonathan Culler
- The Hero’s Journey – Constructing the Monomyth
  - Hero’s Journey Chart
  - The Hero’s Journey Cartoon
- Notes
- Assignment

Extension (appendix) – Excerpt from Joseph Campbell’s *Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949)

(Pages 16-20) Tutorial 2 – Myth vs Folktales: Introducing Lord Raglan

- Objectives
- Assessing the Hero – reviewing last sessions assignment
- Looking More Closely at Myth and Mythopoeis (or mythmaking)
- Other Traditional Stories: Legends, Folktales, Fables and Fairytales
- Lord Raglan
  - The Hero of Tradition
- Activity
- Notes
- Assignment

Extension (appendix) – Illustration of Kurt Vonnegut’s ‘The Shape of Stories’

(Pages 21-23) Tutorial 3 – Genre and/or Character: Introducing Vladimir Propp

- Objectives
- Assessing the Monomyth – reviewing last session’s assignment
- Theory Re-Cap
  - Campbell, Raglan and Vonnegut
- Genre
  - What is genre and how does it effect usefulness of the monomyth?
- Character
  - What is character and how do different characters work in relation to the monomyth?
- Activity
- Vladimir Propp
  - *Dramatis Personae* and 31 Functions (Overview)
- Plenary
- Notes
- Assignment

Extension (appendix) – Chart of Propp’s Dramatis Personae and his 31 Functions
(Page 24-25) Tutorial 4 – Critical Reviews of the Monomyth

- Objectives
- Conformity to the Hero’s Journey?
  - The Anti-Hero?
  - The Female Hero?
  - Alternative Plots
- Extended Assignment Question

(Page 26) Tutorial 5 – Presentations and Feedback

- Objectives
- Presentations
- Assignment

(Pages 27) Glossary/Key Terms

- A glossary of key words and phrase that will be used throughout the course.

(Pages 29) Appendix

- Excerpt from Joseph Campbell’s Hero with a Thousand Faces
- The Shape of Stories by Kurt Vonnegut
- Tips for Writing a Literary Analysis
- Summary of Vladimir Propp’s Dramatis Personae and Narratemes
- The Heroine’s Journey (Adapted from Maureen Murdock)
Tutorial 1 – Literary Theory: An Introduction to Joseph Campbell’s Monomyth

Objectives

- To be able to define literary theory and to give examples
- To be able to list the stages of Joseph Campbell’s monomyth and to give examples

What is Literary Criticism?

*The following source is adapted from ‘Purdue Owl: Literary Theory and Schools of Criticism’.*

What does it mean to study literature? What are we doing when we perform literary criticism? Does performing literary criticism create literary theory?

- Literature literally means ‘things made of letters’, but it can be more than just books. Studying literature also means studying: films, poetry, graphic novels, art and even culture.
- The easiest way to visualize what literary theory is to imagine that the various ideas (or criticism) are lenses that are used to think and talk about literature. Each lens allows critics to focus on different issues within literature in sharper focus. The lens may focus on authorship, critical value, or reader’s responses to texts, for example.

Further examples:

- A critic working with Marxist theories might focus on the economic structures faced by different characters in a text
- A critic working with feminist theories might focus on how gender is represented in a text.
- A critic working with structuralist theories might focus on the form of text and how that form relates to other texts.

**Note** – You don’t have to use a single critical theory; in fact, most people use a couple (or more) when approaching a text.

‘Doing’ literary criticism isn’t only for your teachers or for university students. It’s about critically engaging with texts, questioning your reactions and considering how others have also responded. You can have a lot of training or very little and still ‘do’ literary criticism, perhaps, even creating a new literary theory along the way.

**Question** – From the above, do you feel that you are able to define literature, literary theory and literary criticism?

**Activity** – With a partner come up with three example of literature (be creative!) and using the excerpt from Jonathan Culler’s Literary Theory: A Short Introduction pick a literary theory to share with the group.

https://owl.english.purdue.edu/ow/ resource/722/1/
Chapter 1

What is theory?

In literary and cultural studies these days there is a lot of talk about theory – not theory of literature, mind you; just plain ‘theory’. To anyone outside the field, this usage must seem very odd. ‘Theory of what?’ you want to ask. It’s surprisingly hard to say. It is not the theory of anything in particular, nor a comprehensive theory of things in general. Sometimes theory seems less an account of anything than an activity – something you do or don’t do. You can be involved with theory; you can teach or study theory; you can hate theory or be afraid of it. None of this, though, helps much to understand what theory is.

‘Theory’, we are told, has radically changed the nature of literary studies, but people who say this do not mean literary theory, the systematic account of the nature of literature and of the methods for analysing it. When people complain that there is too much theory in literary studies these days, they don’t mean too much systematic reflection on the nature of literature or debate about the distinctive qualities of literary language, for example. Far from it. They have something else in view.

What they have in mind may be precisely that there is too much discussion of non-literary matters, too much debate about general questions whose relation to literature is scarcely evident, too much reading of difficult psychoanalytical, political, and philosophical texts.

Theory is a bunch of (mostly foreign) names: it means Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Luce Irigaray, Jacques Lacan, Judith Butler, Louis Althusser, Gayatri Spivak, for instance.

The term theory

So what is theory? Part of the problem lies in the term theory itself, which gestures in two directions. On the one hand, we speak of ‘the theory of relativity’, for example, an established set of propositions. On the other hand, there is the most ordinary use of the word theory.

‘Why did Laura and Michael split up?’

‘Well, my theory is that . . .’

What does theory mean here? First, theory signals ‘speculation’. But a theory is not the same as a guess. ‘My guess is that . . .’ would suggest that there is a right answer, which I don’t happen to know: ‘My guess is that Laura just got tired of Michael’s carping, but we’ll find out for sure when their friend Mary gets here.’ A theory, in contrast, is speculation that might not be affected by what Mary says, an explanation whose truth or falsity might be hard to demonstrate.

‘My theory is that . . .’ also claims to offer an explanation that is not obvious. We don’t expect the speaker to continue, ‘My theory is that it’s because Michael was having an affair with Samantha.’ That wouldn’t count as a theory. It hardly requires theoretical acumen to conclude that if Michael and Samantha were having an affair, that might have had some bearing on Laura’s attitude toward Michael. Interestingly, if the speaker were to say, ‘My theory is that Michael was having an affair with Samantha’, suddenly the existence of this affair becomes a matter of conjecture, no longer certain, and thus a possible theory, but generally, to count as a theory, not only must an explanation not be obvious; it should involve a certain complexity: ‘My theory is that Laura was always secretly in love with her father and that Michael could never succeed in becoming the right person.’ A theory must be more than a hypothesis; it can’t be obvious; it involves complex relations of a systematic kind among a number of factors; and it is not easily confirmed or disproved. If we bear these factors in mind, it becomes easier to understand what goes by the name of ‘theory’.

Theory as genre

Theory in literary studies is not an account of the nature of literature or methods for its study (though such matters are part of theory and will be treated here, primarily in Chapters 2, 5, and 6). It’s a body of thinking and writing whose limits are exceedingly hard to define. The philosopher Richard Rorty speaks of a new, mixed genre that began in the nineteenth century: ‘Beginning in the days of Goethe and Macaulay and Carlyle and Emerson, a new kind of writing has developed which is neither the evaluation of the relative merits of literary productions, nor intellectual history, nor moral philosophy, nor social prophecy, but all of these mingled together in a new genre.’ The most convenient designation of this miscellaneous genre is simply the nickname ‘theory’, which has come to designate works that succeed in challenging and reorienting thinking in fields other than those to which they apparently belong. This is the simplest explanation of what makes something count as theory. Works regarded as theory have effects beyond their original field.

This simple explanation is an unsatisfactory definition but it does seem to capture what has happened since the 1960s: writings from outside the field of literary studies have been taken up by people in literary studies because their analyses of language, or mind, or history, or culture, offer new and persuasive accounts of textual and cultural matters. Theory in this sense is not a set of methods for literary study but an unbounded group of writings about everything under the sun, from the most technical problems of academic philosophy to the changing ways in which people have talked about and thought about
Literary Theory: a very short introduction
by Jonathan Culler

Appendix:
Theoretical Schools and Movements

I have chosen to introduce theory by presenting issues and debates rather than ‘schools’, but readers have a right to expect an explanation of terms like structuralism and deconstruction that appear in discussions of criticism. I provide that here, in a brief description of modern theoretical movements.

Literary theory is not a disembodied set of ideas but a force in institutions. Theory exists in communities of readers and writers, as a discursive practice, inextricably entangled with educational and cultural institutions. Three theoretical modes whose impact, since the 1960s, has been greatest are the wide-ranging reflection on language, representation, and the categories of critical thought undertaken by deconstruction and psychoanalysis (sometimes in concert, sometimes in opposition); the analyses of the role of gender and sexuality in every aspect of literature and criticism by feminism and then gender studies and Queer theory; and the development of historically oriented cultural criticisms (new historicism, post-colonial theory) studying a wide range of discursive practices, involving many objects (the body, the family, race) not previously thought of as having a history.

There are several important theoretical movements prior to the 1960s.

Russian Formalism
The Russian Formalists of the early years of the twentieth century stressed that critics should concern themselves with the literariness of literature: the verbal strategies that make it literary, the foregrounding of language itself, and the ‘making strange’ of experience that they accomplish. Redirecting attention from authors to verbal ‘devices’, they claimed that ‘the device is the only hero of literature’. Instead of asking ‘what does the author say here?’ we should ask something like ‘what happens to the sonnet here?/or/what adventures befall the novel in this book by Dickens?’ Roman Jakobson, Boris Eichenbaum, and Victor Shklovsky are three key figures in this group which reoriented literary study towards questions of form and technique.

