# The Mystical Function And The Primal Goddess

This function of mythology introduces us to (and reminds us of) the fact that there are things about existence, the universe, and life experience that are *transcendent*, not submissible to formal, scientific analysis; things which simply must be accepted as they are and recognized as having a significant impact on human experience.

The biologist J. B. S. Haldane wrote that, “Theuniverse is not only[stranger] than we imagine, it is[stranger] than we *can* imagine.”[[1]](#footnote-1) The fact that there are aspects of living experience which are not explicable via reason does not mean that those experiences are to be avoided nor dismissed — they are certainly not to be denied. Indeed, the very nature of “mythos” in contrast to “logos” is the assimilation of the wisdom of experience *disconnected* from reason and logic. Some things *just are*.

The **Primal Goddess** is the representative of this function because of her association with the mysteries of life and death. Her dichotomous nature as *both* mother-nurturer *and* implacable punisher reflects the inexplicable variety and vagaries of the natural world: the Earth provides food but also produces earthquakes and volcanoes. This contradiction was a mystery, certainly to early cultures, and it is not unknown even to contemporary societies, as reflected in the question: “Why do bad things happen to good people?”[[2]](#footnote-2)

## Protology: Automatic Myths Of Origin

There also occurs a parallel between this function of mythology and *automatic* creation/origin myths, wherein the fundamental elements of creation either already exist or come into being without explanation (they are *automatically* part of the myth, and accepted as apodictic). Examples include Gaia in the Greek tradition[[3]](#footnote-3), arising from the primordial chaos — she does not cause her own creation (*sui creates*) — she just “happens” as a result of the inherent properties of the *ylem[[4]](#footnote-4)*; Tepeu and Gucumatz in the Mesoamerican tradition, pre-existing in a cosmic ocean (again, without an explained origin)[[5]](#footnote-5); the Great God Vishnu (*Mahavishnu*)[[6]](#footnote-6) in the Hindu tradition, who is interwoven throughout the fabric of the universe, but nevertheless contains it simultaneously. There are examples from every mythic tradition, no matter how ancient.

## The First Steps Away From Animism

The British historian and documentarian, Bettany Hughes, in the first episode (“When God Was A Girl”) of her three-part her televised series, *Divine Women* discusses the fact that, “If you look at the total number of human figures unearthed between now and around 30,000 BC, then the massive majority of them are of the female form”[[7]](#footnote-7), and goes on to propose that the earliest expressions of human spiritual awareness are evidenced first in abstracted feminine figurines and later in specifically goddess-depicting statues and carvings. Among the earliest such depictions she references is a carving of a woman who “… looks like she is both being penetrated and giving birth at the same time … and whoever made it obviously thought it was both important, and appropriate that a woman should be commemorated right at the heart of a prehistoric temple”[[8]](#footnote-8).

She posits that the mystery of the Earth giving rise to plants (humankind’s earliest source of nutrition) and the similar mystery of the females of all species giving birth (apparently miraculously) to live young were connected in the minds of Neolithic peoples. Reay Tannahill, in her 1980 book, *Sex In History*, also opines that “… homo sapiens, after more than 100,000 years of fully-fledged existence, may still have been unaware of the biological facts of life when the Neolithic Revolution began.”[[9]](#footnote-9)

These two examples give weight to the idea that early humans were unaware of the relationship between sexual intercourse and birth. Early peoples, apparently found the production of life to be a mysterious, even magical. It seemed typical of their broader experience of the world as a place of unexplained and inexplicable objects and occurrences which must simply be accepted in-and-of themselves. As a species, we were primarily *reactive*.

Thus, in Campbell’s words, the Mystical Function is that of “…opening the world to the dimension of mystery … [realizing] the mystery that underlies all forms,”[[10]](#footnote-10) and reminding us that there are aspects of human experience which logos (science) cannot explain (and which it often declines to investigate).

For example: Imagine you find yourself thinking of a friend or family member to whom you haven’t spoken in quite some time; your phone rings, and when you answer it, that self-same person is calling you.

Logos would call this event a *coincidence*; arguing that in an infinite universe, “uncanny” events are bound to happen from time-to-time. Logos-thinking declares that there is no demonstrable *causal connection* between you thinking of the person and them choosing that precise moment to place a call to you.

Carl Jung, working with Wolfgang Pauli, described such a happenstance as *synchronicity*; arguing that although there may be no demonstrable physical causal connection between the two events, *psychologically there seems to be a connection*, and this seeming causal connection impacts your *reaction* to the event, which then has an effect upon your immediate environment. Thus, an event of synchronicity has an effect “… equal in rank to causality as a principle of explanation”[[11]](#footnote-11). It may be *objectively* insignificant, but its *subjective* significance is profound and not to be dismissed.

A fascinating sidenote here is that the word “coincidence” is Latin, meaning “happening at the same time”; whereas “synchronicity” is Greek, meaning … “happening at the same time.” Greek is the older language, and as stated earlier, the pre-Socratic Greeks saw mythos as the primary means of acquiring knowledge. Thus, the words, themselves, encode the realization that humans were having experiences and assigning meaning to them (the Mystical Function) long before we began to cogitate upon their causes (the Cosmological Function).

## The Growth Of The Goddess

As human consciousness expanded, men and women began to ask “why?”, “… the question that marked humanity's final, irrevocable divergence from the apes,”[[12]](#footnote-12) and to utilize the rudimentary answers they found in their first, halting steps to have some sense of agency and empowerment to consciously direct the paths of their lives. This marks the transition of the female figurine from a simple expression of the abstract concept of the powers of nature into representations of a personified director[[13]](#footnote-13) of natural events.

The discovery at the bottom of a grain bin at Çatalhöyük of a carving of a seated woman flanked by two lionesses has been described by Shahina Farid, field director of the site until 2012 as:

… a life-giving force, [but] I don't think she's a goddess at this stage, and I think we're at the beginning of this role of the female form becoming a goddess. Mother Goddess did not come from nowhere; she has to start somewhere. And we think that Çatalhöyük is one of the places where she started.[[14]](#footnote-14)

As Hughes then points out, “As societies developed in scale and got more sophisticated the goddess … got bigger; she's no longer one of those diminutive, little figurines at Çatalhöyük. Now, she's a kind of dominatrix, guarding and ruling over a vast landscape.”[[15]](#footnote-15) Dr. Taciser Sivas of Anadolu University at Eskişehir, Turkey, has remarked, “… she controlled nature. She controls the animals. She controls the wild world … so the Mother Goddess was the protector of the people.”[[16]](#footnote-16)

Hughes continues, “As prehistory gives way to history, and men and women start to write down the stories of their lives, we begin to learn the names of some of these divine women: Isis; Ishtar; Inanna, the Queen of Heaven. They actually come in all shapes and sizes, but a notable number share two key traits: These are still creatures in charge of both life *and* death, of conflict and fertility: they inspire awe … and they are terrifying.”[[17]](#footnote-17)

But, the continued growth of human intelligence and the increasing levels of our ability to manipulate nature (which gave us a growing false sense of control), meant that our thinking processes steadily progressed from mere awareness of experience to contemplation of causes and effects. Thus, we began to develop disciplined structures of asking questions and ferreting out answers, a process which Richard Shlain believes led to the domination of the explanations of the “left-brain” in human cognition, at the expense of the insights of the “right-brain”. He observes:

… left hemispheric modes of thought are reinforced at the expense of right hemispheric ones, which manifests as a decline in the status of images, women's rights, and goddess worship.[[18]](#footnote-18)

And as Robert M. Pirsig observes in *Zen and The Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, “It’s been necessary since before the time of Socrates to reject the passions and the emotions, in order to free the rational mind for an understanding of nature’s order, which was as yet unknown.”[[19]](#footnote-19)

## The Cosmological Function And The King God

Examination and exploration of the natural world led to the inevitable conclusion that natural events happen as a result of knowable causes and effects, which engendered the idea that the universe functions according to certain knowable, immutable laws. A dropped object falls to the ground; water seeks its own level; decay is the default process of life[[20]](#footnote-20); cause always precedes effect.

The reasoning seems to have been something like:

1. There are universal laws of the natural world which are always true and unbreakable.
2. Rules of behavior result from the ordering of thoughts by conscious will.
3. Therefore, the universal laws of nature must have been formulated, enacted, and are continually enforced, by an overarching, controlling consciousness.

### Protology: Architectural Myths of Origin

The Cosmological Function is thus associated with *architectural* creation/origin myths, in which the physical universe is conceived, manifested, structured, and ordered by the *conscious agency* of a deity or deities. The manifested deity or deities (who often arise *increatus,* “uncreated”) set about to build the universe according to some design.

Thus, *all automatic origin myths become architectural at some point.* This may happen quickly, as we see in the first line of Genesis, “In the beginning, God created the Heavens and the Earth.”[[21]](#footnote-21) The first phrase, “In the beginning, God,” is an automatic origin myth; neither God’s origin nor nature is explained — it is assumed, he is *increatus* (uncreated) . The remainder of the passage begins an architectural origin myth; the physical universe and everything in it brought into existence through the conscious actions of God, for his own reasons and purposes.

