

LEGENDARY AMERICAN SCHOLAR JOSEPH CAMPBELL'S THEORY ON ANCIENT MYTHOLOGICAL INTERPRETATIONS FOR CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT: American scholar Joseph Campbell was recognized for deciphering the patterns found in ancient cultural myths that had inspired great explorations in the realm of human consciousness. His lifetime of scholarship is nothing short of stellar, and nothing less than the search for the truth revolving around “radiant living”.

According to recent academic and journalistic discussions, Campbell's published books are even more compelling in today's ever-changing social and psychological landscapes. His theory on “monomyth” brings us the “aha” moment of realization of what lies in creating our destinies as an individual who may be lost in this confusing world of social change. This involves an inner, soulful contemplation by the hero archetype found in “monomyth.” This hero finds courage to face his or her adversities and challenges in life without regret and with resolve. Through Campbell's writings, we can find some spiritual relief in response to our environmental global crisis, worldwide economic and markets fluctuations, and social unrest for religious freedoms in pursuit of democratic ideals within developing countries. For within human existence, these struggles are universal and explained in centuries of mythologies that address the human condition and the discovery of self.

This academic paper discusses the potential application of “monomyth” to our everyday lives in facing our personal psychological struggles. Most of the focus would be about Joseph Campbell's extraordinary journey in bringing the mythical sense of the social world and its eternal figures into our everyday consciousness from his multiple publications and televised interviews. There will be a section on how Joseph Campbell had interpreted some of the religious mythologies from a worldwide perspective that is relevant today as it was twenty-five years ago.

INTRODUCTION:

Due to the Tohoku earthquake/tsunami that occurred on March 11, 2011, the people of Japan had been struggling to overcome these inherent obstacles. Much of the media coverage had stirred the emotions and passions of everyone in the world. These human interest stories echo the need for some form of understanding that can help repair the Japanese psyche from the darker side of this disaster, and to look for a more brighter meaning and substance into the relevance of life itself.

Should there be a little glimmer of “radiant waves” of hope, positivism, and the restoration of a nation's confidence in a new tomorrow, then it is through the careful evaluation of our past cultural tradi-

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tions and ancient myths that contain the essential truths for survival. In these myths, we hope to glean some level of comfort for the people of Japan and for worldwide considerations in the wake of uncertainties. In fact, there had been greater global concerns throughout the world such as the earthquakes in New Zealand and Haiti, hurricanes and tornadoes in America, and the floods in Southeast Asia. These are just a few past occurrences in the last decade or so. Other disaster areas of the world have struck a major chord in all of us. Specifically, we are articulating our subconscious fears of the unknown and wondering what the future may hold in the preservation of our humankind for future generations to come.

UNDERSTANDING OUR HUMANITY THROUGH THE RE-EXAMINATION OF ANCIENT MYTHS

Moral confusion and unfounded illusions based on religious misinterpretations in today's ever-changing world has led humankind to search for meaningful truths that represent the bedrock of all societies. The interpretations of these social and impassioned pleas to save humankind from its own destructive tendencies can be found in American scholar Joseph Campbell's writings on the "monomyth." While there were certainly other scholars who had addressed this issue, the overriding factor that had brought the attention of such journalists as Bill Moyers and other leading scholars is the re-examination of essential truths found in Joseph Campbell's "monomyth." This being said, it was Joseph Campbell's fundamental analysis that provides us with some answers in facing 21st century psychological struggles and addressing worldwide adversities.

WHO WAS JOSEPH CAMPBELL?

Joseph Campbell was born in 1904 in the suburbs of New York City. Campbell had a strong Irish upbringing from his parents, and this ethnic heritage had led him to a natural immersion in the rituals and symbols of the Catholic Church. Accordingly, it has been said that Joseph Campbell was an altar boy.