New Criticism
What is called the ‘New Criticism’ arose in the United States in the 1930s and 1940s (with related work in England by I. A. Richards and William Empson). It focused attention on the unity or integration of literary works. Opposed to the historical scholarship practised in universities, the New Criticism treated poems as aesthetic objects rather than historical documents and examined the interactions of their verbal features and the ensuing complications of meaning rather than the historical intentions and circumstances of their authors. For new critics (Cleanth Brooks, John Crowe Ransom, W. K. Wimsatt), the task of criticism was to elucidate individual works of art. Focusing on ambiguity, paradox, irony, and the effects of connotation and poetic imagery, the New Criticism sought to show the contribution of each element of poetic form to a unified structure.

The New Criticism left as enduring legacies techniques of close reading and the assumption that the text of any critical activity is whether it helps us to produce richer, more insightful interpretations of individual works. But beginning in the 1960s, a number of theoretical perspectives and discourses – phenomenology, linguistics, psychoanalysis, Marxism, structuralism, feminism, deconstruction – offered richer conceptual frameworks than did the New Criticism for reflecting on literature and other cultural products.

Phenomenology
Phenomenology emerges from the work of the early twentieth-century philosophers Edmund Husserl. It seeks to bypass the problem of the separation between subject and object, consciousness and the world, by focusing on the phenomenal reality of objects as they appear to consciousness. We can suspend questions about the ultimate reality or knowability of the world and describe the world as it is given to consciousness. Phenomenology underwrote criticism devoted to describing the ‘world’ of an author’s consciousness, as manifested in the entire range of his or her works (Georges Poulet, J. Hillis Miller). But more important has been ‘reader-response criticism’ (Stanley Fish, Wolfgang Iser). For the reader, the work is what is given to consciousness; one can argue that the work is not something objective, existing independently of any experience of it, but is the experience of the reader. Criticism can thus take the form of a description of the reader’s progressive movement through a text, analysing how readers produce meaning by making connections, filling in things left unsaid, anticipating and conjecturing and then having their expectations disappointed or confirmed.

Another reader-oriented version of phenomenology is called ‘aesthetics of reception’ (Hans Robert Jauss). A work is an answer to questions posed by a ‘horizon of expectations’. The interpretation of works should therefore, focus not on the experience of an individual reader but on the history of a work’s reception and its relation to the changing aesthetic norms and sets of expectations that allow it to be read in different eras.

Structuralism
Reader-oriented theory has something in common with structuralism, which also focuses on how meaning is produced. But structuralism
originated in opposition to phenomenology; instead of describing experience, the goal was to identify the underlying structures that make it possible. In place of the phenomenological description of consciousness, structuralism sought to analyse structures that operate unconsciously (structures of language, of the psyche, of society), because of its interest in how meaning is produced, structuralism often (as in Roland Barthes’s 5/2) treated the reader as the site of underlying codes that make meaning possible and as the agent of meaning.

Structuralism usually designates a group of primarily French thinkers who, in the 1950s and 1960s, influenced by Ferdinand de Saussure’s theory of language, applied concepts from structural linguistics to the study of social and cultural phenomena. Structuralism developed first in anthropology (Claude Lévi-Strauss), then in literary and cultural studies (Roman Jakobson, Roland Barthes, Gérard Genette), psychoanalysis (Jacques Lacan), intellectual history (Michel Foucault), and Marxist theory (Louis Althusser). Although these thinkers never formed a school as such, it was under the label ‘structuralism’ that their work was imported and read in England, the United States, and elsewhere in the late 1960s and 1970s.

In literary studies structuralism promotes a poetics interested in the conventions that make literary works possible; it seeks not to produce new interpretations of works but to understand how they can have the meanings and effects that they do. But it did not succeed in imposing this project—a systematic account of literary discourse—in Britain and America. Its main effect was to offer new ideas about literature and to make it one signifying practice among others. It thus opened the way to symptomatic readings of literary works and encouraged cultural studies to try to spell out the signifying procedures of different cultural practices.

It is not easy to distinguish structuralism from semiotics, the general science of signs, which traces its lineage to Saussure and the American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce. Semiotics, though, is an international movement that has sought to incorporate the scientific study of behaviour and communication, while mostly avoiding the philosophical speculation and cultural criticism that has marked structuralism in its French and related versions.

Post-Structuralism

Once structuralism came to be defined as a movement or school, theorists distanced themselves from it. It became clear that works by alleged structuralists did not fit into the idea of structuralism as an attempt to master and codify structures. Barthes, Lacan, and Foucault, for example, were identified as post-structuralists, who had gone beyond structuralism narrowly conceived. But many positions associated with post-structuralism are evident even in the early work of these thinkers when they were seen as structuralists. They had described ways in which theories get entangled in the phenomena they attempt to describe; how texts create meaning by violating any conventions that structural analysis locates. They recognized the impossibility of describing a complete or coherent signifying system, since systems are always changing. In fact, post-structuralism does not demonstrate the inadequacies or errors of structuralism so much as turn away from the project of working out what makes cultural phenomena intelligible and emphasize instead a critique of knowledge, totality, and the subject. It treats each of these as a problematical effect. The structures of the systems of signification do not exist independently of the subject, as objects of knowledge, but are structures for subjects, who are entangled with the forces that produce them.

Deconstruction

The term post-structuralism is used for a broad range of theoretical discourses in which there is a critique of notions of objective knowledge and of a subject able to know him or herself. Thus, contemporary feminisms, psychoanalytic theories, Marxism, and historicisms, all partake in post-structuralism. But post-structuralism also designates above all deconstruction and the work of Jacques Derrida, who first came to prominence in America with a critique of the structuralist notion of structure in the very collection of essays that brought structuralism to American attention (The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man, 1970).

Deconstruction is most simply defined as a critique of the hierarchical oppositions that have structured Western thought: inside/outside, mind/body, literal/metaphorical, speech/writing, presence/absence, nature/culture, form/meaning. To deconstruct an opposition is to show that it is not natural and inevitable but a construction, produced by discourses that rely on it, and to show that it is a construction in a work of deconstruction that seeks to dismantle it and re-inscribe it— that is, not destroy it but give it a different structure and functioning. But as a mode of reading, deconstruction is, in Barbara Johnson’s phrase, a ‘teasing out of warring forces of signification within a text’, an investigation of the tension between modes of signification, as between the performative and constitutive dimensions of language.

Feminist Theory

In so far as feminism undertakes to deconstruct the opposition male/ woman and the oppositions associated with it in the history of Western culture, it is a version of post-structuralism, but that is only one strand of feminism, which is less a unified school than a social and intellectual movement and a space of debate. On the one hand, feminist theorists champion the identity of women, demand rights for women, and promote women’s writings as representations of the experience of women. On the other hand, feminists undertake a theoretical critique of the heteronormative matrix that organizes identities and cultures in terms of the opposition between man and woman. Elaine Showalter distinguishes the feminist critique of male assumptions and procedures from ‘gynocriticism’, a feminist criticism concerned with women authors and the representation of women’s experience. Both of these modes have been opposed to what is sometimes called, in Britain
and America, ‘French feminism’, where ‘woman’ comes to stand for any radical force that subverts the concepts, assumptions, and structures of patriarchal discourse. Similarly, feminist theory includes both strands that reject psychoanalysis for its incontrovertibly sexist foundations and the brilliant rearticulation of psychoanalysis by such feminist scholars as Jacqueline Rose, Mary Jacobus, and Kaja Silverman, for whom it is only through psychoanalysis, with its understanding of the complications of internalizing norms, that one can hope to comprehend and reconceive the predicament of women. In its multiple projects, feminism has effected a substantial transformation of literary education in the United States and Britain, through its expansion of the literary canon and the introduction of a range of new issues.

**Psychoanalysis**

Psychoanalytic theory had an impact on literary studies both as a mode of interpretation and as a theory about language, identity, and the subject. On the one hand, along with Marxism it is the most powerful modern hermeneutic: an authoritative meta-language or technical vocabulary that can be applied to literary works, as to other situations, to understand what is ‘really going on’. This leads to a criticism alert to psychoanalytic themes and relations. But on the other hand, the greatest impact of psychoanalysis has come through the work of Jacques Lacan, a renegade French psychoanalyst who set up his own school outside the analytic establishment and led what he presented as a return to Freud. Lacan describes the subject as an effect of language and emphasizes the crucial role in analysis of what Freud called transference, in which the analyst becomes the subject of the analyst. The truth of the patient’s condition, in this account, emerges not from the analyst’s interpretation of the patient’s discourse but from the way the analyst and patient are caught up in reenacting a crucial scenario from the patient’s past. This reorientation makes psychoanalysis a post-structuralist discipline in which interpretation is a replaying of a text it does not master.

**Marxism**

In Britain, unlike the United States, post-structuralism arrived not through Derrida and then Lacan and Foucault but through the work of the Marxist theorist Louis Althusser. Read within the Marxist culture of the British left, Althusser led his readers to Lacanian theory and provoked a gradual transformation by which, as Tony Easthope puts it, ‘post-structuralism came to occupy much the same space as that of its host culture, Marxism’. For Marxism, texts belong to a superstructure determined by the economic base (the ‘real relations of production’). To interpret cultural products is to relate them back to the base. Althusser argued that the social formation is not a unified totality with the mode of production at its centre but a looser structure in which different levels or types of practice develop on different time-scales. Social and ideological superstructures have a ‘relative autonomy’. Drawing on a Lacanian account of the determination of consciousness by the unconscious for an explanation of how ideology functions to determine the subject, Althusser maps a Marxist account of the determination of the individual by the social onto psychoanalysis. The subject is an effect constituted in the processes of the unconscious, of discourse, and of the relatively autonomous practices that organize society.

This conjunction is the basis of much theoretical debate in Britain, in political theory as well as literary and cultural studies. Crucial investigations of relations between culture and production took place in the 1970s in the film studies magazine Screen, which, deploying Althusser and Lacan, sought to understand how the subject is positioned or constructed by the structures of cinematic representation.