The overarching, controlling consciousness of architectural myths of origin was almost everywhere assigned to a male deity in preference to a female. Edith Hall, Professor in the Department of Classics and Centre for Hellenic Studies at King’s College, London, tells Bettany Hughes:

Walled cities start to be built all around the, sort of, Mediterranean world, and you get large armies; you get very powerful kings; you get accumulation of money and capital. You get something you've got to defend, something really worth fighting for. And violence, in terms of policing the world, becomes — I think — much more common. Mass violence, between different communities. And that's the moment at which you start to get these big, masculine gods, that's I think a reflection of a much more militaristic culture on the ground.[[22]](#footnote-22)

But why? Shlain suggests that it was because big-game hunting generally fell to males:

The prolonged childhood of their progeny precluded most women from hunting. A mother could not leave her young for long and a crying baby could not accompany a hunting expedition. Among other social predators such as wolves, lions, and killer whales, the females actively participate in both hunting and killing. Humans became the first group of social predators in which females left this critical task to the males. A hunter must maintain a singularity of purpose when focused on prey; a mother must keep a field awareness of all that is going on around her.[[23]](#footnote-23)

Thus, according to Shlain, the average male became more goal-oriented and task-focused, while the average female became more process-oriented and multi-tasking[[24]](#footnote-24). He also contends that the perpetuation of culture became the purview of mothers, while socializing the young became the task of fathers.

Besides providing her young with breast milk, a mother became responsible for imparting the knowledge of the *culture*, imprinting upon the infant's mind essential lessons regarding love, honor, respect, courage, loyalty, honesty, curiosity, playfulness, and self-esteem. To enhance their offspring's chances of survival, the females also reached across the growing divide separating the sexes and engaged the males of the tribe in the job of *socializing* children.[[25]](#footnote-25) [emphasis added]

Society, by its very nature, is a set of permissions and prohibitions dictated to individuals by the collective will of the body politic. Thus, the argument goes:

1. The laws of nature are formulated, enacted, and continually enforced, by a Father God.
2. Society is bounded by laws, just as nature is bounded by laws.
3. Because males are more logically minded than females[[26]](#footnote-26), it is in the male nature to explore and apprehend natural laws.
4. Familiarity with the essence and functioning of natural law qualifies males to conceive, enact, and enforce societal laws.

(Yes, there is more than a hint of a circular argument here, but, as Gary Zukav points out, mythos “… follows a much more permissive set of rules”[[27]](#footnote-27) than does logos.)

The fifth and final point is the least palatable. Because, as Shain says, “Hunting demands ‘cold-bloodedness’ tinged with cruelty; nurturance requires emotional generosity combined with warmth,”[[28]](#footnote-28) and hunters are perforce male[[29]](#footnote-29); males are, therefore, naturally better equipped to enforce the sometimes rigorously inequitable and unjust rules of society in order to ensure the greatest good to the greatest number for the majority of the time.[[30]](#footnote-30)

This has also been supposed to explain that “The male brain tends to be more efficient to lateralize and compartmentalize, which has the advantage of making him more task-focused. The female brain has more [nerve] connections and constantly cross-signals and takes in more, so it tends to see and feel more than the male brain.”[[31]](#footnote-31)

An example: It so often happens that when a hetero-husband is discovered to have cheated on his spouse, his response is something like, “It was one time; it has nothing to do with *us*!” He apparently literally believes that his dalliance with another woman is completely and utterly unrelated to his relationship with his wife. The spouse, on the other hand, tends to respond along the lines of “It has *everything* to do with us!” In her awareness, *he is her husband at all times and in all situations[[32]](#footnote-32)*, whether she is physically present with him or not; as far as she is concerned, he might just has well have engaged in sex with the other woman while his wife was in the same room.

It is not that either of them is more-or-less “right” about the situation; they simply have conflicting understandings of the circumstances. Shlain concludes:

Evolution, in time, equipped men and women emotionally to respond differently to the same stimuli. This resulted in men and women having different perceptions of the world, survival strategies, styles of commitment, and, ultimately, different ways of *knowing:* the way of the hunter/killer and the way of the gatherer/nurturer.[[33]](#footnote-33)

## The Divine Father And The Demotion Of The Goddess

Shlain asserts that there was a devaluation of the contributions of women in the maintenance of the community:

The necessity of hunting larger and more dangerous animals … meant that hunters had to be bolder. The female, on the other hand, performed repetitious routines that had little glory or reward and kept her *immanent.*[[34]](#footnote-34)Women's work was not inspiring because it was not dangerous, even though everyone tacitly recognized its value to the tribe's overall well-being.[[35]](#footnote-35)

This led to a gradual diminution of the power of the Primal Goddess in mythological stories. As Hesiod reports the outcome of the civil war among the Greek gods in his *Theogeny*, “Now King of the Gods, Zeus was wiser than any other god or any mortal….”[[36]](#footnote-36)

This social change in the status of the female is reflected in numerous myths within all societies. An example of a myth that encodes this transition is the Greek tale of Demeter and Persephone.

Persephone is given away by her father, Zeus, to his brother (and her uncle), Hades, as a wife. Neither Persephone nor her mother, Demeter, are consulted about, *nor even informed of*,the arrangement. Hades simply collects (abducts) Persephone one day and carries her off to the Underworld. Hermes witnesses the event, but keeps quiet about it.[[37]](#footnote-37) Demeter, noting Persephone’s absence, seeks her out only to be told she should not be upset, but that she should instead feel joy at having such a powerful and prestigious new son-in-law. The message is clear; the girl is inconsequential; the male is paramount.

Demeter, in her sadness, abandons Olympus for the world of Men, and decrees an embargo on the Earth’s fertility — seeds will not germinate, fruits will not flower. She is exerting a fundamental power of the Primal Goddess by controlling natural processes. As the Earth becomes sere and barren, mortals are not able to make sacrifices to the gods, an intolerable state of affairs. When Zeus finally takes notice that something is awry, he engages each of the other Olympians, in turn, to plead and negotiate with Demeter to relent, but she remains steadfast.[[38]](#footnote-38)

Zeus ultimately sends Hermes to the Underworld to command Hades to release Persephone from the “contract”. Hermes finds her there, despondent and dejected. It is critical to take note at this juncture that *Persephone has taken no action whatsoever to extricate herself from her undesired circumstance*. Again, the message is clear: as a female you are powerless and without agency — if something bad happens to you, endure, and wait patiently for a male to come to your aid.

Persephone is delighted at Hermes’ news and immediately prepares for departure. Hades ostensibly releases her, but in doing so, fools her by encouraging her to eat a bit of pomegranate before leaving, thus dooming her to spend part of each year with him in the Underworld.

Once she is (temporarily) reunited with her mother[[39]](#footnote-39), Demeter is forced to release her stranglehold on the Earth and allow it to bloom and thrive once more. Tellingly, she is then required to reveal the secrets of growing things to the male gods[[40]](#footnote-40), so that she will never again be able to hold them hostage in such a way.

Persephone’s obligation to remain consorted with Hades, and Demeter’s forced surrender of her Primal Goddess power are both tacit signals to the audience that the male has taken the dominant position and the female is well-advised to bend to masculine whim and will.

Shades of these same messages are to be found in the Norse story of the theft of Idunn’s Apples, in which Loki conspires with a Frost Giant to spirit the goddess away, depriving the Asgardians of the rejuvenating effects of the apples she dispenses. When (as always happens), Loki’s mischief is revealed, he is forced to undertake her rescue to undo the damage he’s done. He finds her in the giant’s castle, sitting dejected in a dark, cold room (*à la* Persephone), having taken no action on her own behalf to rectify her situation. She is returned to Asgard, where she blithely resumes dispensing her apples, evincing no signs whatsoever of trauma as a result of her ordeal, implying that she was too naïve even to recognize the danger she had been in.

Another implicit message concerning the diminution of the authority of the Primal Goddess is found in the story of Artemis and Aktaion, in which the hapless prince of Thebes[[41]](#footnote-41) chances to glimpse the goddess at her bath. Infuriated at such an imposition, the Huntress transforms Aktaion into a stag and he is then brought down by his own hunting hounds.

Here, again, Artemis displays a power of the Primal Goddess, to exercise violence in the punishment of wrong-doing, but the message is far more subtle than that. Artemis is an avowed virgin[[42]](#footnote-42), and her agency in the male-dominated environment of Olympus is predicated upon her retaining this condition. Since the males of her society equate even simply being seen naked as tantamount to engaging in sexual congress, she cannot allow anyone to know that Aktaion has encountered her thus. What *actually* transpired carries far less weight than what may appear to have occurred. A whiff of scandal becomes an inescapable social stench. She defends her virginity by violent means, not so much because she values it in-and-of-itself, but for the agency it affords her in society[[43]](#footnote-43).

Like Kybele of the Phrygians and Kali in the Hindu tradition, Artemis is fully capable of violent action; however, the difference is her motivation in this instance for violence. She is not (as with Kali), defending the world from a dangerous threat; Artemis’ motivation is far more materialistic and socially constructed[[44]](#footnote-44).