From his early upbringings in New York, Campbell was greatly interested in learning more about the American Indians in Buffalo Bill's Wild West Shows at Madison Square Garden. This curious interest eventually brought him to a great and intense fascination of Native American stories in connection with the Indians' great reverence for nature. Campbell's early education brought him to the American Museum of Natural History where he read all the books he could locate on Native Americans, including advanced anthropological reports. (Moyer's Interview, 1988)

HIGHER EDUCATIONAL PURSUITS

In researching Campbell's past from televised interviews, he had an adventurous spirit for a young man. After graduation in 1921 from New Milford, Connecticut, Campbell went abroad across the North Atlantic and met another scholar Jiddu Krishnamurti. In fact, Krishnamurti later became a world teacher in theosophy with a specialization in Asian philosophy. From this friendship, Campbell became fascinated with the traditions of India throughout most of his life. After his trip, Campbell returned home to obtain his bachelor's degree in English from Columbia University in 1925. Campbell then continued onwards with his graduate studies on his thesis entitled "The Dolorous Stroke" which was based on the

symbolic origins found in the ancient Holy Grail. His advisor during graduate school was Roger Loomis, a leading scholar of Arthurian History.

Taking course work during 1926 at the New York City Religious Science Church taught by Fenwick Holmes, Campbell spent some time in Paris during 1927-1928. He had expanded his thesis work to include such works as James Joyce, W.B. Yeats, and T.S. Elliot. Another influence that made a profound effect on Campbell's inquisitive mind was the sculptor, Antoine Bourdell. Due to Bourdell's art appreciation tutorials, these sessions had led Campbell to respect and admire the great works of Picasso, Brancusi, and Braque. In Campbell's constant search for universal truths, he also attended and studied under Carl Jung and Sigmund Freud at the University of Munich from 1928-1929. It was there that Campbell learned about the use of mythological interpretations in psychology and formulated the merits of his scholarly writings. From his scholarly pursuits in Europe, Campbell returned back to his studies at Columbia University that included more than the literary interpretations of human foibles and struggles, but to actualize a theory that mythologies are the artistic expressions found in psychological life itself.

At long last, Campbell's ongoing research had a more interdisciplinary approach of critical analysis, and contained multiple notes that relate to literature, psychology and art from his studies abroad. Although, Campbell's intense learning had brought him to meet great scholars, artists and social scientists of this time period, the young Campbell did not complete his doctorate degree as previously planned. Instead, he decided to spend more time reading extensively in Woodstock, New York. Later, Campbell went out to California during 1931-1932 to meet John Steinbeck and biologist, Ed Ricketts in continuance of his quest for more personal knowledge. Eventually, this search led Campbell to read Oswald Spengler's, *Decline of the West*. This body of work was the primary force in Campbell's revelations of human truths and his vision for a new world based on the re-interpretation of ancient myths. Thus, the concept and the coining of the word "monomyth" had come into being through Campbell's extensive and unrelenting pursuit of book knowledge, interactions with influential scholars of his time period, and through his "real life" experiences (Moyer's Interview, 1988).

MAJOR LITERARY INFLUENCES IN CAMPBELL'S WORKS

One of the major influences that had lead Campbell in his lifelong journey in delving into the social influences and interpretations of legends and myths within society were based on the writer, James Joyce. Joyce's mindset was against the present social order of Christianity as a prevailing religion of faith. In short, Joyce's writings on society isolated recognized social virtues, classes of life, and religious doctrines offering Campbell insights into the struggles that most people face in day-to-day life. Indeed, Campbell had his own struggles as a student as it was the time of the "Great Depression" of 1929. In fact, the whole of American families were fighting desperately to survive this national economic crisis. Sadly, most families were not surviving this grand-scale financial crisis. America as a nation was facing great financial turmoil putting thousands of people out-of-work. These destitute American families were always moving to different towns, and were constantly seeking for the basic essentials of food and shelter. This period of time also provided the necessary backdrop for Campbell's writings.