**New Historicism/Cultural Materialism**

The 1980s and 1990s in Britain and the United States have been marked by the emergence of vigorous, theoretically engaged historical criticism. On the one hand, there is British cultural materialism, defined by Raymond Williams as ‘the analysis of all forms of signification, including quite centrally writing, within the actual means and conditions of their production’. Renaissance specialists influenced by Foucault (Catherine Belavie, Jonathan Dollimore, Alan Sinfield, and Peter Stallybrass) have been particularly concerned with the historical constitution of the subject and with the contestatory role of literature in the Renaissance. In the United States, new historicism, which is less inclined to posit a hierarchy of cause and effect as it traces connections among texts, discourses, power, and the constitution of subjectivity, has also been centred on the Renaissance. Stephen Greenblatt, Louis Montrose, and others focus on how Renaissance literary texts are situated amid the discursive practices and the institutions of the period, treating literature not as a reflection or product of a social reality but as one of several sometimes antagonistic practices. A key question for the new historicists has been the dialectic of ‘subversion and containment’: how far do Renaissance texts offer a genuinely radical critique of the religious and political ideologies of their day and how far is the discursive practice of literature, in its apparent subversiveness, a way of containing subversive energies?

**Post-Colonial Theory**

A related set of theoretical questions emerge in post-colonial theory: the attempt to understand the problems posed by the European colonization and its aftermath. In this legacy, post-colonial institutions and experiences, from the idea of the independent nation to the idea of culture itself, are entangled with the discursive practices of the West. Since the 1980s a growing corpus of writings has debated questions about the relation between the hegemony of Western discourses and the possibilities of resistance, and about the formation of colonial and post-colonial subjects: hybrid subjects, emerging from the superimposition of conflicting languages and cultures. Edward Said’s Orientalism (1978), which examined the construction of the oriental ‘other’ by European discourses of knowledge, helped to establish the field. Since then post-colonial theory and writing has become an
attempt to intervene in the construction of culture and knowledge, and, for intellectuals who come from post-colonial societies, to write their way back into a history others have written.

**Minority Discourse**

One political change that has been achieved within academic institutions in the United States has been the growth of study of literatures of ethnic minorities. The main effort has been to revive and promote the study of black, Latino, Asian-American, and Native American writing. Debates bear on the relation between the strengthening of cultural identity of particular groups by linking it to a tradition of writing and the liberal goal of celebrating cultural diversity and ‘multiculturalism’. Theoretical questions swiftly become entangled with questions about the status of theory, which is sometimes said to impose ‘white’ questions or philosophical issues on projects struggling to establish their own terms and contexts. But Latino, African-American, and Asian-American critics pursue the theoretical enterprise in developing the study of minority discourses, defining their distinctiveness, and articulating their relations to dominant traditions of writing and thought. Attempts to generate theories of ‘minority discourse’ both develop concepts for the analysis of specific cultural traditions and use a position of marginality to expose the assumptions of ‘majority’ discourse and to intervene in its theoretical debates.

**Queer Theory**

Like deconstruction and other contemporary theoretical movements, Queer theory (discussed in Chapter 7) uses the marginal – what has been set aside as perverse, beyond the pale, radically other – to analyse the cultural construction of the centre: heterosexual normativity. In the work of Eve Sedgwick, Judith Butler, and others, Queer theory has become the site of a productive questioning not just of the cultural construction of sexuality but of culture itself, as based on the denial of homoerotic relations. As with feminism and versions of ethnic studies before it, it gains intellectual energy from its link with social movements of liberation and from the debates within these movements about appropriate strategies and concepts. Should one celebrate and accentuate difference or challenge distinctions that stigmatize? How to do both? Possibilities of both action and understanding are at stake in theory.
The Hero’s Journey – Constructing the Monomyth

The following source is adapted from www.wikipedia.org

Joseph Campbell’s Big Idea

Joseph Campbell’s big idea is that a single ‘monomyth’ exists, sometimes known as ‘the Hero’s Journey’ and that it is the basic pattern that (according to its supporters) constructs many myths, or narratives, from around the world. This widely distributed pattern was described by Campbell in his book The Hero with a Thousand Faces (1949).

Campbell believed that numerous myths from disparate times and regions share fundamental structures and stages, which he summarised in his book The Hero with a Thousand Faces:

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 and other scholars, such as Erich Neumann, describe the narratives of Buddha, Moses, and Jesus Christ in terms of the monomyth, and Campbell argues that classic myths from many cultures follow the basic pattern.

The Basic Pattern

According to the basic pattern of the monomyth, the hero begins in the ordinary world, and receives a call to enter an unknown world of strange powers and events. The hero who accepts the call to enter this strange world must face tasks and trials, either alone or with assistance. In the most intense versions of the narrative, the hero must survive a severe challenge, often with help. If the hero survives, he may achieve a great gift (which Campbell refers to with an old-fashioned word – ‘boon’ – well, he was writing in 1949!)

The hero must then decide whether to return to the ordinary world with this boon. If the hero does decide to return, he or she often faces challenges on the return journey. If the hero returns successfully, the boon or gift may be used to improve the world. To give a few examples: the stories of Osiris, Prometheus, Moses and Buddha, can be interpreted to follow this structure closely.

Campbell describes 17 stages along this journey. These 17 stages may be organized in a number of ways, and some literary theorists (i.e. academics who write about stories) have offered their own ideas about how best to break down the monomyth; some break it down into 8 stages, some into 12 stages, some leave it at 17 and some even break it down even further. However it may be broken down, the three stages of ‘separation, initiation and return’ form the core of Campbell’s pattern. “Separation” deals with the hero’s adventure prior to the quest; “initiation” deals with the hero’s many adventures along the way; and “return” deals with the hero’s return home with knowledge and powers acquired on the journey.

Note – Wikipedia is a very useful tool as an introduction to a topic. The link below is an article that is a wonderful example of how Wikipedia can work (it isn’t always reliable). The article outlines each of the 17 stages, gives a key quote from Joseph Campbell and then examples of the stage from Classical literature and Modern literature. While this is useful for helping you come to terms with the monomyth, it is not appropriate as a direct reference in your essay. At the end of this document, there is an excerpt from Campbell’s Hero with a Thousand Faces (1949) – that’s what you cite.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monomyth#The_17_Stages_of_the_Monomyth
The main stages of Joseph Campbell’s ‘Hero’s Journey’ are summarised in the diagram below:
Another interesting way of assessing the Hero’s Journey is through this cartoon strip, which uses examples from popular culture that you might recognise.
Questions – Think about the idea that different literary theorists have broken the monomyth down into stages in different ways. How closely do you think this cartoon strip fits in with Campbell’s 17 stage theory? Does it matter that people have different ideas? Who do you think is correct?

Notes:
Assignment

Part 1 – Read the extract from Joseph Campbell’s Hero with a Thousand Faces (found in the appendix). Note down any questions that you have for discussion (I expect you to have questions – difficult words, phrases, content, connections).

Part 2 – Choose a story that you are familiar with and that you think fits in with the basic pattern of the monomyth. (Remember, the monomyth does not necessarily have to include every stage).

Take a piece of A4 paper and fold it in half, in half again and then in half again. You will now have a paper made up of eight rectangles. Have a think about it and break up the plot of your chosen story into eight main segments and write one on each of the rectangles.

Important – Make sure that you do not put the plot segments in order, mix them up on your page.

For example...

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both of these assignments are due at the start of our next tutorial, as we will be using them to continue developing our understanding of Joseph Campbell’s monomyth.
Tutorial 2 – Myth vs Folktales: Introducing Lord Raglan

Objectives

- To continue exploring Joseph Campbell’s monomyth
- To be able to explain ‘mythopoesis’ or ‘mythmaking’
- To be able to compare myths and other traditional stories (folktales, fairytales, fables, legends), identifying differences and similarities
- To explore Lord Raglan’s theory, as an alternate way of looking at ‘mythic’ stories

Assessing ‘the Hero’ – reviewing last session’s assignment

Part 1
Activity – By way of introduction to this tutorial (and to recap on the last one) we are going to start with your homework assignment. Swap your folded A4 sheet with a partner and then try to put the plot segments of their story into the correct order, this works best if you have not read each other’s story first!

Now you have finished… did the story go something like this: “A hero ventures forth, slays some great dragon or rescues a princess, before returning home and sharing gifts with his community.” Remember, Joseph Campbell would expect it to because this is a really basic example of what a monomyth looks like!

Part 2
Discussion – Having read the extract from Joseph Campbell’s Hero with a Thousand Faces (1949), what questions or points for discussion did you have?

Looking More Closely at Myth and ‘Mythopoesis’ or ‘Mythmaking’:

We’ve been talking quite a lot about myth over the last two sessions. From what you’ve read, what does myth mean to you?

Myth and ‘mythopoesis’:

The English word myth comes from the Greek word mythos, which means word or story. However, mythos does not mean just any word or story – it means divinely inspired (from the gods). Claiming that myths are ‘from the gods’ gives these stories a special kind of power. In ancient times, myths weren’t just something your friend, aunty, mother or cousin told you; they were from the gods (so, you’d better pay attention).

These narratives also featured gods and goddesses – Zeus, Hades, Artemis, Athena, Poseidon, Hera, Persephone (just to name a few). There were also human heroes (more or less the character Campbell focused on in his ‘Big Idea’) – Hercules, Odysseus, Theseus, Perseus, Jason.

Because myths were from the gods and about the gods, these narratives were traditionally considered to be high-culture, they were passed (or given) to common people from priests and men of letters (those who could read and write – and yes, just men. Women weren’t taught to read or write in ancient times!).
However, myths aren’t static things; they change, which is where mythopoesis comes into play. Mythopoesis is the art of ‘making myths’. First used by Tolkien in the 1930s (in a poem he wrote called Mythopeia), Mythopoesis is now used to describe how writers and artists participate in the tradition of myth, by writing new ones. Tolkien’s Hobbit and his Lord of the Rings trilogy are fantastic example of modern-day myths.