The ultimate demotion (degradation?) is found in Aphrodite’s story. She is reported to have arisen (not been born) from the foam issuing from the testicles of Ouranos (Uranus), severed and thrown into the sea[[45]](#footnote-45),[[46]](#footnote-46),[[47]](#footnote-47). In the story of her “marriage” to Hephaestus (via an act of extortion against Zeus) and her dalliance with Ares (whom she preferred and desired to be united with[[48]](#footnote-48)), she is depicted as a purely sexual creature, desired *solely* for her pulchritude. (In one retelling, after Hephaestus has left Olympus for his daily work, Ares goes to Aphrodite’s bedchamber and merely motions to her — all the effort needed on his part to summon her to lovemaking[[49]](#footnote-49)).

Discovering the pair *in flagrante delicto*, Hephaestus immediately summons Zeus to witness her “betrayal”, and demands that the entirety of the bride-price he gave for her be returned[[50]](#footnote-50). The other male gods, attracted by the commotion, jape and jest, admitting that they would gladly endure Ares’ humiliation in this situation for a chance to sample Aphrodite’s charms, themselves — and all this while the goddess is entrapped in Hephaestus’ snare and cannot extricate herself to flee from their leering and jeering.

Thus, the male in many societies was established as “an acknowledged despot … [taking] over the dominant role and [learning] to use every available means to sustain it.”[[51]](#footnote-51) Exploration of the processes of the natural world and the development of discernment of the relationship between cause and effect fell to males because they were exempt from the requirements of child-bearing and child-rearing.

The human male tended to focus on developing logos-knowledge over mythos-wisdom, and gained a (sometimes utterly illusory) sense of the power of agency in personal and collective destiny. This, combined with unplanned responses to biological necessities and haphazard adaptation to environmental pressures, conspired to create a state of gender inequity and injustice in many human societies, which mythology was sometimes coöpted to validate and perpetuate.

### A Structured, Orderly World

The architectural aspect of protology (origin myths) appears in some of the earliest written accounts of mytho-religious literature. Most of these record the origin and nature of the structure and order of the physical universe; enumerate the specific actions of a seminal male deity[[52]](#footnote-52) who brought it all about; and emphasize that organizing physical principles and processes are *crucial* for a smoothly functioning reality that is both conducive and kindly to human existence.

Norse mythology reflects this model when Odin and his brothers construct the Nine Realms from the body of the Frost Giant, Ymir; and, of course, the Tanakh[[53]](#footnote-53) enumerates in great detail in the book of Genesis the order in which Yahweh creates the various physical aspects of the universe.

Reproduction of the illustration "The Great Chain of Being" from the book Rhetorica Christiana by Didacus Valades

Public DomainThis was also captured in the European Medieval concept of the Great Chain of Being, a hierarchical structure of the physical universe, both animate and inanimate, progressing upward from minerals at the bottom to God at the pinnacle.

The underlying message is that the universe has the structure it does for good reasons, and if you’re going to try to manipulate it, you should do so intelligently, with a thorough understanding of the possible and potential effects your actions will produce. This is the other face of the Divine Father: the Moral Authoritarian; the King God who has ordained the universe to be as it is, decreed that it is perfect as-built, and demands that his order be honored and his natural laws be observed and obeyed.[[54]](#footnote-54)

In *Egyptian Myth: A Very Short Introduction*, Geraldine (Harris) Pinch, faculty of Oriental Studies at the University of Oxford, discusses the Memphite Theology, sourced to an ancient scroll which was partially duplicated on a stele known as the Shabaqo Stone.[[55]](#footnote-55) She relates that in this account, the creator deity, Ptah, is linked,

… with a whole series of deities who represent elements of the primeval world … [including] Ptah-Nun and Ptah-Naunet, the male and female aspects of the dark, watery chaos of the primeval ocean. The potential for intelligent life was inherent in this ocean, but was not realized until the spirit of the creator attained awareness.[[56]](#footnote-56)

Note here the echoes of animistic thought; the quintessential material from which physical reality will arise or be constructed is described as a mysterious “stuff” which has no nature of its own, but holds in suspension all possible things, awaiting a directing consciousness to bring them into being.

This is strikingly similar to Hindu cosmogony, as when Campbell quotes from the Upanishads, “In the beginning there was only the Great Self, reflected in the form of a person. Reflecting, it found nothing but itself, and its first word was, ‘This am I.'”.[[57]](#footnote-57)

Pinch tells of Atum of Heliopolis, who, as described in the Pyramid and Coffin Texts:

… acted as both father and mother, by giving himself an erection, taking his ‘seed’ into his mouth, and spitting out the first divine couple Shu and Tefnut. The androgynous nature of the creator was sometimes made clearer by personifying the hand of Atum as a goddess who united with his penis to create life.[[58]](#footnote-58)

A more specific relationship to the Cosmological Function is found in the retelling of the story in the Memphite Theology, in which “… Ptah is said to bring deities, people, and animals into being by devising them in his heart and naming them with his tongue.”[[59]](#footnote-59) This power of *divine speech* is ubiquitous in architectural creation myths, and serves to illustrate the awareness of the earliest societies of the power of first spoken, and then written, language.[[60]](#footnote-60) Pinch emphasizes that “… the ‘divine words’ of Ptah can, like hieroglyphs, *make thoughts real*”[[61]](#footnote-61) [emphasis added].

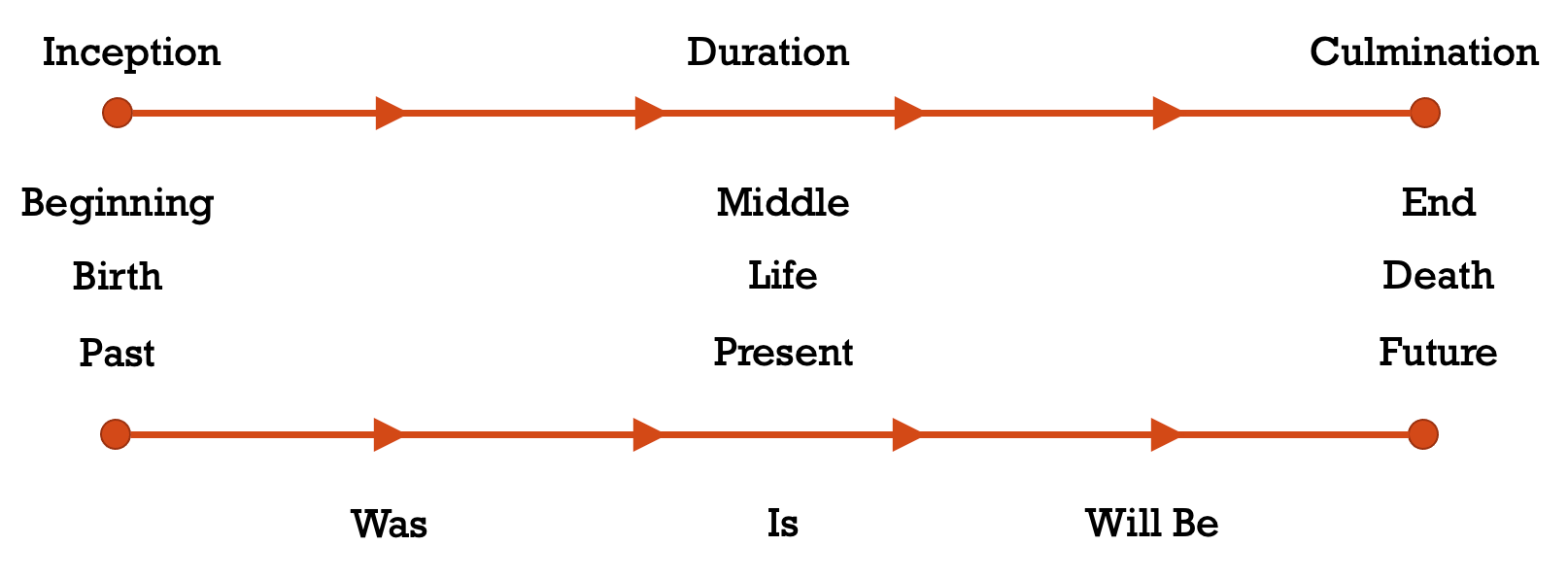
If we posit that “thoughts” in this sense, refers to “cogitations born of contemplation and exploration”, then the concept is demonstrably logos-oriented, since experience and feeling are indelibly linked to mythos. Speech (and later written language) is a structured and ordered expression of the products of asking questions and discovering answers, clearly a function of logos-knowledge. Thus, a structured and orderly world, created by structured and orderly thoughts, realized by structured and orderly language, *must* be the product of the agency and actions of a male deity, himself functioning in a structured and orderly fashion.

Pinch observes that, “On one level, the Memphite Theology can be seen as a classic validatory myth. It justifies the continued existence of institutions such as kingship and the priesthood by giving them divine origins,”[[62]](#footnote-62) but she also points out that, “… local deities of both genders achieved the status of creator, [and] where a temple had two principle deities, both could be given creation myths,”[[63]](#footnote-63) and that, although “Egyptian cosmogonies usually list several, apparently contradictory primal events, [they] do not seem to have regarded their creation myths as literally true, [but] more like highly charged metaphors, drawn from the natural world.”[[64]](#footnote-64),[[65]](#footnote-65)

This power of divine speech also appears in the *Popol Vuh*, the Mayan account of creation, wherein “Creation begun with a declaration of the first words,”[[66]](#footnote-66), and of course, in the first chapter of the Hebrew Bible, “And God said, Let there be light: and there was light,”[[67]](#footnote-67) as well as the first verse of the Christian New Testament Book of John: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God … and the Word was made flesh….”[[68]](#footnote-68)

## Linear and Cyclical Time

Most logos-structured worldviews see time as linear, following a path from a starting point to a conclusion, an ending which is inevitable, inescapable, and absolutely final.