Due to Joyce's influence at that time, the exploration began in Campbell's mind to consider other religions in different countries. In doing so, Campbell also made subsequent journeys to India, a country that instilled deep religious influences on his writings. Later, Campbell traveled to Japan as part of his focus on evaluating religious discourse at an academic level. These travel experiences ultimately helped Campbell in teaching "cultural appreciation" among university students at Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, New York.

Instinctively, Campbell was constantly looking for answers other than faith-based conditioning. He knew that the focus on Christianity as the mainstay for societal salvation was not enough in difficult times like the “Great Depression”. Instead, Campbell sought to “open” his mind to other religions and to the people and culture of other countries. He sought working solutions that offered prevailing and universal truths for all human beings who are seeking spiritual relief in his or her lifetime. In part, Campbell’s extensive European and Asian travels brought more cultural awareness to America. From an academic point of view, Campbell was able to contribute to the ideals of educational diversity to manifest into American mainstream society. This is based on Campbell’s prolific writings on the human condition with society. (Moyer’s Interview 1988)

MYTHOLOGICAL TRUTHS BASED ON CAMPBELL’S PROLIFIC BOOK, *THE HERO WITH A THOUSAND FACES*

The most influential writings came from Joseph Campbell’s publication, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* in 1949. This book, in particular, had established Campbell as the prominent comparative mythologist of the twentieth century. The main intent of his writings focused on being a guide in reading and understanding cultural and ancient myths from a global perspective. One of the most striking aspects of Campbell’s writings is that he found the connection between ancient stories and the stirring emotional component of social concerns within modern life as seen by contemporaries during a particular time period. In this regard, there is timelessness to his writings. Thus, Campbell’s passages evoke responses from readers that identify certain aspect of their lives with ancient mythical stories. In part, Campbell writes in refractory mood bringing to light some underpinning of daily truths:

The latest incarnation of Oedipus, the continued romance of Beauty and the Beast, stand this afternoon on the corner of 42nd Street and Fifth Avenue, waiting for the traffic light to change.

In the “Hero’s Journey,” Campbell describes a model of initiatory elements in religious myths, comparative religions and stories of world mythological legends. To explain the key elements found in myths and legends, Campbell utilizes a simple matrix stemming from departure, transformation, and the return of the odyssey described as a psychological archetype in the “Hero’s Journey.” Theoretically, he relies on the strengths found on the insights gained from ethnographer Adolf Bastian who is noted for his empirical fieldwork studies (Bastian’s writings from 1860 to 1902). Campbell further anchors these essential ideas from Bastian into a similar concept of internalized archetypes that was researched by Swiss Psychiatrist Carl Jung, the founder of analytical psychology (1919).

For Campbell, he felt that it was imperative that society showed us the courage and strength of heroic acts in the face of danger and potential destruction, and that societies should incarnate values upon a nation striving for world order and stability. From another perspective, Campbell would rhetorically ask: “if such heroic acts of courage are not done in a timely manner, then would these societies die out in an untimely way?” In short, there is a greater need for the seeker of truth as the initiator of adventure and the challenges found in his book, “Hero’s Journey.” In these illustrated heroic steps, Campbell’s book provides society with the vitality essential for continued existence for the greater good of people.