Question – Another literary theorist, Kurt Vonnegut, believes that we can identify lots of different story ‘shapes’ and that these are in some way linked to the type of plot. With reference to the diagram in the appendix, how useful do you think Joseph Campbell’s literary theory is when applied to story ‘shapes’ other than the mythic?

Other Traditional Stories: Legends, Folktales, Fables and Fairytales

Above we discussed how myths come down to people from priests and men-of-letters. Myth, in its traditional sense, is about the written story or word, and it carries with it the authority of almost religious significance. In other words, while traditional myths did change, they didn’t change as quickly as the oral stories that people shared on a daily basis (these are the stories that your: friend, aunty, mother or cousin told you), and within these traditional literatures (like folktales, fairytales, fables and legends) we find mythic ideas re-written.

- **Legends**: are essentially myths personalised. They aren’t as grand as myths (don’t feature gods/goddesses and all that goes with those characters), but they are still regarded as truth, in the ways that myths are (or were). Legends are folk history and often explain natural happenings: like a Native American legend that explains why the crow is black (he was white before flying too close to the sun and has been black ever since). Examples: Robin Hood, ‘Urban Legends’, America’s Johnny Appleseed, The Highwayman

- **Folktales**: if legends are the folk history, then the folktale is the oral fiction of the folk (remember not a lot of ‘folk’ can read or write, so most stories were told (instead of watching TV in the evening, these people told stories, folktales). These are fiction and are told for entertainment. The word folktale is also often confused with fairytale, but as we shall see, the two are different. Examples: Little Red Riding Hood, Snow White, Goldilocks and the Three Bears, etc.

- **Fables**: are moral tales (they aim to teach a lesson). They also usually feature animals whose actions mimic human behaviour. Examples: The Tortoise and the Hare, The Sick Lion, The Bremen Town Musicians, and The Three Little Pigs.

- **Fairytales**: are like folktales but they have a couple of very important differences. First, they do usually feature magic, or the magical. Sometimes, this means there are fairies, but other times, it simply means witches, trolls, monsters and other ‘magical’ creatures or happenings. Fairytales are also traditionally written down. Where folktales were part of the oral culture (before most people could really read and write), fairytales developed the ideas and themes from folktales and put them into stories that were written down. Examples: Snow White, Cinderella, Hansel and Gretel, etc.

All of these terms together are known as folklore – the oral culture/literary culture of a people.

**Question**: While legends, folktales, fables and fairytales aren’t strictly myth, can you spot any similarities?
Lord Raglan

However, before we look at the Hero’s Journey in more detail, we are going to take a look at a literary theorist who went by the name of Lord Raglan…

Fitzroy Richard Somerset was 36 years old when he inherited the title of Lord Raglan upon the death of his father, George Somerset. The year was 1921, and he retired from a successful career in the army, including service in Hong Kong, Palestine and the Sudan, to return to his family home in South Wales. Lord Raglan’s travels had left him with a passion for languages and people of different cultures; he is famous for defining culture as “roughly everything we do that monkeys do not”. When he retired he took up lots of interests, including carpentry, beekeeping and academic study.

Over the years he published a number of articles and books about languages and culture, including some works of literary theory. One of these works was called ‘The Hero’, and in it he detailed what he thought were typical character traits of heroes in myths. He set out these traits as criteria for whether or not characters can be considered heroes, and then graded heroes from folklore and Classical literature against his criteria; the more traits a character met, the more of a hero they were considered to be.

As you will notice, this sounds similar to Joseph Campbell’s monomyth. However, Lord Raglan (1936) was in fact writing before Campbell (1949) and, even though Campbell may have been influenced by Lord Raglan’s writings, there is an important difference in their approach…

As you may be aware, in order to gain insight into the ways an author has created meaning, literary theory often separates plot, genre and character within a work of literature. Taking Romeo and Juliet as an example: the main characters are two young lovers from rival families, the plot focuses on the pursuit of their forbidden love and the genre might be interpreted as either romance or tragedy. In a similar way, when analysing literature, different types of literary theory might place a particular emphasis on plot, genre or character.

Question – Out of plot, genre and character, which do you think Lord Raglan’s literary theory places a particular emphasis on? Which do you think Joseph Campbell’s monomyth places a particular emphasis on?
Lord Raglan’s Big Idea

In his book *The Hero: A study in Tradition, Myth and Dreams*, Lord Raglan noted a set of character traits that are regularly found in hero-myths of all cultures; remember, he lived in many places across the world and had a real interest in languages and culture so he had a wide range of experiences to draw on.

The Hero of Tradition

1. Hero’s mother is a royal virgin;
2. His father is a king, and
3. Often a near relative of his mother, but
4. The circumstances of his conception are unusual, and
5. He is also reputed to be the son of a god.
6. At birth an attempt is made, usually by his father or his maternal grandfather to kill him, but
7. He is spirited away, and
8. Reared by foster-parents in a far country.
9. We are told nothing of his childhood, but
10. On reaching manhood he returns or goes to his future Kingdom.
11. After a victory over the king and/or a giant, dragon, or wild beast,
12. He marries a princess, often the daughter of his predecessor and
13. And becomes king.
14. For a time he reigns uneventfully and
15. Prescribes laws, but
16. Later he loses favour with the gods and/or his subjects, and
17. Is driven from the throne and city, after which
18. He meets with a mysterious death,
19. Often at the top of a hill,
20. His children, if any do not succeed him.
21. His body is not buried, but nevertheless
22. He has one or more holy sepulchres.
Activity

Part 1
Lord Raglan graded a number of heroes from folklore and Classical literature against his criteria; the more traits a character met, the more of a hero they were considered to be. You will be given a handout including a profile of four characters; your activity is to grade each of them against Lord Raglan’s criteria.

Questions
- In literature, do you think we can say in black and white terms that a character definitely is/is not a hero, or are there shades of grey?
- If you think the answer is black and white, how many points do you think they would need to score according to Lord Raglan’s criteria to be considered a hero?

Part 2
Working in pairs, you will design your own set of criteria and scoring system for Joseph Campbell’s monomyth which will enable you to decide if a story fits the pattern of the hero’s journey or not. You will then grade examples from the homework assignments and the first tutorial against your own criteria.

Notes:

Assignment
For the next tutorial, write a 300-word piece exploring how useful you think Joseph Campbell’s literary theory is when applied to stories that are not obviously mythic (for example, crime novels, action films, murder mysteries, biographies).

With a short piece of evaluative writing like this the aim is not to spend too long describing or defining key ideas, but rather to get to the heart of the question and to make a clear judgment. You will not have time to cover every aspect of the question or say everything you want to say; do not worry, embrace this! Take it as a license to focus on one new, interesting or controversial idea!

See also: Tips for Writing a Literary Analysis (Appendix)
Tutorial 3 – Genre and/or Character: Introducing Vladimir Propp

Objectives

- To continue developing an understanding of character
- To be able to define and to identify genre
- To be able to compare and contrast the relationship of genre and character to our various theories
- To explore Lord Raglan’s theory, an alternative ‘plot’ based pattern

Assessing the ‘monomyth’ – reviewing last session’s assignment

Activity – By way of introduction to this tutorial (and to recap on the last one) we are going to start with your homework assignment. In pairs, share your thoughts on the usefulness of the monomyth when applied to stories that are not obviously mythic with your partner. You can read it out or simply talk about what you’ve discovered.

Come up with 2 or 3 really good points to share with the whole group. Don’t forget to let us know what story you considered!

Theory Re-Cap – Campbell, Raglan and Vonnegut

So far, we’ve looked at three theories (or lenses) related to myths or traditional stories (folktales, fairytales, etc).

- Joseph Campbell’s ‘Big Idea’ was the monomyth or the idea that at the heart of all myths there is one single story, or plot: separation, initiation, return. Campbell (and other theorists who follow his theory) believed that this single plot (or structure) formed the bases of all mythic stories (and some would argue all narratives in general).
- Lord Raglan’s ‘Big Idea’ was The Hero of Tradition or the idea that all heroes fulfilled most—or all—of the 22 characteristics that he identified as being central to making a hero. Lord Raglan, and his supporters, believed that these characteristics appeared in (varying amounts) all mythic-hero stories.
- Kurt Vonnegut’s ‘Big Idea’ was The Shape of Stories or the idea that if you plot the ‘ups and downs’ of the main character you can identify the shape of a story. The chart in the appendix shows the shapes of some popular stories.

Discussion – What do you think is the aim (or point) of each of these theories? What are they trying to do? What are the focused on? What do they leave out?

Genre and Character

Genre is how we categorise, or group, texts (including films). Genre is about finding the similarities between texts and grouping them together. The broadest categories of genre include: poetry, drama, film, and fiction. With those it’s easy to see how texts would fit within a specific category (a poem would obviously fit in poetry and not film). However, those categories are divided up even further. Poetry might include: sonnets, haikus or limericks; whereas, fiction might also include: westerns, crime, mystery or romance. Bookstores and libraries and even film services like NetFlix or LoveFilm use genre to help us find the kind of thing we’re looking for.

Handout: Genre Characteristics
Characters are what populate the narratives we’ve been talking about. The hero is one example, but there are countless types of characters: animals, fairies, people and ghosts – to name a few. Within this characters can be defined by different traits. You might have a mother, a friend, a villain or a king. It’s through the characters that the action of a narrative develops.

Handout: Character Archetypes

Activity

Part 1 – Brainstorming: How well does the monomyth work when applied to other genres?

Using the cards provided by your tutor, discuss the implications (what is lost or gained) when applying the monomyth to the example(s) you’re given.

Part 2 – Brainstorming: Using the ‘Character Archetypes’ handout, discuss the implications of different characters going on a hero’s journey (see the handout for more details).