In addition, most cultures which use an alphabet writing modality also depict the flow of time as left-to-right (or, more rarely, top-down), so that on a timeline, earlier dates are to the left of later ones.

This is reflected in many mythologies which have an *eschatological* mode, both at an individual and a universal level. An eschatology[[69]](#footnote-69) is any system of stories concerning last, or final, matters, such as an apocalypse, a judgment, an afterlife, etc. These mythologies purport to describe or predict for an individual what to expect after death (predicated upon a moral-ethical assessment of the conduct of their lifetime). However, they as well elucidate what form a general “end of the world” will take, and whatever (if anything) follows — which is usually expected to be utterly different and generally “better” than the current situation (at least for those who qualify to partake in it).

All of these systems tend to have strong architectural protological elements; a Creator brought the universe into being, is watching over it as it functions, and will either bring about or at least preside over its demise when its function comes to an end.

It is easy to see how this worldview came about. In everyday, logos-oriented experience, everything has a beginning, an existence of some duration, and an ending. Plants sprout, grow and flourish, and finally wither; animals are born, live and interact, and eventually die. Even mountains — the very rocks, themselves — are not permanent, but rise, maintain for a time (a very long time, in human terms, but a finite time), and erode away. It makes sense that this becomes entrenched in a culture’s “understanding” of “how things work.”

Other worldviews, however, see time and existence as more-or-less cyclical (at least when it is functioning properly). The totality may be subdivided into lesser units which have a finite nature, but the essence of being — the nature of existence — is, itself, unbounded having no beginning and no ending. It is *transcendent*.

Try imagining a canvas so large that an infinite number of paintings of any individual size may be created on it, but regardless how many paintings are painted on it, there is always room for one more, of any size. The mind literally rebels.

A white and black analog clock, showing the time as approximately 7 minutes past 10.

Public DomainA more practical example can be seen in a standard analog clock. Each cycle of the minute hand around the clock denotes an hour of time, and each cycle of the hour hand defines some version of a “day”. But the circle of the clock’s circumference, itself, has no beginning and no end. If an analog clock were able to function in perpetuity[[70]](#footnote-70), the minute and hour hands would cycle around it endlessly, ceaselessly marking out individual minutes and hours, but never coming to an end of their journey.

Similarly, a wall-calendar with 12 sheets, each divided into regular arrangements of squares beginning with January 1 in the upper-left of the first page and concluding with December 31 at the lower-right of the last page tracks the passage of a year, but time, itself, does not come to a stop at the end of the last page; a new calendar with a similar structure replaces the previous one, and another year is counted through (again, theoretically in perpetuity).

Illustration of the Mayan Long-Count calendar carving.

Public DomainMisunderstanding of this principle is why so many people incorrectly believed that “time” would “end” when the Mayan Long-Count calendar “ran out” on December 21, 2012; the famous circular carving is simply a depiction of a very long period of time (5,125 years), but each of those periods is believed to be preceded by a previous 5,125-year period, and it is assumed that each wil be succeeded by a following 5,125-year period, for as long as the universe exists.

The Ancient Egyptian view of time was primarily cyclical on a universal level[[71]](#footnote-71). Again, it is not hard to see why this would be so: each day the Sun rose in the east, travelled across the sky, and set in the west. Each daylight period was followed by a dark period in which the Moon[[72]](#footnote-72) and various arrangements of stars (constellations) were visible, also traversing the sky from east-to-west.

The nighttime period, however, had more variety than the daylight period; the shape of the Moon changed in a regular, predictable cycle, and which constellations were in the sky also shifted over time. Counting from one Full Moon to the next yielded a count of about 29 cycles of the Sun rising and setting. Counting from the night when a given constellation was directly overhead in the middle of the night, to the next time it was in that precise position again yielded about 365 risings of the Sun.[[73]](#footnote-73)

So, even though the Sun was “born” each morning and “died” each night, and the Moon was renewed on a monthly basis, and the heavens cycled on a yearly scale, these cycles, themselves, never came to a stop — unless there was an eclipse, which universally terrified logos-thinking humans all over the world for thousands of years, until it was noted that these events, too, occurred on a regular, predictable cycle.

So, a plant may sprout, flourish, and wither, a person may be born, thrive for a time, and die, but time itself continued to flow. Thus, while Egyptian mythology does have an origin story (several, in fact; see above), and while it does have an eschatological mode for people, animals, and objects, it does not foresee and end for the universe, itself.

Hindu cosmogony takes a similar view, but accounts for much longer divisions of perpetuity. In this view, infinite time is divided into the *Yuga*[[74]](#footnote-74) Cycle a series of repeating cycles each of which is called a “*maha yuga*”[[75]](#footnote-75) (or sometimes a “*chatur yuga*”), and which the Vedas tell us comprise 4,320,000 years.

Each Maha Yuga is further divided into four smaller yugas: *Krita* (sometimes *Satya*) *Yuga*, *Treta Yuga*, *Dvapara Yuga*, and *Kali Yuga*. However, these divisions are not equal in length, nor in character; in order, each represents 40-30-20-10 percent of a Maha Yuga. Below is a table for clarity.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Yuga** | **Percentage of Maha Yuga** | **Length (years)** |
| Krita | 40% | 1,728,000 |
| Treta | 30% | 1,296,000 |
| Dvapara | 20% | 864,000 |
| Kali | 10% | 432,000 |
| ***Total*** | ***100%*** | ***4,320,000*** |

As shown, each succeeding yuga is shorter than the preceding one, and the conditions in the universe, and in human society, progressively worsen as each yuga passes into the next. (Unfortunately, the details are far too complex to detail here, but an interesting point to ponder is whether human society degenerates because the universal conditions worsen, or whether it works the other way around).

For our purposes, the important point is that at the end of each Kali yuga, there is a sort-of “resetting” period, after which a new Maha Yuga begins, starting with a new Krita Yuga. One thousand Maha Yugas (4,320,000,000; 4.32 billion years), represents one day in and even longer cycle![[76]](#footnote-76),[[77]](#footnote-77)

Interestingly, we are said to currently be in a Kali Yuga (surprise, surprise), which began 5,124 years ago (does that number seem somehow familiar?) in 3102 BCE.[[78]](#footnote-78)

Finally, the Cosmological Function is frequently where the explanation for the creation and purpose of human beings is to be found. In the Sumerian account of Atrahasis, humankind is created purposely to function “… as short-lived drudges to do the work … on earth.”[[79]](#footnote-79). In the *Popol Vuh*, the creation of humankind only occurs after three previous failed attempts, and their purpose is “… as essential mediators between this world and that of their patron deities and ancestors.”[[80]](#footnote-80) In the Tanakh, humans are created (male first and female later) as the pinnacle of God’s material creation, to serve as keepers of the Garden of Eden, and only later become mortal and subject to hard labor through their own failings. The Vedas reveal that humans were simply a part of the original material manifestation of the universe, but the ease and quality of their physical existence alters with the changing quality of morality through the successive yugas.

## The Sociological Function And The Trickster

The Sociological Function, which Campbell decried as having, “… taken over in our world … ethical laws, the laws of life in the society … what kind of clothes to wear, how to behave to each other … in terms of the values of this particular society”[[81]](#footnote-81).

The Sociological Function is a narrower focus than the Cosmological Function; whereas the latter seeks to describe and explain the nature and working of the objective physical universe, the former concentrates on the institutions and practices that are specific to a particular culture’s social functioning and interactions. Whereas the Cosmological Function often describes the origins and creation of humankind, the Sociological Function, in part, is the vehicle for “… validating or maintaining a certain society; ethical laws, the laws of life in the society … the values of [a] particular society.”[[82]](#footnote-82)

Thomas Hobbes in *Leviathan*, believes that humans originally existed in *State of Nature*[[83]](#footnote-83) (in Latin, *Bellum omnium contra omnes*; “war of all against all”) in which the natural condition is for each person to do whatever seems best to ensure their own survival and thriving. They spent their time competing ceaselessly with one another over limited resources and life was, “… solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.”[[84]](#footnote-84)

Hobbes goes on to explain that eventually people realized that oftentimes more can be achieved through cooperation than competition, but that for cooperation to be engendered and maintained, certain limitations must be levied against the liberty of the individual by the collective. Certain behaviors, mandatory in the State of Nature, must be curtailed or proscribed in the social environment in order to ensure the smooth functioning of collective efforts. Social stratification, hierarchy, and structures of legislation and systems of justice all resulted from the advent of collective life and livelihood.

Thus, there are certain behaviors, available to the individual because of their inalienable right to personal liberty, which must be voluntarily surrendered for the benefit of the group; the other side of this coin, of course, is that the group also reserves the right to require certain behaviors from the individual which are not necessarily naturally voluntary. In other words, the collective decrees some behaviors as approved and others as prohibited. Engagement in approved behaviors elicits rewards; transgression of prohibitions induces punishments.

In this way, the Sociological Function is associated with the Trickster archetype, which may be justifiably termed “the most human” of all the archetypes.