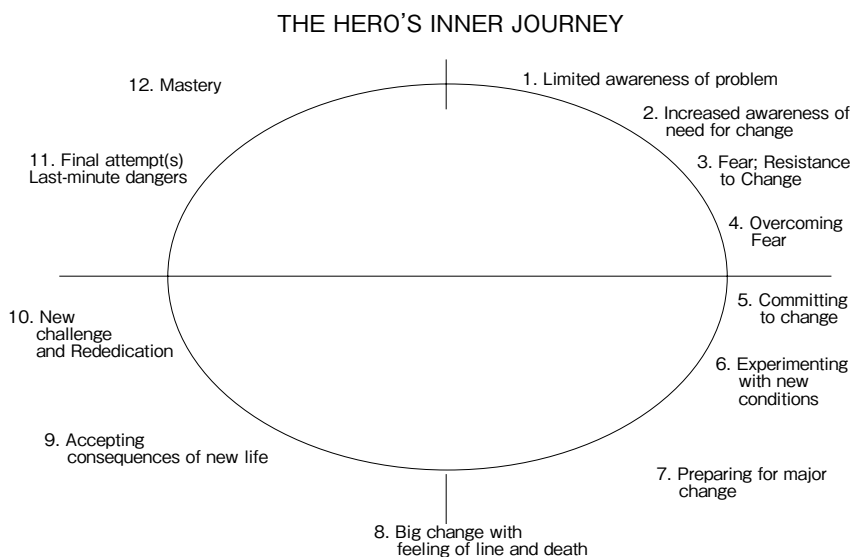
Through our imaginary mythological journeys based on ancient stories of the past, Campbell alludes to the opening stage that includes the call to adventure, meeting the mentor, and the threshold passage that provides answers to sought-after treasures of knowledge. Once into the adventure, the challenges come forth to engage and interact with the adventurer while allies and guides serve to help the hero face

ordeals, resist temptations, brave the enemies, endure struggles, and survive obstacles. This hero goes on to obtain and conquer such things in his or her path toward truth and honor. With hope and courage in his or her heart, the hero will eventually come to a threshold passage, a resurrection, a celebration, and finally, the acceptance of this service for the greater good of humankind. By doing so, the iconic hero with the merging of our mythical interpretations helps us to merge the two metaphysical and spiritual worlds together in alignment with our current “real time” situations and circumstances. Simply put, we can overcome our fears if we only tried to take the kind of actions needed for us to challenge ourselves beyond common measure in the belief that these acts would make a difference in our world for others.

GENERAL ILLUSTRATION OF THE TWELVE-STEP PROCESS BASED ON CAMPBELL’S HERO ARCHETYPE

The notions held by Campbell’s hero archetype illustrates the internal psychological struggles an individual takes in order to meet life’s challenges by conquering his or her realized and/or unspoken fears. Through this imaginary journey, the person becomes stronger and is named the “hero” or “heroine” of his or her personal world that is universal to all. In Campbell’s *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, the idea that is depicted in problems or struggles within human existence represents the true nature of our psychological minds. Succinctly, Campbell shows us how to analyze our world by addressing our needs from the general to the specific stages toward spiritual growth. Fundamentally, the hero’s journey shows us how important it is to gain the confidence within ourselves in order to return safely from our adventure. More importantly, we need to conquer these stages in order to secure our means for survival with an open and flexible mind. The final mastery exemplifies our charitable self for the sake of everyone in society.

As shown below, these twelve-step imagined scenarios provide us with hope for the profound social change we seek within ourselves for the betterment of society. In short, this cycle of self-analysis promotes life-sustaining transcendence into the affirmation of self-discovery. Finally, all of these steps come full circle for it starts and ends with each of us. If one can imagine the contributions of each person in this full circle of self-discovery, then a collected consciousness can be realized as each part adds to the greater whole in society (See Diagram).



Christopher Vogler’s Adaptation of Joseph Campbell’s 12-Step Hero’s Inner Journey

OTHER NOTEWORTHY WRITINGS BY JOSEPH CAMPBELL

Campbell wrote many books on the subject of world myths such as the four-volume *Masks of God: Primitive Mythology* (1959), *Oriental Mythology* (1962), *Occidental Mythology* (1964), and *Creative Mythology* (1968). These works center on the mythological distinctions found in various regions and cultures around the world.