Discussion: What’s more important to Joseph Campbell’s monomyth: character or genre?

31 Functions and Dramatis Personae – Vladimir Propp

The following source is developed from Vladimir Propp’s Morphology of the Folktale (1968)

Vladimir Propp’s Big Idea

Where Joseph Campbell was concerned with myth, Vladimir Propp focused on folktales and fairytales, and his big idea is known as the ‘Morphology of the Folktale’. While morphology may seem to be a rather complicated word, it really just means the form of a folktale; the shape it takes (a little bit like Vonnegut).

Propp focused, primarily, on the Russian folktales of his homeland, and (like Campbell did with myths), he set out to compare them. He came up with 7 dramatis personae (characters) who function within these narrative, and through their actions, he came up with 31 narratemes (stages of the story – theorist always feel the need to use new words!). The character and the stages of the plot work together to construct the story.

In talking about character, he said:

The names of the dramatis personae change (as well as the attributes of each), but neither their actions nor functions change. From this we can draw the inference that a tale often attributes identical actions to various personages. This makes possible the study of the tale according to the functions of its dramatis personae.

In other words, the characters name and physical appearance don’t matter. He’s concerned with their function – or how they act within a story.

The shape of the story depends on the actions of the 7 dramatis personae. It’s about how the character functions within the story; so through those actions, Propp described 31 narratemes (or stages) of the folktale. For Propp, it takes both character and plot to define the narratives he’s looking at.
Plenary

In this tutorial we have recapped the basic pattern of the hero’s journey and looked at how Vladimir Propp’s theory relates to the theories’ of Joseph Campbell and Lord Ragland, all of these theories have set out criteria that we can use to help us establish whether or not stories conform to an idealised type.

Lord Raglan set out a series of traits as criteria for whether or not characters can be considered heroes, and then graded heroes from folklore and Classical literature against his criteria; the more traits a character met, the more of a hero they were considered to be.

Vladimir Propp focused on the function of characters (his *Dramatis Personae*) within a specific set of stories in order to determine the shape of those stories.

Joseph Campbell believed that numerous myths from disparate times and regions share fundamental structures and stages, and he summarised these stages in his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. Unlike Lord Raglan, he did not actually use his theory to classify myths, but we can still use his pattern to look at how narratives relate (or not) to the myths he was studying.

Remember back to when we introduced literary theory; we talked about separating plot, genre and character within a work of literature in order to gain insight into the ways an author has created meaning.

Up until now we have talked about a little bit about character (Lord Raglan) and about plot (Joseph Campbell). However, we have not paid too much attention to genre yet.

So, one last thing to think about is how useful these literary theories are when applied to genres that are not obviously connected to myth or to the ‘hero’s journey’?

Notes

Assignment

Using the ‘Character Archetypes’ handout (and any notes you made from part 2 of the activity), write an outline of a hero’s journey undertaken by a character who doesn’t appear to be a traditional hero. Be creative in imagining problems or difficulties...
Tutorial 4 – Criticising the Hero’s Journey

Objectives

To critically engage with Joseph Campbell’s monomyth

Assessing Characters (or Heroes in Disguise) – reviewing last session’s assignment

Activity – By way of introduction to this tutorial (and to recap on the last one) we are going to start with your homework assignment. In pairs, share your ‘Heroes in Disguise’ (You don’t have to read the whole thing, just talk your partner through your thoughts). What happened? Was a gossip able to complete the journey? A monster? A child? An ordinary man?

Once you discussed this in pairs, come up with 2 or 3 interesting discoveries or problems to share with the whole group. Don’t forget to let us know which characters you considered!

Subverting the Monomyth

Campbell’s monomyth, while still at the heart of myth studies, is now often seen as rather out-dated. For starters, not all myths tell a single story. The motif is common, as Campbell showed, but is it really present in every single myth? Even in myths from Thailand, China or Africa? Some people argue that when you create a pattern, like Campbell’s, you’re forcing stories to act in a certain way and that you end up with a lot of ‘kinda-sorta’ fits: like the hero might not really be of royal birth, but his mother was famous, so it’s sort of the same.

Other people argue that one of the most valuable things about mythology is its difference, and a single pattern – or monomyth – takes all that away. By forcing these stories to fit a single pattern, we lose cultural content (are there dragons in India or do they fight different monsters?). Myths are (or were traditionally) the very things that determined a group’s culture. So, if we take away all the things that are different, in order to fit a pattern, what do we have left?

Some also argue that it’s actually impossible to come up with a universal myth because a single person can’t define what is for everyone. Any view is always going to be biased. It’s going to contain your opinions, preferences and views, no matter how hard you try to avoid doing so. For example, Campbell focused on male heroes because male heroes fit his worldview (and the world-view of the Western myths he studied). What about cultures with female heroes in their myths? Those stories aren’t taken into account in Campbell’s monomyth.

Discussion – What other potential problems can you see? How useful is the monomyth as a tool for studying literature?

Extension: The Heroine’s Journey by Maureen Murdock (Appendix)
Tutorial 5 – Presentations and Feedback
Glossary/Key Terms

Character:
An individual (usually a person) in a narrative or text.

Fable:
Moral tales (they aim to teach a lesson). They also usually feature animals whose actions mimic human behaviour. Examples: The Tortoise and the Hare, The Sick Lion, The Bremen Town Musicians, and The Three Little Pigs.

Fairy tale:
These stories do, usually, feature magic, or the magical. Sometimes, this means there are fairies, but other times, it simply means witches, trolls, monsters and other ‘magical’ creatures or happenings. Fairytales are also traditionally written down. Where folktales were part of the oral culture (before most people could really read and write), fairytales developed the ideas and themes from folktales and put them into stories that were written down. Examples: Snow White, Cinderella, Hansel and Gretel, etc.

Note – some people do use folktale and fairytale interchangeably (as in some people consider them to mean the same thing).

Folk:
Term used to describe the oral peoples who originally told the fairytales, folktales, legends, fables and myths discussed on this course.

Folktale:
If legends are the folk history, then the folktale is the oral fiction of the folk (remember not a lot of ‘folk’ can read or write, so most stories were told (instead of watching TV in the evening, these people told stories, folktales). These are fiction and are told for entertainment. The word folktale is also often confused with fairytale, but as we shall see, the two are different. Examples: Little Red Riding Hood, Snow White, Goldilocks and the Three Bears, etc.

Folklore:
The traditional beliefs, customs and stories of a community (the folk); it is transmitted orally. The narratives discussed on this course are folkloric, or of folklore.

Legend:
Essentially myths personalised. They aren’t as grand as myths (don’t feature gods/goddesses and all that goes with those characters), but they are still regarded as truth, in the ways that myths are (or were). Legends are folk history and often explain natural happenings: like a Native American legend that explains why the crow is black (he was white before flying too close to the sun and has been black ever since). Examples: Robin Hood, ‘Urban Legends’, America’s Johnny Appleseed, The Literary Theory:

Monomyth:
Joseph Campbell’s theory of a single unifying pattern underlying what he called all myth (really he was just focusing on the Western Mythic tradition). The simple version of his pattern is that of separation – initiation – return.

Motif:
A recurring theme or element in a narrative. Cinderella’s evil step-mother is a motif as the sun-god being creator (from myth).
Myth:
Narratives that attempt to answer the questions that arise from simply being human: How did life begin? Who are we? How did we end up where we are? What are our values? How should we behave? How should we NOT behave, and what happens if we misbehave? Myths are about giving meaning to our lives. Myths are sacred because they define us. However, myths are not static – they don’t remain locked away in a cupboard only to be looked at. Myths change, as our understanding of the world changes (it way ancient myths and modern myths look so different – Homer wouldn’t understand your smart phone just as we can’t conceive of a mythic story that explains the difference between winter and summer based on a story about a goddess being captured – checkout the story of Persephone, if you’re interested).

Mythopoesis:
From the Greek word for Myth-Making.

Taken from the Mythopoeic Society:
We define this as literature that creates a new and transformative mythology, or incorporates and transforms existing mythological material. Transformation is the key — mere static reference to mythological elements, invented or pre-existing, is not enough. The mythological elements must be of sufficient importance in the work to influence the spiritual, moral, and/or creative lives of the characters, and must reflect and support the author’s underlying themes. This type of work, at its best, should also inspire the reader to examine the importance of mythology in his or her own spiritual, moral, and creative development.”

Narratemes:
Vladimir Propp’s word for the component parts of a story – any one of his 31 functions is a narrateme.

Narratives:
Texts or stories.
Appendix:

Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*


3.

*The Hero and the God*

The standard path of the mythological adventure of the hero is a magnification of the formula represented in the rites of passage: separation—initiation—return: which might be named the nuclear unit of the monomyth.³⁰

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.

Prometheus ascended to the heavens, stole fire from the gods, and descended. Jason sailed through the Clashing Rocks into a sea of marvels, circumvented the dragon that guarded the Golden Fleece, and returned with the fleece and the power to wrest his rightful throne from a usurper. Aeneas went down into the underworld, crossed the dreadful river of the dead, threw a sop to the three-headed watchdog Cerberus, and conversed, at last, with the shade of his dead father. All things were unfolded to

THE HERO AND THE GOD

him: the destiny of souls, the destiny of Rome, which he was about to found, "and in what wise he might avoid or endure every burden." He returned through the ivory gate to his work in the world.

A majestic representation of the difficulties of the hero-task, and of its sublime import when it is profoundly conceived and solemnly undertaken, is presented in the traditional legend of the Great Struggle of the Buddha. The young prince Gautama Sakya-muni set forth secretly from his father's palace on the princely steed Kanthaka, passed miraculously through the guarded gate, rode through the night attended by the torches of four times sixty thousand divinities, lightly hurdles a majestic river eleven hundred and twenty-eight cubits wide, and then with a single sword-stroke sheared his own royal locks—whereupon the remaining hair, two finger-breaths in length, curled to the right and lay close to his head. Assuming the garments of a monk, he moved as a beggar through the world, and during these years of apparently aimless wandering acquired and transcended the eight stages of meditation. He retired to a hermitage, bent his powers six more-years to the great struggle, carried austerity to the uttermost, and collapsed in seeming death, but presently recovered. Then he returned to the less rigorous life of the ascetic wanderer.

