

8. Myth & Psychic Sequence

“In the course of its ontogenetic development, the individual ego consciousness has to pass through the same archetypal stages which determined the evolution of consciousness in the life of humanity.”

Erich Neumann
The Origins and History of Consciousness

The journey of the Hero through history is elaborated in Joseph Campbell's *Hero With A Thousand Faces (Hero)* discussed earlier. The book gained widespread popularity in Hollywood with George Lucas noting he used its structure in creating his famous *Star Wars* stories. Since *Star Wars*, Campbell's structure has been placed into screenplay theory through the work of Christopher Vogler and his book *The Writer's Journey*.

The seventeen-step sequence structure of Hero provides a structure involving three major acts of the Hero in myth stories: *Departure, Initiation and Return*. This structural journey comes closest to the movement of symbols we have observed in this project.

Jung observed the movement of symbols using analytical methods more than comparative methods. His most well-known observation of symbol movement came with his analysis of one of his patients published later as *Symbols of Transformation*.

Yet Jung never developed his theories of symbol movement into a broad-ranging cultural and historical thesis like Campbell's *Hero*. Rather, this extension of Jung's analysis would be undertaken by his greatest pupil, Erich Neumann in Neumann's *Origins & History of Consciousness (Origins)*. Neumann was considered one of the greatest psychological theoreticians of the 20th century and was the disciple and scientific heir of Jung. He was anointed by Jung himself. Neumann's students view him as Jung's crown prince who in certain areas even exceeded the monarch.

C. G. Jung and Erich Neumann first met in 1933 at a seminar Jung was conducting in Berlin. Jung was fifty-seven years old and internationally acclaimed for his own brand of psychotherapy. Neumann, twenty-eight, had just finished his studies in medicine. The two men struck up a correspondence that would continue until Neumann's death in 1960. A lifelong Zionist, Neumann fled Nazi Germany with his family and settled in Palestine in 1934, where he would become the founding father of analytical psychology in the future state of Israel.

Unlike Campbell's *Hero*, Neumann's *Origins* never gained popularity outside the academic community or Jung's world of analytical psychology. Yet, like Campbell's *Hero*, it also drew from a wide range of world mythology in explaining how the individual consciousness passes through the same archetypal stages of development as the human consciousness as a whole. Campbell studied the journey of the Hero in mythology.

Yet, Jung observed in *Symbols of Transformation* that the Hero was really “finest symbol of the libido” as it appears in mythology, legend and the dramatic dream of his patient, Miss Miller whose fantasies the book was about. A passive introversion which rejects an external object of love and a concentration of the libido on an internal substitute created by the unconscious is considered the source of Miss Miller’s vision. For mankind in general, this internalization of libidinal attention is seen in the cult of the hero, who symbolizes archaic psychic power suppressed to conform to society.

In a sense, Neumann’s *Origins* expanded the Miller fantasies outward into civilization and collective archetypes. In 1949, in the final years of his life, Jung offered a Forward to *Origins* observing.

“It begins just where I, too, if I were granted a second lease of life, would start to gather up the *disjecta membra* of my own writings, to sift out all those ‘beginnings without continuations’ and knead into a whole ... As I read through the manuscript of this book it became clear to me how great are the disadvantages of pioneer work: one stumbles through unknown regions; one is led astray by analogies, forever losing the Ariadne thread; one is overwhelmed by new impressions and new possibilities, and the worst disadvantage of all is that the pioneer only knows afterwards what he should have known before. The second generation has the advantage of a clearer, if still incomplete, picture; certain landmarks that at least lie on the frontiers of the essential have grown familiar, and one knows what must be known if one is to explore the newly discovered territory ... This difficult task the author has performed with outstanding success. He has woven his facts into a pattern and created a unified whole ... the present work opens at the very place where I unwittingly made landfall on the new continent long ago, namely the realm of *matriarchal symbolism*; and, as a conceptual framework for his discoveries, the author uses a symbol whose significance first dawned on me in my recent writings on the psychology of alchemy: the *uroboros*. Upon this foundation he has succeeded in constructing a unique history of the evolution of consciousness, and at the same time representing the body of myths as the phenomenology of this same evolution. In this way he arrives at conclusions and insights which are among the most important ever to be reached in this field ... The author has placed the concepts of analytical psychology – which for many people are so bewildering – on a firm evolutionary basis, and erected upon this a comprehensive structure in which the empirical forms of thought find their rightful place.”