In the *Masks of God* series written by Campbell, the introduction of his principal theoretical constructs outline the four functions of myths that apply across all cultures and nations. At the fundamental level, these functions hold some relevancy in today's social and cultural analysis. In Campbell's writings, we find striking answers to the age-old questions that help us re-evaluate ourselves that challenge our minds to heighten levels of self-awareness. This challenge only comes from a person's true commitment in stepping outside of his/her comfort zones and in meeting unseen and unpredictable obstacles with courage and conviction. Ultimately, the culmination of these courageous acts summon up the requisite inner strength that define our natural abilities and specialized skills that are tested under circumstances far beyond our normal capabilities. Campbell suggests that these ancient myths tell us that we are not only doing these courageous acts for ourselves but to answer the call of altruism, and to defend ourselves from encroaching and potential dangers. Campbell believes that our call for duty is for a higher, universal purpose. (Moyer's Interview, 1988)

THE FOUR FUNCTIONS OF MYTHS ACCORDING TO CAMPBELL

One of the first functions of myths according to Campbell was that these ancient stories invoked a stirring in our hearts, awakened our senses, and supported a feeling of awe with regard to the mysteries of the life force. (Moyer's Interview, 1988). According to Campbell's viewpoints, these deep feelings came from the precondition that tells us about our own existence here on earth. He eloquently states that our consciousness was derived by realizing the importance and sanctity of the intricacies of life itself. Beyond the phenomenological world, there was an implicit understanding of a transcendent mysterious source that eluded our everyday perceptions. Most people relied on the physical evidence found within our surroundings in order to validate their senses. From this mysterious source that was beyond mortal description, there was a notion that the universe can be formulated on a holy picture, a sacred vision, and/or an image that captured our imagination to signify our connection with something greater than ourselves. This was akin to the words that most religious sectors interpreted as God or a higher connectivity to nature. This holy and sacred communion may be described as something above and beyond the realms of human consciousness and day-to-day normal perceptions.

SECOND FUNCTION OF MYTHS

Campbell then turns our attention to the second function of myths and this relays to the cosmological dimension dealing with the image of the world that is explained to us through science and technology. In this second function of myths, Campbell explains to us the expansiveness of our universe, but in truth, the mystery still exists, and the explainable parts of the science still are undefined to us. In view of this, Campbell states: "the cosmology should correspond to the actual experience of an individual, the knowledge based on facts, and the mentality and/or social mores of our culture." According to Campbell, this interpretative function changes radically over time due to innovation and the refinement of scientific explorations.

THIRD FUNCTION OF MYTHS

In the third function of myths, Campbell suggests that there is a strong sociological foundation that validates our moral order or code for living that provides some sense of harmony among a given populous. Without such ethical laws or social roles that are defined within our interactive and interdependent psychological dimensions, the particular life-customs, practices, and rites rendering a system of sentiments or feelings among a given group may fall into disarray and mortal strife. Campbell suggests that this is a time-given tradition that strengthens human existence here on earth and forms our sense of continuity.

THE LAST FUNCTION OF MYTHS

The last and fourth function of myths is based on the stages of existence that shows how humans should live within a given lifetime. All human beings, according to Campbell undergo various age-related stages within the range of physical and emotional crises as well as positive or negative experiences in life. This stems from the advent of childhood dependency to the responsibilities of adult maturity that eventually brings us to the physical decline of old age. Ultimately, our physical decline leads to death, signaling the symbolic end of human existence. In another words, Campbell strongly suggests that this last function helps people to grasp the unfolding of life with personal integrity. From its most basic tenets, the concept relies on an individual's order of realities and how it affects his/her psyches in response to changing circumstances and situations. In the most positive sense, the grounding of one's realities, according to Campbell, propels and guides us to enrichment through a profound sense of realization of the stages found in our life cycle, and how we must live respectfully for ourselves as well as for the sake of others.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF CULTURAL MYTH FUNCTIONS

With regard to all four functions serving in Campbell's study on ancient myths, the most important aspect within his scholarship came from psychological theories. Campbell inwardly noted that his female students where he taught at Sarah Lawrence College in New York (1933-1972) made his work more accessible and more tenable to others. Through multiple discussions with his female university students, Campbell placed greater emphasis on the wisdom of literature as it related to psychological dynamics in society. In Campbell's own admissions, he felt that it was his female students who wanted to understand the relevancy of mythological traditions during specific "moments" of their lives that greatly shaped the focus in his writings. Although, Campbell had implicitly wrote his research findings on the goals of inner life thoughts, there were other scholarly criticism that believed Campbell's writings were primarily socio-logical in content. (Kudler 2002)