One day he sat beneath a tree, contemplating the eastern quarter of the world, and the tree was illumined with his radiance. A young girl named Sujata came and presented milk-rice to him in a golden bowl, and when he tossed the empty bowl into a river it floated upstream. This was the signal that the moment of his triumph was at hand. He arose and proceeded along a road which the gods had decked and which was eleven hundred and twenty-eight cubits wide. The snakes and birds and the divinities of the woods and fields did him homage with flowers and celestial perfumes, heavenly choirs poured forth music, the ten thousand worlds were filled with perfumes, garlands, harmonies, and

80 Virgil, *Aeneid*, VI, 892.
THE MONOMYTH

shouts of acclaim; for he was on his way to the great Tree of Enlightenment, the Bo Tree, under which he was to redeem the universe. He placed himself, with a firm resolve, beneath the Bo Tree, on the Immovable Spot, and straightway was approached by Kama-Mara, the god of love and death.

The dangerous god appeared mounted on an elephant and carrying weapons in his thousand hands. He was surrounded by his army, which extended twelve leagues before him, twelve to the right, twelve to the left, and in the rear as far as to the confines of the world; it was nine leagues high. The protecting deities of the universe took flight, but the Future Buddha remained unmoved beneath the Tree. And the god then assailed him, seeking to break his concentration.

Whirlwind, rocks, thunder and flame, smoking weapons with keen edges, burning coals, hot ashes, boiling mud, blistering sands and fourfold darkness, the Antagonist hurled against the Savior, but the missiles were all transformed into celestial flowers andointments by the power of Gautama’s ten perfections. Mara then deployed his daughters, Desire, Pining, and Lust, surrounded by voluptuous attendants, but the mind of the Great Being was not distracted. The god finally challenged his right to be sitting on the Immovable Spot, flung his razor-sharp discus angrily, and bid the towering host of the army to let fly at him with mountain crags. But the Future Buddha only moved his hand to touch the ground with his fingertips, and thus bid the goddess Earth bear witness to his right to be sitting where he was. She did so with a hundred, a thousand, a hundred thousand roars, so that the elephant of the Antagonist fell upon its knees in obeisance to the Future Buddha. The army was immediately dispersed, and the gods of all the worlds scattered garlands.

Having won that preliminary victory before sunset, the conqueror acquired in the first watch of the night knowledge of his previous existences, in the second watch the divine eye of omniscient vision, and in the last watch understanding of the chain
of causation. He experienced perfect enlightenment at the break of day.\footnote{37}

Then for seven days Gautama—now the Buddha, the Enlightened—sat motionless in bliss; for seven days he stood apart and regarded the spot on which he had received enlightenment; for seven days he paced between the place of the sitting and the place of the standing; for seven days he abode in a pavilion furnished by the gods and reviewed the whole doctrine of causality and release; for seven days he sat beneath the tree where the girl Sujata had brought him milk-rice in a golden bowl, and there meditated on the doctrine of the sweetness of Nirvana; he removed to another tree and a great storm raged for seven days, but the King of Serpents emerged from the roots and protected the Buddha with his expanded hood; finally, the Buddha sat for seven days beneath a fourth tree enjoying still the sweetness of liberation. Then he doubted whether his message could be communicated, and he thought to retain the wisdom for himself; but the god Brahma descended from the zenith to implore that he should become the teacher of gods and men. The Buddha was thus persuaded to proclaim the path.\footnote{38} And he went back into

\footnote{37} This is the most important single moment in Oriental mythology, a counterpart of the Crucifixion of the West. The Buddha beneath the Tree of Enlightenment (the Bo Tree) and Christ on Holy Rood (the Tree of Redemption) are analogous figures, incorporating an archetypal World Savior, World Tree motif, which is of immemorial antiquity. Many other variants of the theme will be found among the episodes to come. The Immovable Spot and Mount Calvary are images of the World Navel, or World Axis (see p. 40, \textit{infra}).

The calling of the Earth to witness is represented in traditional Buddhist art by images of the Buddha, sitting in the classic Buddha posture, with the right hand resting on the right knee and its fingers lightly touching the ground.

\footnote{38} The point is that Buddhahood, Enlightenment, cannot be communicated, but only the \textit{way} to Enlightenment. This doctrine of the incommunicability of the Truth which is beyond names and forms is basic to the great Oriental, as well as to the Platonic, traditions. Whereas the truths of science are communicable, being demonstrable hypotheses rationally founded on
THE MONOMYTH

the cities of men where he moved among the citizens of the world, bestowing the inestimable boon of the knowledge of the Way.³⁹

The Old Testament records a comparable deed in its legend of Moses, who, in the third month of the departure of Israel out of the land of Egypt, came with his people into the wilderness of Sinai; and there Israel pitched their tents over against the mountain. And Moses went up to God, and the Lord called unto him from the mountain. The Lord gave to him the Tables of the Law and commanded Moses to return with these to Israel, the people of the Lord.⁴⁰

Jewish folk legend declares that during the day of the revelation diverse rumblings sounded from Mount Sinai. "Flashes of lightning, accompanied by an ever swelling peal of horns, moved the people with mighty fear and trembling. God bent the heavens, moved the earth, and shook the bounds of the world, so that the depths trembled, and the heavens grew frightened. His splendor passed through the four portals of fire, earthquake, storm, and hail. The kings of the earth trembled in their palaces. The earth herself thought the resurrection of the dead was about to take place, and that she would have to account for the blood of the slain she had absorbed, and for the bodies of the murdered whom she covered. The earth was not calmed until she heard the first words of the Decalogue.

⁴⁰ Exodus, 19:3-5.
THE HERO AND THE GOD

"The heavens opened and Mount Sinai, freed from the earth, rose into the air, so that its summit towered into the heavens, while a thick cloud covered the sides of it, and touched the feet of the Divine Throne. Accompanying God on one side, appeared twenty-two thousand angels with crowns for the Levites, the only tribe that remained true to God while the rest worshiped the Golden Calf. On the second side were sixty myriads, three thousand five hundred and fifty angels, each bearing a crown of fire for each individual Israelite. Double this number of angels was on the third side; whereas on the fourth side they were simply innumerable. For God did not appear from one direction, but from all simultaneously, which, however, did not prevent His glory from filling the heaven as well as the earth. In spite of these innumerable hosts there was no crowding on Mount Sinai, no mob, there was room for all." 41

As we soon shall see, whether presented in the vast, almost oceanic images of the Orient, in the vigorous narratives of the Greeks, or in the majestic legends of the Bible, the adventure of the hero normally follows the pattern of the nuclear unit above described: a separation from the world, a penetration to some source of power, and a life-enhancing return. The whole of the Orient has been blessed by the boon brought back by Gautama Buddha—his wonderful teaching of the Good Law—just as the Occident has been by the Decalogue of Moses. The Greeks referred fire, the first support of all human culture, to the world-transcending deed of their Prometheus, and the Romans the founding of their world-supporting city to Aeneas, following his departure from fallen Troy and his visit to the eerie underworld of the dead. Everywhere, no matter what the sphere of interest (whether religious, political, or personal), the really creative acts are represented as those deriving from some sort of dying to the world; and what happens in the interval of the hero’s nonentity,

THE MONOMYTH

so that he comes back as one reborn, made great and filled with creative power, mankind is also unanimous in declaring. We shall have only to follow, therefore, a multitude of heroic figures through the classic stages of the universal adventure in order to see again what has always been revealed. This will help us to understand not only the meaning of those images for contemporary life, but also the singleness of the human spirit in its aspirations, powers, vicissitudes, and wisdom.

The following pages will present in the form of one composite adventure the tales of a number of the world’s symbolic carriers of the destiny of Everyman. The first great stage, that of the separation or departure, will be shown in Part I, Chapter I, in five subsections: (1) “The Call to Adventure,” or the signs of the vocation of the hero; (2) “Refusal of the Call,” or the folly of the flight from the god; (3) “Supernatural Aid,” the unsuspected assistance that comes to one who has undertaken his proper adventure; (4) “The Crossing of the First Threshold”; and (5) “The Belly of the Whale,” or the passage into the realm of night. The stage of the trials and victories of initiation will appear in Chapter II in six subsections: (1) “The Road of Trials,” or the dangerous aspect of the gods; (2) “The Meeting with the Goddess” (Magna Mater), or the bliss of infancy regained; (3) “Woman as the Temptress,” the realization and agony of Oedipus; (4) “Atonement with the Father”; (5) “Apotheosis”; and (6) “The Ultimate Boon.”

The return and reintegration with society, which is indispensable to the continuous circulation of spiritual energy into the world, and which, from the standpoint of the community, is the justification of the long retreat, the hero himself may find the most difficult requirement of all. For if he has won through, like the Buddha, to the profound repose of complete enlightenment, there is danger that the bliss of this experience may annihilate all recollection of, interest in, or hope for, the sorrows of the world; or else the problem of making known the way of illumina-

36
THE HERO AND THE GOD

tion to people wrapped in economic problems may seem too
great to solve. And on the other hand, if the hero, instead of sub-
mitting to all of the initiatory tests, has, like Prometheus, simply
darted to his goal (by violence, quick device, or luck) and plucked
the boon for the world that he intended, then the powers that he
has unbalanced may react so sharply that he will be blasted from
within and without—crucified, like Prometheus, on the rock of
his own violated unconscious. Or if the hero, in the third place,
makes his safe and willing return, he may meet with such a blank
misunderstanding and disregard from those whom he has come
to help that his career will collapse. The third of the following
chapters will conclude the discussion of these prospects under six
subheadings: (1) "Refusal of the Return," or the world denied;
(2) "The Magic Flight," or the escape of Prometheus; (3) "Rescue
from Without"; (4) "The Crossing of the Return Threshold,"
or the return to the world of common day; (5) "Master of the
Two Worlds"; and (6) "Freedom to Live," the nature and
function of the ultimate boon.\footnote{42}

The composite hero of the monomyth is a personage of excep-
tional gifts. Frequently he is honored by his society, frequently
unrecognized or disdained. He and/or the world in which he
finds himself suffers from a symbolical deficiency. In fairy tales
this may be as slight as the lack of a certain golden ring, whereas
in apocalyptic vision the physical and spiritual life of the whole
earth can be represented as fallen, or on the point of falling, into
ruin.