One of the most important aspects of *Origins* was the *finding of a similarity (correspondence) between the mythological stages of evolving consciousness and the psychological stages in the development of personality*. While Campbell’s methods of comparative mythology are used in *Origins*, Neumann’s mythology starts with the Creation Myth and the Original Unity before the Hero myth where Campbell starts. Inhabiting the Creation Myth is the archetype of the Great Mother. It is a myth that Neumann perhaps knew better than anyone after creating his landmark book *The Great Mother* (1955).

Neumann viewed the Great Mother as a primordial image of the human psyche and drew on ritual, mythology, art and records of dreams and fantasies to examine how the archetype has been outwardly expressed in many cultures and periods since prehistory. He shows how the feminine has been represented as goddess, monster, gate, pillar, tree, moon, sun, vessel, and

every animal from snakes to birds. Neumann discerns a universal experience of the maternal as both nurturing and fearsome, an experience rooted in the dialectical relation of growing consciousness, symbolized by the child, to the unconscious and the unknown, symbolized by the Great Mother.

Given his massive research on the Feminine Archetype it is not surprising that Neumann's *Origins* begins with the feminine and moves towards the masculine, from the unity of the feminine unconsciousness to the fragmentation inherent in Masculine consciousness. Life involves a movement away from the Feminine to the Masculine and all the symbol correspondences this entails.

Yet the Campbell Hero is neither male or female. Such a difference from Jung's idea of the movement of symbols, his long analysis with one woman. But never beyond his patient in *Symbols of Transformation*. In the meantime, Joseph Campbell's structure served as the sequence in the particular sequence steps in symbol movement across all history and was much more accessible to those out there looking for a particular structure to park their minds in. And of course there was the use of the structure in Star Wars so it had a tremendous resonance with its generation.

Campbell's *Hero* offers a different journey altogether than Jung's patient. Campbell's Hero departs, goes through an initiation and then returns. Yet there is not mention of this return in the Neumann finally channeling the thoughts and wishes of Carl Jung in this area, now too old to join in this battle. He writes about in the March 1, 1949 Forward to Neumann's book, the book of perhaps his greatest student, carrying on something he would have done had he more time. Extending the symbols on his patient in *Symbols of Transformation* into a universal phenomenon. He knew it was but simply became sidetracked in other areas throughout his life. Only returning to this early and famous book in the 1949 Forward to Neumann's book.

Neumann proposed all these before Campbell's Hero even appeared on the scene: The Uroboros, The Great Mother and The Separation of the World Parents: The Principle of Opposites.

Neumann's book develops the Jungian symbolism into culture and civilization and particularly in the area of narrative. This will prove to one of the greatest books on drama more than on anything else. We suggest a narrative structure for the ideas of the book.

The Neumann sequence creates a duality, something that the Campbell sequence never has at the beginning of the story. Perhaps it is this duality that the Campbell Hero searches for? Yet it is the duality that the Neumann (Jung Hero) is born with. The two archetypes of Masculine and Feminine always residing within each person. Moving into dominance and then moving out.

The Neumann structure is a movement forward to a type of transformation. The Campbell movement is a return to the everyday world knowing more. With Neumann, carrying forward Jung's ideas, expressing them when he was too old to take up the task himself. Jung aware of this and thankful that Neumann was doing this, carrying on this part of his message.