William Hynes, et. al., in *Mythical Trickster Figures: Contours, Contexts, and Criticisms*, identifies and enumerates “… a number of shared characteristics [which] appear to cluster together in a pattern that can serve as an index to the presence of the trickster. At least six similarities … can be identified,”[[85]](#footnote-85) but these should not be viewed as in any way exhaustive or proscriptive.

The six characteristic qualities or behaviors[[86]](#footnote-86) are:

1. *Ambiguous and Anomalous*: the nature of the Trickster, its motivations and goals are never clear or concise; as soon as one believes they have “nailed the Trickster down”, it will alter its behavior to escape definition.
2. *Deceiver and Trick-player*: the most commonly recognized trickster trait; whatever the Trickster appears to be, it is always something more; any act it performs will always have unexpected (though not necessarily always malicious) results.
3. *Shape-Shifter*: whatever guise the Trickster appears in, there is always more than meets the eye; and the Trickster is supremely talented at either actually changing its physical form, or at least disguising itself (often playing its opponent’s own *naïveté* against them).
4. *Situation-Invertor*: similar to Shape-Shifter, any situation in which the Trickster is involved is certain to have more aspects and complexity than a cursory inspection reveals.
5. *Messenger and Imitator of the Gods*: Tricksters are often (unwisely?) employed by divine authority to announce or disseminate their decrees and pronouncements, and in this way the Trickster often seems to (or actively does) take on the mantle of authority, itself.
6. *Sacred and Lewd Bricoleur*: a tinker or jack-of-all-trades, the Trickster is adept at using whatever objects or circumstances are at hand to fashion the means and accomplishment of its trickery.

Some of these characteristics have areas of overlap, in that a given behavior may be identified as falling into more than one category. For instance, in the Nez Percé story “How Beaver Stole Fire From The Pines”[[87]](#footnote-87), Beaver hides under a bank in order to snatch up an ember from the fire.

Beaver’s act of hiding can be seen as simple *deception and trick-playing* (he is not making his presence known); a form of *shape-shifting* (he is disguising his own nature to appear as simply part of the natural surroundings); *situation-inversion* (the Pines believe their meeting place to be secure, when it has, in fact, already been infiltrated); acting as *bricoleur* (Beaver didn’t construct the bank under which he hides — it was already there and he simply made use of it); and, finally *messenger of the gods*, in the sense of bringing a boon from the divine realm to the mundane realm (Beaver’s intent is to bring fire to his people, à la Prometheus).

It is more of a stretch, but we could even invoke *ambiguous and anomalous*, in the sense that while thievery is generally frowned upon in civilized society, the intention and motivation of Beaver’s transgression is ultimately noble — he freely shares fire equally once he is in possession of it, whereas the Pines had been selfishly keeping the secret for themselves.

This, however, also points out the fact that the Trickster is often used in folklore as a warning that selfishness and refusal to share is a major source of social disruption (especially within a small population) and may be viewed as a punishable offense by the group. A marvelous example of this is found in the White Mountain Apache story, “Coyote Steals Sun’s Tobacco”[[88]](#footnote-88), in which Coyote, having stolen Sun’s tobacco, keeps it all for himself and is tricked by the community into giving it all away to them when they pretend to give him a house and a wife.[[89]](#footnote-89),[[90]](#footnote-90)

Lewis Hyde, in *Trickster Makes This World: Mischief, Myth, and Art*, reveals other frequent aspects of the Trickster archetype. Firstly, he says that the Trickster archetype:

…begins with a being whose main concern is getting fed and it ends with the same being grown mentally swift, adept at creating and unmasking deceit, proficient at hiding his tracks and at seeing through the devices used by others to hide theirs.[[91]](#footnote-91)

This hunger may be purely gastronomic, but it may stem from other, more id-centered sources as well, such as a desire for power, wealth, pleasure, security, etc. However, the object of such inducements, once acquired, is rarely enjoyed by the Trickster, for a variety of reasons. Either the food is inedible or unsatisfying, the object is less attractive once acquired, the authority is more onerous than glorifying, etc. This encodes the well-known adage to “be careful what you wish for, you may get it.”

This is effectively presented in the Aesop fable of the frogs and the stork, in which the former repeatedly entreat Zeus to send them a king to rule over them, but always find Zeus’ response inadequate or unsatisfying, until Zeus, simply to quiet their incessant pleading, finally sends a stork as King, which immediately sets to work devouring the frogs one-by-one.

Hyde also points out that the Trickster is often “hoist with his own petard”[[92]](#footnote-92), getting “… snared in his own devices… [so] trickster is cunning about traps but not so cunning as to avoid them himself.”[[93]](#footnote-93)

There is perhaps no better example of this in popular culture than Wile E. Coyote, the Warner Bros. cartoon character who is eternally being foiled by the very snares and devices he tries to employ to entrap the Road Runner.

On the wider sociological level, in true Trickster fashion, the Trickster serves simultaneously a dual purpose. The first of these, the *admonisher*, encompasses the cautionary tale, in which the Trickster serves to remind that punishments may befall an individual who refuses to adhere to divine and/or social mores and expectations. This relates to the “Messenger of The Gods” characteristic of the Trickster (see above), in which guise this archetype is often employed by the Moral Authoritarian Father god as a bringer of punishments to humans.

However, this aspect is also expressed in stories in which the Trickster is “back-tricked”: caught in its own trap, or has its own practices and methods used against it. Native American and African mythologies are rich with these kinds of Trickster tales. We observe Tricksters being punished by the negative consequences of their *own* actions (“…your sin will find you out”[[94]](#footnote-94)), by their leaders, or collectively by their communities, for engaging in misbehaviors such as refusing to share a bounty; for stealing rather than earning food or possessions; or, for causing disruption simply for the sake of watching the ensuing confusion.

The second aspect of the Trickster we might call it the *counselor* role; that of also pointing out that it is *not always the wisest choice to blindly obey the rules*, especially if those rules have become outmoded and inflexible. The young child in “The Emperor’s New Clothes” is performing this Trickster function by refusing to subscribe to the dangerous “group-think” of the elders who know perfectly well that the Emperor is naked, but who are all afraid to speak the truth for fear of rejection by the group.

We also, however, see Tricksters in these myths “misbehaving” because limitations imposed on society are too rigid and thus detrimental to progress and growth (a prime example comes from the Greek tradition — Prometheus bringing fire to humanity in defiance of divine will). In this we find Campbell’s famous Trickster-Hero melding of archetypes (discussed later).

The Trickster, thus, manifests across a spectrum from the *unconscious numbskull*[[95]](#footnote-95) (think of the hapless Gilligan) who causes disruption unintentionally (sometimes as a result of poorly planned and badly executed attempts to do good); to a *malicious spoiler*[[96]](#footnote-96)(à la Rumpelstiltskin), who resonates to the baser drives of human nature and seeks self-advancement and personal pleasure at the expense of others. In this aspect, the Trickster also serves to remind a culture/society of what it values by profaning its sacred icons and institutions.[[97]](#footnote-97)

As indicated above, the Trickster may be considered the most “human” of the primal archetypes, being able to associate with both mortals and with gods (Loki), perform feats of near superhuman daring and strength (Maui), and yet it is fallible and often incurs punishment, or at least reprimand. As the *unconscious numbskull*, the Trickster reminds us that fallibility is part of human nature; however, as the *malicious spoiler*, it teaches that our errancy is not a justification for willfully indulging our basest nature. The Trickster reminds us that we are fallible humans, which can make us evil if we consciously choose to follow our darker impulses.

Additionally, the Trickster is also the salve for human guilt over the need to kill to eat. Hunters, who are weaker, slower, and/or less agile than their prey, in order to obtain meat, must be able to trick animals in order to kill them: wearing a buffalo hide to get close to the herd; setting snares; dangling worms on hooks, and so forth.

Especially among earlier cultures and those which are still “connected” to the natural world, there is an overriding awareness that while killing to eat is an unavoidable necessity, it nevertheless requires a certain abuse of power over other living things to achieve its aims.

As Campbell says, in part quoting Arthur Schopenhauer, “‘Life is something that should not have been. It is in its very essence and character, a terrible thing to consider, this business of living by killing and eating.’ I mean, it’s *in sin* in terms of all ethical judgments, all the time!”[[98]](#footnote-98)

Lastly, it is important to note that the vast majority of Tricksters in earlier mythic traditions are male in character. This is not because females are incapable of engaging in Trickster acts (indeed, in some cultures, females must be come consummate Tricksters merely to survive), but in many (most?) cultures, females simply were not given the personal liberty to make a female Trickster believable to a given audience.

A signal departure from this is the Brule Sioux story of “Iktome Sleeps With His Wife By Mistake”[[99]](#footnote-99). In this story, the character of the wife and the young girl with whom the titular character attempts to have a dalliance *both* take on the Trickster archetype,[[100]](#footnote-100) in order to fool Iktome and teach him a lesson about his self-centered motivations and behavior.

# The Pedagogical Function And The Heroic

Chart, funnel chart

Description automatically generatedThe Pedagogical Function, though it is the fourth and “lowest” function on the Mythic Structure Diagram, is in many ways the most important, as it is about the “… experience of being alive”[[101]](#footnote-101), within the context of the other three functions. It is about the question, “How do I do this thing called Life, in a way that fulfills me and expresses my individuality and uniqueness (Pedagogical Function); in a way that is minimally disruptive to the culture and society of which I am part (Sociological Function); in a way that is minimally destructive to the natural environment of which I and my culture/society are a part (Cosmological Function);, and in a way which keeps me ‘… in accord with the universal being’[[102]](#footnote-102) (Mystical Function)?” What a typically complex-simple question!