Typically, the hero of the fairy tale achieves a domestic,
THE MONOMYTH

microcosmic triumph, and the hero of myth a world-historical, macrocosmic triumph. Whereas the former—the youngest or despised child who becomes the master of extraordinary powers—prevails over his personal oppressors, the latter brings back from his adventure the means for the regeneration of his society as a whole. Tribal or local heroes, such as the emperor Huang Ti, Moses, or the Aztec Tezcatlipoca, commit their boons to a single folk; universal heroes—Mohammed, Jesus, Gautama Buddha—bring a message for the entire world.

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

Part II, “The Cosmogonic Cycle,” unrolls the great vision of the creation and destruction of the world which is vouchsafed as revelation to the successful hero. Chapter I, Emanations, treats of the coming of the forms of the universe out of the void. Chapter II, The Virgin Birth, is a review of the creative and redemptive roles of the female power, first on a cosmic scale as the Mother of the Universe, then again on the human plane as the Mother of the Hero. Chapter III, Transformations of the Hero, traces the course of the legendary history of the human race through its typical stages, the hero appearing on the scene in various forms according to the changing needs of the race. And Chapter IV, Dissolutions, tells of the foretold end, first of the hero, then of the manifested world.
THE HERO AND THE GOD

The cosmogonic cycle is presented with astonishing consistency in the sacred writings of all the continents, and it gives to the adventure of the hero a new and interesting turn; for now it appears that the perilous journey was a labor not of attainment but of reattainment, not discovery but rediscovery. The godly powers sought and dangerously won are revealed to have been within the heart of the hero all the time. He is “the king’s son” who has come to know who he is and therewith has entered into the exercise of his proper power—“God’s son,” who has learned to know how much that title means. From this point of view the hero is symbolical of that divine creative and redemptive image which is hidden within us all, only waiting to be known and rendered into life.

“For the One who has become many, remains the One undivided, but each part is all of Christ,” we read in the writings of Saint Symeon the younger (949-1022 A.D.). “I saw Him in my house,” the saint goes on. “Among all those everyday things He appeared unexpectedly and became unutterably united and merged with me, and leaped over to me without anything in between, as fire to iron, as the light to glass. And He made me like fire and like light. And I became that which I saw before and beheld from afar. I do not know how to relate this miracle to you. . . . I am man by nature, and God by the grace of God.”

A comparable vision is described in the apocryphal Gospel of Eve. “I stood on a lofty mountain and saw a gigantic man and another a dwarf; and I heard as it were a voice of thunder, and drew nigh for to hear; and He spake unto me and said: I am thou,

43 The present volume is not concerned with the historical discussion of this circumstance. That task is reserved for a work now under preparation. The present volume is a comparative, not genetic, study. Its purpose is to show that essential parallels exist in the myths themselves as well as in the interpretations and applications that the sages have announced for them.
and thou art I; and wheresoever thou mayest be I am there. In all am I scattered, and whencesoever thou willest, thou gatherest Me; and gathering Me, thou gatherest Thyself.”

The two—the hero and his ultimate god, the seeker and the found—are thus understood as the outside and inside of a single, self-mirrored mystery, which is identical with the mystery of the manifest world. The great deed of the supreme hero is to come to the knowledge of this unity in multiplicity and then to make it known.

4.

The World Navel

The effect of the successful adventure of the hero is the unlocking and release again of the flow of life into the body of the world. The miracle of this flow may be represented in physical terms as a circulation of food substance, dynamically as a streaming of energy, or spiritually as a manifestation of grace. Such varieties of image alternate easily, representing three degrees of condensation of the one life force. An abundant harvest is the sign of God’s grace; God’s grace is the food of the soul; the lightning bolt is the harbinger of fertilizing rain, and at the same time the manifestation of the released energy of God. Grace, food substance, energy: these pour into the living world, and wherever they fail, life decomposes into death.

The torrent pours from an invisible source, the point of entry being the center of the symbolic circle of the universe, the Im-

46 Quoted by Epiphanius, Adversus haereses, xxvi. 3.
The Shapes of Stories
by Kurt Vonnegut

Kurt Vonnegut gained worldwide fame and adoration through the publication of his novels, including *Slaughterhouse-Five*, *Cat's Cradle*, *Breakfast of Champions*, and more.

But it was his rejected master's thesis in anthropology that he called his prettiest contribution to his culture.

The basic idea of his thesis was that a story's main character has ups and downs that can be graphed to reveal the story's shape.

The shape of a society's stories, he said, is at least as interesting as the shape of its pots or spearheads. Let's have a look.

**Designer:** Maya Eilen, www.mayaelen.com
**Sources:** A Man without a Country and Palm Sunday by Kurt Vonnegut

---

**Man in Hole**
- The main character gets into trouble then gets out of it again and ends up better off for the experience.
- Arsenic and Old Lace
- Harold & Kumar Go To White Castle

**Boy Meets Girl**
- The main character comes across something wonderful, gets it, loses it, then gets it back forever.
- Jane Eyre
- Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind

**From Bad to Worse**
- The main character starts off poorly then gets continually worse with no hope for improvement.
- The Metamorphosis
- The Twilight Zone

**Which Way Is Up?**
- The story has a lifetime ambiguity that keeps us from knowing if new developments are good or bad.
- Hamlet
- The Sopranos

---

**Creation Story**
- In many cultures' creation stories, humankind receives incremental gifts from a deity, a first major staple like the earth and sky, then smaller things like sparrows and cell phones. Not a common shape for Western stories, however.
- Great Expectations

**Old Testament**
- Humankind receives incremental gifts from a deity, but is suddenly ousted from good standing in a fall of enormous proportions.
- Great Expectations with Dickens' alternate ending

**New Testament**
- Humankind receives incremental gifts from a deity, is suddenly ousted from good standing, but then receives off-the-charts bliss.
- Great Expectations with Dickens' alternate ending

**Cinderella**
- It was the similarity between the shapes of Cinderella and the New Testament that thrilled Vonnegut for the first time in 1947 and then over the course of his life as he continued to write essays and give lectures on the shapes of stories.
Tips for Writing a Literary Analysis

When writing a literary analysis, it is important to make sure that you limit the amount of summarising that you do. In order to keep from summarising, remember the following tips and descriptions.

Summary vs analysis

Summary – A summary is a brief overview. There are different types of summaries that require different approaches, but predominantly summaries follow these guidelines:

• Mention only the most important aspects of the plot
• Omit insubstantial details
• Quotes are not necessary (it is assumed that the summary is based on someone else’s words)
• Write in present tense
• Be brief (a summary is meant to be much shorter than the original text)

There are several purposes for a summary. Sometimes a writer is expected to include a summary in an analysis. In this case, the summary is used to introduce the audience to the text that is being analysed.

This generally occurs within the introduction of the analysis in order to remind or inform the reader of the events of the text prior to analysis.

Sample summary:

Little Red Riding Hood is the story of a young girl and her sick grandmother who are tricked by a wolf. The wolf hides in the grandmother’s bed and tricks Little Red Riding Hood into coming into her grandmother’s sick room. Little Red Riding Hood and her grandmother are both swallowed by the wolf, but they are saved by a hunter who cuts open the wolf’s stomach, pulls them out, and fills the wolf’s stomach with rocks. This experience teaches Little Red Riding Hood a very valuable lesson.

Analysis

An analysis is a detailed examination of specific elements within a text or other work (i.e., movie, article, advertisement). In an analysis, the writer breaks down aspects of the text and examines them for purpose, effect, or meaning. Below are some characteristics of an analysis that differentiate it from a summary.

• Aspects of the plot are not analysed in chronological order (unless there is a reason)
• Elements of the text are discussed in detail
• There is a specific reason for choosing a detail from the text to analyse
Elements of the text:

- Theme – the central idea of the text.
  - A writer might argue that the theme of Othello is jealousy.
- Symbolism – a symbol is an object that represents something other than the original object.
  - Examples of common symbols are a cross, which might represent Christianity, the serpent which might represent evil, a rose which might represent beauty, a lily which might represent purity, and a dove which might represent peace. Colours alone can also work as symbols. For example, white might represent purity, and purple might represent royalty.
- Allegory – an allegory is a text, which can be read with more than one level of meaning (a primary or surface-level meaning and a deeper or secondary meaning).
  - A writer might argue that The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe is a religious allegory in which Aslan is Jesus and Edmund is the sinner. One example of Aslan as Jesus is the sacrifice of his life for Edmund’s. Aslan’s return to life can be interpreted as Jesus’ resurrection, and Edmund’s sin, indulging in gluttony by eating the Turkish Delight and later becoming obsessed with it, is representative of mankind’s sin, which can be compared to the original sin of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.
- Characters - Characters within the text may be analysed in many ways
  - Archetypal characters can usually be classified by type because they behave or speak in a way that is typical and expected. For instance the hero is an archetypal character, who often attempts a journey or quest and demonstrates characteristics or qualities that are valued by the culture in which he or she lives. Odysseus, King Arthur, and Frodo Baggins are examples of archetypal heroes. A less obvious archetypal character is the witch, who may appear as a hag or as a beauty and who tries to trap, delay, or destroy the protagonist (the hero). The evil stepmother in a fairy tale is an example of an archetypal witch. Other archetypal characters include the villain, the whore, the virgin, the martyr, the siren, the traitor, and the rebel. Archetypes can also be found in other elements of the text such as the quest, the journey to the underworld, birth, life, and death.
  - Characters can also be compared and contrasted, and their actions within a text can be analysed even if they do not seem to fit within a prescribed archetype.