The movement is from Feminine to the Masculine. One of greatest discovery about the direction of movement of symbols. But the Campbell structure takes a different approach. A non-sexual one that becomes noted as a famous piece of pop scholarship called *The Hero With A Thousand Faces*. It was a book everyone quoted in Hollywood but no one had read. Like Toffler's *Future Shock* a generation later. All the while, Neumann's book has wallowed in the minds of serious academics and a handful of psychologists and therapists around the world. It wasn't that his ideas were destined to be put into a particular discipline and stored away. The book needs a modern reading. It truly presents a new way of looking at stories.

Part I

The Mythological Stages In the Evolution of Consciousness

- A. The Creation Myth
 - 1. The Uroboros
 - 2. The Great Mother
 - 3. The Separation of the World Parents: The Principle of Opposites
- B. The Hero Myth
 - 1. The Birth of the Hero
 - 2. The Slaying of the Mother
 - 3. The Slaying of the Father
- C. The Transformation Myth
 - 1. The Captive and the Treasure
 - 2. Transformation, or Osiris

Part II

Psychological Stages In The Development of Personality

- A. The Original Unity
 - 1. Centroversion and Ego Formation
 - 2. The Ego Germ in the Original Uroboric Situation
 - 3. Development of the Ego out of the Uroboros
 - 4. Centroversion in Organisms on the Uroboric Level
 - 5. Centroversion, Ego and Consciousness
 - 6. Further Phases of Ego Development
- B. The Separation of the Systems
 - 1. Centroversion and Differentiation
 - 2. The Fragmentation of Archetypes
 - 3. Exhaustion of Emotional Components: Rationalization
 - 4. Secondary Personalization
 - 5. The Transformation of Pleasure-Pain Components
 - 6. The Formation of Authorities Within the Personality
 - 7. The Synthetic Function of the Ego
- C. The Balance and Crisis of Consciousness
 - 1. Compensation of the Separated Systems
 - 2. The Schism of the Systems: Culture in Crisis
- D. Centroversion and the Stages of Life
 - 1. Prolongation of Childhood and Differentiation of Consciousness
 - 2. Activation of Collective Unconscious and Ego Changes
 - 3. Self-Realization of Centroversion in the Second Half of Life

Chart 8A

The Origins And History of Consciousness

Interestingly (and revealingly) Campbell has less to say on the Feminine or Masculine nature of the Hero in his book. The Hero receives a “Call to Adventure” which puts him/her on a journey where a “First Threshold” is crossed. In Campbell’s structure, woman is not seen as the original Great Mother but rather as a “Temptress” involved with the Hero’s initiation. And, Campbell’s journey involves a Departure, Initiation and Return, events not apparent in Neumann’s *Origins*.

Departure
 Call to Adventure
 Refusal of the Call
 Supernatural Aid
 Crossing First Threshold
 Belly of the Whale
Initiation
 Road of Trials
 Meeting With Goddess
 Woman as Temptress
 Atonement With Father
 Apotheosis
 Ultimate Boon
Return
 Refusal of Return
 Magic Flight
 Rescue From Without
 Crossing Return Threshold
 Master of Two Worlds
 Freedom to Live

Chart 8B
Hero With A Thousand Faces

A comparison of the two structures appears in the chart below. While there is similarity, there is no Great Mother in the Campbell system but rather “woman as temptress.” Neumann views the Feminine as the original Great Mother while Campbell views the Feminine not as a mother but as a temptress. In addition, the psychological stages of Part II of the Neumann book discuss an “Original Unity” while Campbell’s journey of the Hero begins not with Unity but Departure.

The discovery in *Origins* of what Jung calls “matriarchal symbolism” is the major contribution of Neumann’s book. As Jung notes in his Froward, “the present work opens at the very place where I unwittingly made landfall on the new continent long ago, namely the realm of *matriarchal symbolism*; and, as a conceptual framework for his discoveries, the author uses a symbol whose significance first dawned on me in my recent writings on the psychology of alchemy: the *uroboros*.”