If we simplify the Mythic Structure Diagram as a perspectival image of a set of stairs viewed from above, we see that the exploration of mythology is like walking down those stairs, with each step bringing us closer to our destination, yet each step also having a part of its meaning carried forward from the step above it.

The *content* becomes ever more specific, even as the *context* becomes ever broader. Think of looking closely at a painting of a landscape: the whole picture may be of a stand of trees, but as you get closer and closer, you are able to make out particular trees, then separate branches of that tree, and finally individual leaves on that branch of that tree, but you are still aware that the leaf you’re inspecting is on a branch attached to a tree in a painting of a lot of trees.

The Heroic archetype is the manifestation of the Pedagogical Function, which “teaches us how to live a human lifetime under any circumstances,”[[103]](#footnote-103) as Campbell so poetically puts it. It has manifested in many guises in human cultures around the world and across time, but the heroic *character* is *always* a product of the society which produces it, and thus reflects the stresses its progenitor society is experiencing at the time of the archetype’s emergence (and which it is manifested to resolve). This is Campbell’s *monomyth*; the recognition that the Heroic (and, indeed, all of mythology), is a ubiquitous human expression across all cultures and throughout all time, differing in the particulars of each expression, but universal in substance. The archetypes *never* change, but their expressions across different cultures do.

The Heroic also highlights that what *was* heroic behavior in past times may be questionable (indeed, reprehensible) in present contexts (witness both Herakles and Theseus and their unkind treatment of some of the people — especially women — in their lives). Part of the purpose of the Pedagogical Function and of the Heroic archetype is to help individuals address those circumstances wherein the needs of self-expression conflict with the duties of social obligation. For example, an action which might have been questionable behavior for your grandparents may be a survival necessity for you. Contrariwise, some things your grandparents may have taken for granted as their just due as human beings may today land you in court. As Campbell says, “The virtues of the past are the vices of today, and many of what were thought to be the vices of the past are the necessities of today.”[[104]](#footnote-104)

The most straightforward presentation of the Heroic archetype for an effective study of mythology is encoded in the twelve steps of Christopher Vogler’s Hero’s Journey[[105]](#footnote-105) (as adapted from Campbell’s original 17-step cycle). This analysis (and template) for the Heroic storyline is applicable to a variety of both ancient and modern heroic figures, but is also not specific to a particular type of Heroic character. Some of Campbell’s 17 steps of the Hero’s adventure are still couched in Eurocentric or male-centric terms — for instance, “meeting with the goddess,” “woman as temptress”, “*master* of two worlds”, etc. Vogler’s adaptation of Campbell’s Heroic Journey is inclusive, not specific to race, culture, society, gender identity, or, indeed, species. A robotic viewpoint character may traverse the entirety of a Heroic adventure.

Vogler, thus, reinforces Campbell’s emphasis that the Heroic archetype was originally intended as an aid, a guide, and a comfort for everyday human life: a guidebook for “how to live a human lifetime under any circumstances.”[[106]](#footnote-106) However, inherent in the *traditiona*l Heroic journey is the assumption that the goal of the Heroic’s actions is, itself, worthy and worthwhile, and beneficial to “the greater good.” History, if not the Heroic’s own society, must see their deeds as laudable, selfless, martyrly, etc. A more modern understanding of the Heroic is less limiting.

Finally, there is Campbell’s lesson that there are two types of Heroic deed (the spiritual and the physical) and three fundamental types of Heroic character (intentional, accidental, and forced). This formulation reminds us that Heroic adventures may take *any* form and that the capacity for extraordinary accomplishment is within us all, regardless of circumstances or nature. As long as there is a “departure, fulfillment, and return”[[107]](#footnote-107), associated with a willingness to sacrifice self, a transformation of personal consciousness, and a potential created to alter the consciousness of the ordinary world, then a Heroic arc has occurred.

## Exceptional Heroism: The Problem Of The Superhero

The Heroic principle of the Pedagogical Function has been somewhat upended and overshadowed by the *superheroic* concept. The superhero can often place the capacity for heroism beyond the reach of everyday persons and into the realm of the exceptional and unattainable.[[108]](#footnote-108) A viewer/reader may be able to empathize with the moral/ethical dilemmas of a Tony Stark or Kara Danvers, but they will likely *never* experience the beyond-the-ordinary technologies or personal powers to which “heroes” such as Iron Man or Supergirl have ready access.

Thus, these superheroic characters can be admired, even imitated, but never actually *emulated*; you may sympathize with their human aspects and their personal moral and ethical struggles, but you can never hope to achieve what their superheroic counterparts achieve. In fact, it is a common trope for the superhero to chide their companions (and, by extension, the audience) “don’t try this at home,” or for them to steadfastly refuse to be accompanied by a “mundane” companion because whatever actions they are about to engage in are “… too dangerous,” with the implication “…for anyone else but *me*.”

The Pedagogical Heroic also provides a foil to a recent negative development in (especially U.S. American) society: the ascension of the “sympathetic villain” (also-known-as the *anti-hero* or *dark hero*) as a *replacement* for the Heroic. The sympathetic villain is a *fully legitimate* archetype, which explains harmful behavior by a character toward others as the result of their reactions to injustices or injuries they’ve suffered through the caprice of nature, or the malevolence of others. People sometimes *do* become dark and anti-social as a result of traumatic personal experiences, and it is valid for mythology to recount their stories *as cautionary tales*. They also serve as protagonists for redemption stories, in which someone who has fallen into personally damaging or morally reprehensible behaviors comes to recognize the error of their ways, reform their attitudes and actions, and remake themselves as positive forces in their culture/society. These are all realistic human situations and have value in both their formulation and their communication, but they should always be recognized as *exceptions to the true Heroic arc*, and neither synonyms nor substitutes for true Heroism.

The dark-heroic and/or sympathetic villain archetype *must not be confused with the* *Heroic*. These characters may be pitiable, but they are *not* moral exemplars to be emulated. The danger of allowing the sympathetic villain to usurp the Heroic’s place is that it serves to “excuse” harmful behavior as inevitable — or, worse, justifiable. It is all-well-and-good to sympathize with what made the Joker or Darth Vader what they are; it is another thing altogether to set them up as positive role models (which they aren’t, and weren’t intended to be). This is why we should prefer the term “sympathetic villain” (certainly to “dark hero”); because, it emphasizes that these characters are not, *in any way*, Heroic in the mythological sense.

There may be some value, however, in declaring the sympathetic villain to be “the poor man’s Hero” in modern popular cultural expressions. If the Heroic is accessible *only* to the mega-rich or the super-smart (or the alien or semi-divine), then “the rest of us” must make do with the second choice — the character whose heart is in the right place, but whose methods are morally questionable at the best of times. The inevitable result of this contraversion of the archetype is this: if the “everyday person” wishes to defeat the forces of “evil” in their own lives, they must resort to villainous means to do so. The ends come to justify the means, and success is paramount, regardless of the process of its accomplishment. Therein lies the danger.

The gateway to this rationalization is, of course, the Trickster-Heroic, often spoken of by Campbell himself: the Heroic character who is willing to break a rule here-and-there in order to uphold the wider Rule of Law. Of course, the Heroic *must* sometimes engage in distasteful acts in order to achieve their ultimate goal. This actually forms a part of the sacrificial nature of the true Heroic — they sacrifice their morality, their serenity, or even their very humanity, to defeat the “big bad” and put the universe to rights once again.

But the difference between the Trickster-Heroic and the Sympathetic Villain is that the former experiences and expresses guilt and shame over having to use such means. As Kahlil Gibran wrote, “Oftentimes, I have hated in self-defense, but if I were stronger I would not have used such a weapon.”[[109]](#footnote-109).

Most crucially, the audience must recognize and acknowledge *that a terrible price was paid for the success,* and that such solutions should only ever be implemented in the direst of circumstances when *all other possibilities* have been rendered ineffective or unachievable.

Confusing the dark-but-guilty Trickster-Heroic with the dark-and-impenitent Sympathetic Villain eclipses the original, fundamental function of the Heroic archetype — which was to remind and prove to the audience that it is possible (and preferable) to succeed against hardship and evil, *not by adopting the methods of your adversary*, but by holding to a higher moral and ethical standard than theirs.

A perfect example of a Sympathetic Villain *mistaken* for a Heroic character is Paul Muad’Dib from Frank Herbert’s 1965 novel, *Dune[[110]](#footnote-110)*, a fact which Herbert, himself, addressed on more than one occasion:

*Dune* was aimed at this whole [dangerous] idea of the infallible leader, because my view of history says that mistakes made by a leader (or made in a leader's name) are amplified by the numbers who follow *without question*.[[111]](#footnote-111)

The study of mythology, then, must also include the effort to restore the true, original characteristics and examples of the Heroic, which needs to be revived in modern society. So, the study of mythology must also address the *relatability* of the Heroic.