Additional tips

- When using sources, remember that most of what is said in the paper should be your own ideas, not your source’s. Quotes from sources are used as evidence to support your own ideas.
- Keep your goals in mind. These may change as you progress through your essay, but you want to be sure to stay on topic.
- Remember that most writing requires steps toward the final version (i.e., brainstorming, researching, drafting). Don’t expect to complete all these sequences the day before (or the day) the essay is due.
- It is almost impossible to analyse a text that you haven’t finished reading.
Vladimir Propp’s – Dramatis Personae and Narratemes

The 7 Dramatis Personae

1. The villain – This is the sharpest opposition to the hero, as he struggles against the hero. This is the ‘bad-guy’. He may attempt to stop the hero from reaching his goal or may be seeking the same artefact. The villain may also try to tempt the hero away from his goal (and the ‘good-side’). Examples include Darth Vadar in Star Wars, Scar in the Lion King, Voldemort from Harry Potter.
2. The donor (or provider) – prepares the hero for his quest or gives the hero some magical gift. Typically this figure is a god, oracle or wise person that the hero encounters.
3. The helper – supports the hero on his quest. This figure is often a wise old man or magician who appears at important moments to offer the hero aid on his quest. Examples include: Dumbledore in Harry Potter, Obi Wan Kenobi in Start Wars, The Fairy Godmother in Cinderella.
4. The Princess and her father – The Princess appears in two ways: either the object sought by the hero or as a reward for completing some other task. She is seen very little in the story, usually only at the end. Propp noted that the Princess and her Father cannot be separated; as he usually sets the hero on his quest for the princes or awards her as a prize.
5. The Dispatcher – character who makes the lack known and sends the hero off (sometimes the princesses father works in this role).
6. The Hero – he might be a victim who is looking to right some wrong or a seeker who is questing for the princess (or some other prize). He weds the princess at the story’s end.
7. False Hero – he tries to take credit for the hero’s actions. He may also try to marry the princess. He provides another complication (opposed to the one provided by the villain). He appears to act like the hero and may even be mistaken for the hero, but he’s usually caught or stopped by the hero before doing too much damage.

31 Narratemes (or functions)

The first seven narratemes introduce the initial story situation: who, where, when, how and why.

1. Something’s Missing: Someone is in danger, or something is missing in the hero’s world.
2. The Warning: The hero is cautioned: “You are too young, inexperienced or weak.”
3. Violation: The antagonist disturbs the peace, poses a threat. Can be a real or perceived danger.
4. Reconnaissance: The villain often wants to know where the precious object is located.
5. Delivery: The villain obtains useful information, to be used against the hero. Not good for the hero.
6. Trickery: The villain tries to fool the hero in order to steal something of value or threaten someone important to the hero.
7. Complicity: The hero falls for it, and he unwittingly helps the antagonist.

Now, the story really begins! In folktales the hero would leave on his quest.

8. Villainy and Lack: The villain threatens/harms someone important to the hero, or something goes wrong.
9. The Challenge: The hero discovers on his own, or is sometimes informed of the lack by the ‘dispatcher’, who requests or makes the hero feel obligated to help.
10. Counteraction: The hero chooses to accept the challenge or task despite clear personal danger.
11. Departure: The hero leaves and is, (often accidentally) joined by another character known as the ‘helper’ or ‘provider’.
In the next sequence, the hero sets out on his quest. He may or not get assistance from the ‘helper’, (but the hero’s goal is clear at this point.

12. The Test: The protagonist is soon challenged, either by the ‘helper’, or someone else needing assistance.
13. Reaction: Our hero responds positively and bravely to the test, but may or may not succeed at this time.
14. Acquisition: The hero is given a magical object from the ‘donor’.
15. Transport: Usually, the hero must travel to another location to reach his goal where he is unwelcomed or will be in danger.
16. Confrontation: The hero and villain fight. This may not be the climactic battle and the hero may lose this round.
17. Injury: The hero is injured (or set back in his quest) but is not mortally wounded.
18. Victory: Our hero beats the bad guy, but his victory may only be temporary and actually strengthens the villain.
19. Resolution: The initial lack may or may not have been fixed, but someone is rescued or something is returned through the direct efforts of the hero.

In many stories this might be the story’s end as the hero returns and all is well. However, Propp provides an additional story possibility. Many of his suggestions are optional from now on.

20. The Hero Returns: The hero leaves the place he initially went to for his quest and heads back home.
21. Pursuit: The hero is chased by the villain who again tries to kill him or take back what the object.
22. The Rescue: The hero narrowly escapes, often through the assistance of the ‘helper’, or due to a new skill or moral realization.
23. Back Home: Our hero gets back home but he/she is unrecognized or must hide from danger.
24. The False Claim: Because the hero appears absent, others may spread false rumours or question his heroic character and attempt to be the champion or ‘false hero’.
25. The Difficult Task: This is a direct challenge to the hero who must do something which seems impossible, (i.e., get the golden fleece, fight a dragon, etc.).
26. Task Performed: The protagonist proves again his mettle by accomplishing The Difficult Task.
27. Recognition: The protagonist is acknowledged by someone important to the hero. He proves himself.
28. False Claim is Exposed: The false claim by the false hero is usually revealed as a direct result of the hero having performed the impossible/heroic task.
29. Acknowledgement: The hero is seen in a new light and his heroism is recognized by everyone else.
30. The Hero Wins: The bad guy is vanquished by the hero in a climactic battle, usually in physical combat. The false hero is often punished as well.
31. The Hero Returns: In folktales the hero usually marries a beautiful princess and ascends the throne.
The Heroine's Journey (adapted from Maureen Murdock)

This journey is also cyclical (it makes a circle), so it could be plotted just as the 'Hero's Journey Chart' is.

1. Separation from the feminine
2. Identification with the masculine and gathering allies
3. Road of trials, meeting ogres and dragons
4. Finding the boon of success
5. Awakening to feelings of spiritual aridity: death
6. Initiation and descent to the goddess
7. Urgent yearning to reconnect with the feminine
8. Healing the mother/daughter split
9. Healing the wounded masculine
10. Integration of masculine and feminine
Assignment Resources

Brilliant Club Assessment Objectives

You have probably come across Assessment Objectives at school. The Assessment Objectives used by The Brilliant Club fall somewhere in between the ones you have already used in school and those you will encounter at university. If you were interested in looking at the marking criteria used by King’s College London English Department, you can find them at http://www.kcl.ac.uk/artshums/study/handbook/sguides/ugmarkcrit.pdf.

AO1 - Effective Research

We are looking for students to:

- Use precision in the handling of concepts and in the selection of evidence presented to support points
  - Lower level: Make use of learning materials from the tutorials and reading assignments
  - Higher level: Make use of additional materials that have been independently sourced
- Show awareness of historical context, where appropriate
  - Lower level: Using generalised historical context to support argument.
  - Higher level: Using independently researched historical context to strengthen and develop argument

AO2 - Critical Thinking

We are looking for students to:

- Demonstrate a careful and critical engagement with the material
  - Lower level: Analyse concepts
  - Higher level: Evaluate concepts
- Show imagination and originality
  - Lower level: Making links between content
  - Higher level: Synthesising ideas and drawing conclusion

AO3 - Essay Writing

We are looking for students to:

- Demonstrate a precision, clarity and facility of writing
  - Including spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Engage with and answer the question
  - Lower level: Give a clear answer to the question at some point
  - Higher level: Answer the question with an acknowledgement of definitions/parameters etc.
- Structure their writing effectively
  - Lower level: Use structure to develop an argument or reach a conclusion
  - Higher level: Put forward and sustain a coherent argument

AO4 – Self-Reflection

We are looking for students to:

- Recognise alternative approaches and show an awareness of limitations to their own
- Identify and possibly even explore further avenues of inquiry
Essay Requirements

Question:

How useful is Joseph Campbell’s *Hero With A Thousand Faces* as a tool for literary criticism?

Word Limit:

2000 words, not including footnotes or references

Deadline:

At university you are allowed a 10% discretion on the word limit; the same stands here.

Referencing Guide

Plagiarism is when you pass off someone else’s work as your own. It doesn’t matter whether that person is your best friend, your mum, the author of a book or the anonymous author of an article on a website.

If you use someone else’s research, you quote them IN QUOTATION MARKS without changing the wording, and then reference it – i.e. put their name and the page number. It is fine to paraphrase – to put someone else’s argument in your own words – but you must still reference properly (i.e. name of the author).

At university, you will be expected to provide more detailed in-text citations as well as a more detailed bibliography (see below), but for the purposes of this essay, these guidelines will suffice.

Bibliography

At the end of your essay, write a new heading – ‘Bibliography’ – and list all of the sources you have used in your essay, including primary texts such as novel or film you might have used to talk about Joseph Campbell’s monomyth. They should be listed in alphabetical order by the author or critic’s surname, without the page numbers. If you are citing a source that doesn’t have an author, such as a website, then put it at the very bottom.

Is your source from a book?

Name of critic or author (surname, first). *Title of book in italics*

Example: Campbell, Joseph. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*

Is your source from a newspaper or journal article?

Author (surname, first). ‘*Title of article in inverted commas*, Name of newspaper or journal in italics

Example: Raglan, Lord. ‘The Hero of Tradition’, *The Study of Folklore*

Is your source from a website?

Name of author (if there is one), ‘*Title of piece in inverted commas*’ (if there is one), Full url of website