<i>Origins and History of Consciousness</i> – Eric Neumann	<i>Hero With A Thousand Faces</i> – Joseph Campbell
<p>The Mythological Stages In the Evolution of Consciousness</p> <p>1.The Creation Myth The Uroboros The Great Mother The Separation of the World Parents: The Principle of Opposites</p> <p>2.The Hero Myth The Birth of the Hero The Slaying of the Mother The Slaying of the Father</p> <p>3.The Transformation Myth The Captive and the Treasure Transformation, or Osiris</p>	<p>The Journey of the Hero</p> <p>1.Departure Call to Adventure Refusal of the Call Supernatural Aid Crossing First Threshold Belly of the Whale</p> <p>2.Initiation Road of Trials Meeting With Goddess Woman as Temptress Atonement With Father Apotheosis Ultimate Boon</p> <p>3.Return Refusal of Return Magic Flight Rescue From Without Crossing Return Threshold Master of Two Worlds Freedom to Live</p>

Chart 8C
Comparison of *Origins* and *Hero* Sequences

It is the present of the Great Mother before the Hero that makes Neumann’s book special offering a new paradigm for building a new paradigm of story structure around. In it, the grand movement of symbols from the Feminine Archetype to the Masculine Archetype is put into a mythological and psychological framework.

At the end of *Origins*, Neumann provides a useful summary of the sequence of symbols that have represented myth, personality development and consciousness in Figure 7D below.

“The self-differentiating structure of the psyche is reflected in a world cleft asunder by the principle of opposites into outside and inside, conscious and unconscious, life and spirit, male and female, individual and collective. But to the maturing psyche, slowly integrating itself under the sign of the hermaphrodite, the world, too, assumes the appearance of the hermaphroditic ring of existence, within which a human center takes shape, be it the individual who comes to self-realization between the inner and outer worlds, or humanity itself. For humanity as a whole and the single individual have the same task, namely, to realize themselves as a unity. Both are cast forth into a reality, one half of which confronts them as nature and external world, while the other half

approaches them as psyche and the unconscious, spirit and daemonic power. Both must experience themselves as the center of this total reality.”

“We began with the ego in the womb of the parental uroboros dragon, curled up like an embryo in the sheltering fusion of inside and outside, world and unconscious. We end, as in an alchemical picture, with the hermaphrodite standing upon this dragon: by virtue of its own synthetic being it has overcome the primal situation, above it hangs the crown of the self, and in its heart glows the diamond.”

“But only when the conscious development of mankind as a whole, and not merely of single individuals, has reached this stage of synthesis, will the supra-individual uroboros situation truly be overcome, and with it the collective danger of the dragon. The collective unconscious of mankind must be experienced and apprehended by the consciousness of mankind as the ground common to all men. Not until the differentiation into races, nations, tribes, and groups has, by a process of integration, been resolved in a new synthesis, will the danger of recurrent invasions from the unconscious be averted. A future humanity will then realize the center, which the individual personality today experiences as his own self-center, to be one with humanity’s very self, whose coming to birth will finally vanquish and cast out that old serpent, the primordial uroboric dragon.”

Figure 8D

Erich Neumann Quotes From *The Origins and History of Consciousness*

The grand Jung/Neumann movement is lacking in modern story-telling structure as the current structure revolves around Campbell’s *Hero With A Thousand Faces*. Neumann’s *Origins* presents a new movement for symbols through culture and a person’s life. Neumann presents a movement of symbols through psychology as Campbell’s movement of a Hero through mythology. And, Campbell’s Hero is male and there is no movement from Female to Male as there is within the Neumann system. The Hero in Neumann is the ego consciousness, coming into its power out of the original state of unconsciousness. Growth, evolution. Yet the Hero of Campbell returns. This return is not something the Neumann ego does not do.

The ideas laid out in Neumann’s *Origins* provide the starting point to create a new screenplay structure and sequence around. A system that recognizes this universal transition from the feminine archetype ruling youth to the masculine archetype ruling age. This is the way it is for everyone. The grandest battling symbols turn out to perhaps be related to age than sex.

This grand transition from the feminine of the beginning to the masculine of the ending continue to play over and over again in our popular culture made from one-stuck cycle, like a plastic record stuck on an old record player.