## The Relatable Heroic

This takes the form of a two-fold exploration:

1. Determining whether or not particular Heroic characters represent a model of behavior and/or achievement that is actually, realistically attainable by the members of the audience; and,
2. Discovery of how the “anti-hero/dark hero/sympathetic villain” has implemented moral relativism to justify anti-social actions by both groups and individuals, so that these effects may be exposed and corrected.

This effort also involves exploring and clarifying the distinction between myths and legends, the conflation of the two having been the root cause of the ascendance of both the superheroic and the sympathetic villain over the true Heroic.

Legends are, by definition, *exaggerated stories* about actual, historical figures, but their exploits have been hyperbolized after the fashion of tall tales, to the point where they are not humanly possible actions. Relatability suffers when you aren’t able to achieve such a similar feat; your societal training tells you that you are a worthless excuse for a human being as a result. Abraham Lincoln, for instance, was a real, flesh-and-blood, historical human being, but he was far from superheroically infallible. The same goes for George Washington, Giuseppe Garibaldi, Charlemagne … the list goes on.

The Heroic isn’t perfect or infallible; the Heroic succeeds *despite its inabilities* by *overcoming* them, not by circumventing them.

## The Feminine Heroic

This also informs the study of the *feminine Heroic.* By discussing the distressing paucity of true Heroic female characters in Classical mythologies, we draw the circle closed by referring back to the feminine energy of the Primal Goddess. Witness Durga and her extreme expression, Kali, slaughtering demon hordes with wild abandon. To say that the feminine is incapable of violence is just as demeaning as all other restrictions that have been placed upon women by male-dominated culture for the past two hundred centuries (or more).

Studying the (admittedly rare) examples of feminine Heroics in mythology has the effect of emphasizing the loss of the balancing power of the feminine in modern, techno-industrial society. The need to recognize the effects of this loss can be seen in an exploration of the relationship of *mythological* awareness to *ecological* awareness, focusing on how the ancient Earth-connectedness of mythology is (or is not) present in modern ecologically minded (green) philosophies and movements.