CAMPBELL'S RETIREMENT FROM UNIVERSITY TEACHING

Campbell's writings after retiring from Sarah Lawrence College went beyond dimensions of mythic imagination. At this stage of his life, Campbell insisted that timeless wisdom would be approachable from three directions. For one, the mythic story would be a clear form of access to the mysteries beyond our conscious awareness. The next stage would be through ritual or ceremonial practices that allow the participants to enter the dramatic re-enactment of the mythic text to personal experience. Finally, the third and last stage that Campbell employs is the means and entry of the sacred and holy image. For example, such images contained in mythic stories represent something beyond our normal grasp of understanding. This larger context that Campbell show us in his illustrated book, *Mythic Image* (1974) draws upon the metaphor that is often implied in the image of something that is profoundly spiritual or something that is larger than life

itself. From this sacred image, we create the adventures that lead us to believe in a higher source of being.

CAMPBELL'S THEORIES APPLIED TO FILM GENRE GARNERING MASS PUBLIC APPEAL

Another example of larger-than-life itself adventures can be seen in the well-known stories found in *Star Wars* films as produced and written by George Lucas in 1977. In fact, filmmaker George Lucas had commented that he was profoundly influenced by Campbell's scholarly discussions about cultural myths, thus ascertaining that these mythical images served as a key to human survival. These universal struggles were later employed and created in his epic films.

Even today, the storytelling behind *Star Wars* still stands out in creating a wider popular audience appeal. Through the magic of visual imagery, these heroic deeds were demonstrated through forces beyond our own imagination. In doing so, our consciousness can actually depict the spiritual sides of our existence, and this awakening had taken on a more viable and attainable format. Lucas' films followed this structural format by Campbell which had led to the personification of our daily challenges in fighting for the survival of our families. From film reality, this structural style became a reliable one for which such struggles can be addressed on a more personal and grounded level.

TELEVISED INTERVIEW BY JOURNALIST BILL MOYER (1988)

The most memorable and lasting contributions made in Campbell's career was the six-part series entitled, "Joseph Campbell and the Power of Myth with Bill Moyers" broadcasted in 1988. Most of the interviews were conducted at Skywalker Ranch, the film studio built by George Lucas in California's Marin County. In these televised series, Campbell brought the wisdom based on mythology to public awareness, and has contributed to mass cultural appeal in America. Upon his unexpected death in 1987, the popular magazine, *Newsweek* had hailed the life of Joseph Campbell as "one of the rarest intellectuals in American life who was a serious thinker and was embraced by popular culture."

CAMPBELL'S LIVING LEGACY CONTINUES TODAY

Essentially, Campbell explored the 'staying power' of ancient and worldly myths that have survived thousands of years. What Campbell had found in his life's work was that there is a fundamental structure or pattern that he referred to as the "monomyth." Based on his scholarly analysis, Campbell cited various stages of human development that could be seen through a hero's mythical journey. While Campbell's research offer the "monomyth" to structure psychological concepts that were popular in the 1940's and 1950's, the basis in which Campbell utilizes Jungian archetypes, unconscious forces, and the rites of passage rituals in various cultural settings. Specifically, Campbell's "monomyth" was framed in the psychological functionality of the "hero archetype." Basically, these theoretical structures provide a useful basis for insights not only tied to academic categories, but justifiably, Campbell's writings had broadened our vistas to embrace a larger picture of life. The application of the "hero archetype" in "monomyth" can be expanded to include mid-20th century circumstances and situations for critical analysis that can be utilized in our daily lives.