1. J. B. S Haldane, Alfred H. Jacobs, and Charles E. Rosenberg, *Possible Worlds and Other Papers* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1928), 298-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Harold S. Kushner, *When Bad Things Happen to Good People* (New York: Anchor Books, 2004). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Walter Burkert and John Raffan, *Greek Religion* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. “Ylem.” Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, Merriam-Webster, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ylem. Accessed 15 Feb. 2023. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Dennis Tedlock, *Popol Vuh: The Mayan Book of the Dawn of Life* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1986). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. V. Satish., *Tales of Gods in Hindu Mythology* (n.p.: Partridge Singapore, 2014). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. *Divine Women*, episode 1, "When God Was A Girl," narrated by Bettany Hughes, aired April 11, 2012 (first broadcast April 11, 2012), on British Broadcasting Corporation, The Open University. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. *Divine Women*, episode 1, "When God Was A Girl," narrated by Bettany Hughes, aired April 11, 2012 (first broadcast April 11, 2012), on British Broadcasting Corporation, The Open University. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Reay Tannahill, *Sex in History* (New York: Stein and Day, 1980). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Joseph Campbell, "The Message of The Myth," interview by Bill Moyers, *Joseph Campbell and The Power of Myth*, produced by Joan Konner and Alvin H. Perlmutter, aired 1988 (first broadcast 1988), on Athena. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Persi Diaonis and Frederick Mosteller, "Methods of Studying Coincidences," *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 84, no. 408 (December 1989), 853-61. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Reay Tannahill, *Sex in History* (New York: Stein and Day, 1980). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. But not necessarily originator. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. *Divine Women*, episode 1, "When God Was A Girl," narrated by Bettany Hughes, aired April 11, 2012 (first broadcast April 11, 2012), on British Broadcasting Corporation, The Open University. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. *Divine Women*, episode 1, "When God Was A Girl," narrated by Bettany Hughes, aired April 11, 2012 (first broadcast April 11, 2012), on British Broadcasting Corporation, The Open University. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. *Divine Women*, episode 1, "When God Was A Girl," narrated by Bettany Hughes, aired April 11, 2012 (first broadcast April 11, 2012), on British Broadcasting Corporation, The Open University. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. *Divine Women*, episode 1, "When God Was A Girl," narrated by Bettany Hughes, aired April 11, 2012 (first broadcast April 11, 2012), on British Broadcasting Corporation, The Open University. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Leonard Shlain, *The Alphabet versus the Goddess: The Conflict between Word and Image* (New York: Viking/ Penguin, 1998). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Robert M. Pirsig, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, Bantam edition. ed. (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1975), 294. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Later formalized as the Second Law of Thermodynamics: “The universe tends towards disorder.” [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Genesis 1:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. *Divine Women*, episode 1, "When God Was A Girl," narrated by Bettany Hughes, aired April 11, 2012 (first broadcast April 11, 2012), on British Broadcasting Corporation, The Open University. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Leonard Shlain, *The Alphabet versus the Goddess: The Conflict between Word and Image* (New York: Viking/ Penguin, 1998. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. I am fully aware that these statements border on being baldly gender-binary and over-simplified; for the sake of brevity and clarity, I have chosen to risk this perception in preference to the torturous circumlocutions of language necessary to give full-and-proper attention to diversity and inclusion. I humbly beg for grace from the reader. Also, when directly quoting sources, I do not feel myself empowered to drastically change the original author’s text, but consider myself bound to report it as-written. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Leonard Shlain, *The Alphabet versus the Goddess: The Conflict between Word and Image* (New York: Viking/ Penguin, 1998. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. I’m just reporting the ancient attitude; don’t shoot the messenger. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Gary Zukav, *The Dancing Wu Li Masters: An Overview of the New Physics* (New York: Morrow, 1979). [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Leonard Shlain, *The Alphabet versus the Goddess: The Conflict between Word and Image* (New York: Viking/ Penguin, 1998. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. “The prolonged childhood of their progeny precluded most women from hunting.” (Shlain, *The Alphabet*). [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. The ubiquitous declaration of Utilitarianism. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Michael Gurian, *What Could He Be Thinking?: How a Man's Mind Really Works* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2003). [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. “Out of sight, out of mind” is no excuse. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Leonard Shlain, *The Alphabet versus the Goddess: The Conflict between Word and Image* (New York: Viking/ Penguin, 1998. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. “Remaining within; indwelling; inherent; being within the limits of possible experience or knowledge; present as a natural and permanent part of something”; from Late Latin roots meaning “to stay”. In other words, woman never fully *becomes*, she is always *in the process of becoming*. Man, by killing, completes himself; woman, by contrast, never reaches completion as a physical or psychic being. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Leonard Shlain, *The Alphabet versus the Goddess: The Conflict between Word and Image* (New York: Viking/ Penguin, 1998. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Mark P. O Morford and Robert J. Lenardon, *Classical Mythology*, 3rd ed. (New York: Longman, 1985). [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. There are two important aspects to this. First, Hermes keeping quiet emphasizes that as Zeus’ daughter, Persephone is his possession to deal and dispense with as he sees fit, free from any interference from anyone else; second, Zeus is King of the Gods, and Hermes is in no position whatsoever to question nor criticize Zeus’s actions. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. It is worth noting here, as well, that Zeus, himself, never “stoops” to dealing with Demeter directly — to do so would be to tacitly admit that she is exerting a power he has no ability to overcome. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Encoding the social norm that, once married, a girl may visit with her mother, but inherently she is her husband’s possession and must always ultimately “cleave unto” him. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. It is possible that this part of the myth also encodes the fact that men eventually took over agricultural practices (at least on the largest scales) from women. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. The Royal House of Thebes is uniquely cursed to misfortune in Greek mytho-history. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Which is what enables her to engage in a male activity such as hunting with a skill equal to that of her twin brother, Apollo, even though she is female. This is a fascinating indication that (at least in the Classical Greek mind), the closest a female could come to being male was to be a virgin. Apparently, it was the *act of participating in coitus* (willingly or otherwise) that made a female a *woman*, and thus stripped her of at least part of her divine nature (not to mention her socio-political value to her father). There is an echo of this in the Persephone story, as well; having eaten a bit of fruit (which widely symbolizes *life*, *fertility*, and *logos-knowledge* throughout mythology), she has “sullied” herself by accepting into her body an aspect of the profane, material world (a fruit is, after all, a *seed*, and thus symbolic of semen), and thus is no longer fully able to enjoy the benefits of divinity. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Again, there is an echo of this in the Roman tradition of the Vestal Virgins, who did not necessarily value their virginal state for its own sake, but for the social capital it afforded them — and the horrific consequence society would impose upon them for not maintaining it. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. It should be noted, however, that in one version of the story of Artemis and Orion, he boasts that he will kill every living thing, and Artemis slays him to defend nature from his arrogance — a very Durga-Kali act with a much more Mother-Goddess motivation. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. The symbolism here so rich an entire essay could be dedicated solely to its discussion. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Though she is often referred to as a daughter of Zeus, she actually *predates* Zeus and the generation of the Olympians, thus acknowledging that the human sex drive is fundamental and far older than any cognitive functions associated with logos. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Also, note the parallels to Gaia’s *increatus* coalescence from the primordial chaos as the *prima causa* of the physical universe. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Again, the symbolism of the association of the primal sex drive with the endeavor of warfare would involve an entire discussion of its own. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. This is also reflective of the Classical Greek notions that 1) women had a stronger sex-drive than men; and 2) they were utterly incapable of controlling it, so the task of doing so devolved to men. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Essentially declaring, “I’m not satisfied with my purchase and want my money back.” [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Reay Tannahill, *Sex in History* (New York: Stein and Day, 1980). [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Who is sometimes *increatus* (à la Yahweh), and sometimes a member of a second, or even third, generation of entities created by or emergent from an *increatus* Primal Goddess*.* It is worth noting that Zeus is never really presented as a creator deity; mostly, he is depicted as having wrested control of the extant universe from his elders, Gaia and the Titans. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. The “Hebrew Bible”, which forms the basis of the Christian “Old Testament”. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. This morphs into one aspect of the Sociological Function, as well, where it takes the form of the dictum that social institutions and norms are also divinely decreed (or at least inspired), and as such are valid, justified, and transgressed only at great risk or in highly distinctive circumstances. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Geraldine Pinch, *Egyptian Myth: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Geraldine Pinch, *Egyptian Myth: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 46. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Joseph Campbell, "The Message of The Myth," interview by Bill Moyers, *Joseph Campbell and The Power of Myth*, produced by Joan Konner and Alvin H. Perlmutter, aired 1988 (first broadcast 1988), on Athena. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Geraldine Pinch, *Egyptian Myth: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 48-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Geraldine Pinch, *Egyptian Myth: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Shlain also devotes several pages to a discussion of the advent of language and its impact upon social norms, especially as regards the development of division of labor and value along gender lines. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Geraldine Pinch, *Egyptian Myth: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Geraldine Pinch, *Egyptian Myth: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Geraldine Pinch, *Egyptian Myth: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Geraldine Pinch, *Egyptian Myth: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. This highlights a distinctive feature of Egyptian mythology: often shows elements of both animism and theism. So much so, that one might almost declare Egyptian practices as being of a transitory nature between the two forms of spiritual expression. The composite representation of many Egyptian deities as beings with human bodies but animal heads gives further credence to this observation (as well as perhaps revealing a tacit admission that in many ways *homo sapiens* are physically human, but still fundamentally animalistic in their psychic character?). [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Allen J. Christenson, trans., *Popol Vuh: Sacred Book of the Quiché Maya People* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003), 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Gen 1:3 KJV. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. John 1:1-14 KJV. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Greek *éschato(s)* “last”. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Note: I am purposely avoiding the word “eternity” here, because, as Campbell pointed out to Bill Moyers: “Eternity isn’t some later time; eternity isn’t a long time; eternity has *nothing to do with time*. Eternity is that dimension of *here* and *now* which *thinking in time cuts out* … and the experience of eternity *right here and now* is the function of life.” (Campbell, "The Message," interview, *Joseph Campbell*) [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Though it was definitely linear for human beings. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Which was also sometimes visible in the daytime sky, whereas the Sun was never visible at night. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Ever more precise measurements eventually led the Egyptians to identify a “month” as 29½ days long (a “synodic” month), and a year as comprising 365¼ days (a “solar” year); these figures have been progressively more precisely defined, and, in fact, change over time, as the Earth’s rotational and orbital motions are not perpetually constant. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Loosely translated as “age”, the word is ultimately from Sanskrit and means “a yoke”, as in a joining of two things, or a “period of time”. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Sanskrit; “great age”, as in “extensive period of time”. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Donna Rosenberg, *World Mythology: An Anthology of the Great Myths and Epics*, 2nd ed. (Lincolnwood, Ill.: NTC Pub. Group, 1994). [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. It is also worth noting that most versions recount that each Maha Yuga is identical in every aspect and particular to every other. Much like listening to a song on infinite repeat, the cycle continues indefinitely, but never varies in character. This, in the Buddha’s view, was the very description of horror. Any parent who has ever endured a Disney movie being replayed repeatedly for an entire day surely understands the Buddha’s point. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Joscelyn Godwin, *Atlantis and the Cycles of Time: Prophecies, Traditions, and Occult Revelations* (Rochester, Vt.: Inner Traditions, 2011), 300-1. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Geraldine Pinch, *Egyptian Myth: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Allen J. Christenson, trans., *Popol Vuh: Sacred Book of the Quiché Maya People* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003), 59. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Joseph Campbell, "The Message of The Myth," interview by Bill Moyers, *Joseph Campbell and The Power of Myth*, produced by Joan Konner and Alvin H. Perlmutter, aired 1988 (first broadcast 1988), on Athena. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Joseph Campbell, "The Message of The Myth," interview by Bill Moyers, *Joseph Campbell and The Power of Myth*, produced by Joan Konner and Alvin H. Perlmutter, aired 1988 (first broadcast 1988), on Athena. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. The “war of all against all” (*Bellum omnium contra omnes*). [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Thomas Hobbes and J. C. A Gaskin, *Leviathan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998). [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. William J. Hynes and William G. Doty, *Mythical Trickster Figures: Contours, Contexts, and Criticisms* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1993), 34-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. William J. Hynes and William G. Doty, *Mythical Trickster Figures: Contours, Contexts, and Criticisms* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1993), 34-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Richard Erdoes and Alfonso Ortiz, *Native American Myths and Legends*, proprietary edition. ed. (New York: Pantheon Books, 2018), 343-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Richard Erdoes and Alfonso Ortiz, *Native American Myths and Legends*, proprietary edition. ed. (New York: Pantheon Books, 2018), 337-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Another wonderful aspect of this story is how it shows an entire community taking on the Trickster archetype in order to impress a lesson on one of its members about anti-social behavior. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. There is also a delightful reference to back-tricking in this story, such that Coyote initially suspects the community of trying to trick him, but allows himself to be convinced; as an inveterate Trickster, he should have recognized the tools of the trade being used against him, but his ego leads him into the arrogance of thinking that he’s too smart to be tricked, himself. Also, in pretending to give him a wife, the community is appealing to his appetite for sexual gratification. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Lewis Hyde, *Trickster Makes This World: Mischief, Myth, and Art* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1998). [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. *Hamlet*, [3.4.230](http://www.folgerdigitaltexts.org/?chapter=5&play=Ham&loc=line-3.4.230); Literally, “blown up by his own bomb”, imminently apt for the Coyote. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Lewis Hyde, *Trickster Makes This World: Mischief, Myth, and Art* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1998); (see also note 90, above). [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. Numbers 32:23 KJV [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. *Mythical Trickster Figures: Contours, Contexts, and Criticisms.*, ed. William J. Hynes and William G. Doty (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1993), 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. *Mythical Trickster Figures: Contours, Contexts, and Criticisms.*, ed. William J. Hynes and William G. Doty (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1993), 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. For instance, you may not often take notice of or appreciate the meaning of flags flying all around you, until someone takes one down and sets it alight; this also emphasizes that you don’t have to (and often won’t) like the message that the Trickster brings, but you ignore it at your peril. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. Joseph Campbell, "The Message of The Myth," interview by Bill Moyers, *Joseph Campbell and The Power of Myth*, produced by Joan Konner and Alvin H. Perlmutter, aired 1988 (first broadcast 1988), on Athena. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Richard Erdoes and Alfonso Ortiz, *Native American Myths and Legends*, proprietary edition. ed. (New York: Pantheon Books, 2018), 372-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. Indeed, this story is a marvelous example of how a given archetype can be shared among several characters within the same story in competition with one another. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Joseph Campbell, "The Message of The Myth," interview by Bill Moyers, *Joseph Campbell and The Power of Myth*, produced by Joan Konner and Alvin H. Perlmutter, aired 1988 (first broadcast 1988), on Athena. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. Joseph Campbell, "The Message of The Myth," interview by Bill Moyers, *Joseph Campbell and The Power of Myth*, produced by Joan Konner and Alvin H. Perlmutter, aired 1988 (first broadcast 1988), on Athena. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. Joseph Campbell, "The Message of The Myth," interview by Bill Moyers, *Joseph Campbell and The Power of Myth*, produced by Joan Konner and Alvin H. Perlmutter, aired 1988 (first broadcast 1988), on Athena. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. Joseph Campbell, "The Message of The Myth," interview by Bill Moyers, *Joseph Campbell and The Power of Myth*, produced by Joan Konner and Alvin H. Perlmutter, aired 1988 (first broadcast 1988), on Athena. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. Christopher Vogler, *The Writers Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers*, 3rd ed. (Studio City, CA: Michael Wiese Productions, 2007). [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. Joseph Campbell, "The Message of The Myth," interview by Bill Moyers, *Joseph Campbell and The Power of Myth*, produced by Joan Konner and Alvin H. Perlmutter, aired 1988 (first broadcast 1988), on Athena. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. Joseph Campbell, "The Message of The Myth," interview by Bill Moyers, *Joseph Campbell and The Power of Myth*, produced by Joan Konner and Alvin H. Perlmutter, aired 1988 (first broadcast 1988), on Athena. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. This is not an entirely modern phenomenon: Herakles was more-than-man from the moment of his conception. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. Kahlil Gibran, *Sand and Foam* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967). [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. Frank Herbert, *Dune* (New York, NY: Putnam, 1965). [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. Frank Herbert, *Eye* (New York, NY: Berkley Books, 1985). [↑](#footnote-ref-111)