Campbell had successfully implemented a newfound way of approaching life in ways that confront age-old fears, religious misconceptions, and cultural stereotypes in a less rigid form of analysis. He allows the individual to consider these ancient stories as a guide for a fruitful form of "radiant living." Based on a spiritual platform that elevates the consciousness in mastering our personal struggles as part of our fundamental psychological development as a human being, Campbell resolves the daily uncertain-

ties we face with more courage and conviction. Rather than passively accepting the outcome of our lives, the hero found in the “monomyth” encourages us to embrace our challenges without fears or regrets.

JOSEPH CAMPBELL’S LEGACY CONTINUES EVEN TODAY

Since the publication of *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1958), Campbell’s theory has been consciously applied in various scenarios from television, film, novels, and art by the leagues of modern writers, journalists and artists alike worldwide. In all of his academic and scholarly works, Joseph Campbell leaves us with his legacy of writings forming a foundation in his name in California where scholarly discussions continue to this day. For followers of Joseph Campbell, it was important to keep these theories alive with research that inspires to look further into the tenets of his theory of ancient myths.

In 2011, *TIME Magazine* placed the Campbell’s book, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* as one of 100 best and most influential books, and its pervading exploration of the “monomyth” can be summarized in this way:

A hero ventures forth from the world of common duty into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are then encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from his mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man.

In the structure of “monomyth,” Campbell strongly suggests that through these adventures in our cultural and ancient myths, therein lies the answer to our turmoil through struggle and diligence, and the eventual reward is our accomplishments in conquering our fears, righting the wrongs, and in making things better for all of humankind. In short, it is a hero’s saga that provides us with the ideas that our future can be altered through our actions if only we were to take these mighty chances in life.

REFLECTIONS ABOUT JOSEPH CAMPBELL’S PROFOUND VISIONS

In terms of our own personal journey, this does not always seem to be a straight line from birth to the experiences that we have in life. In fact, this road less travelled had, indeed, brought the realization of Campbell’s scholarly pursuits as a vision and hope for our contemporary lives. In fact, there are exceptional writers and artists that bring us closer to understanding our human nature in the struggles for social acceptance, and our interdependency on natural existence. In comparison though, it is to Campbell’s tribute that his writings centered around the whole societal underpinnings of religious symbols and ancient myths that brings us closer to the realization of our own true spiritual inner selves. Campbell helps us embrace the “joy” in our very lives, and that the pursuit of religious and spiritual awakenings begins and ends with our own internal propensities that may or may not be influenced by societal pressures, but instead, relies on our ability to hear the beat of our own internal rhythmic drums.

The myths that are alive in today’s world are not only for artistic expressions of our own inner sanctity, but our moral right to seek salvation on our own terms, and not the social ones that are imposed on through conscious power struggles within class warfare and political discourse. The point in this short dedication to Joseph Campbell is to acknowledge how important it is for us to express our own beings in its truest forms possible through self-knowledge and awareness. Through this universal form, our individuality becomes more defined in our many roles that we play in society. Generally speaking, the roles we play as fathers, mothers, daughters, sons, artists, doctors, educators, entrepreneurs, journalists, leaders, musicians, scientists, and writers can be performed with the “best” of our capabilities as individuals in society. For Campbell, it was his hope that we perform these roles in a heroic manner for the sake of the

universal whole. This is a time-honored tradition and if embraced fully, this can provide us with a sense of accomplishment beyond our immediate realities.

IN SUMMATION AND THE PREVAILING MESSAGE FROM JOSEPH CAMPBELL

Ultimately, the shaping our own destinies is contingent on these soul-searching, metaphorical pathway stones that guide us in our lifelong learning through our ancient cultural myths. With a positive mindset, we all hope to find ourselves toward personal redemption, and finally some level of internal salvation. In acknowledgement to Joseph Campbell's prevailing message, he encourages us to pursue peaceful endeavors within our psyches to account for our existence in a meaningful way. In Campbell's own words, "follow your bliss", he gives us the sustaining message of his legacy in how we should live as a credo for our personal and daily lives. In conquering our unsaid fears, we should face our challenges in this journey we call "life" to its fullest extent as this is the tenant of "radiant living."

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