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**IMAGE OF THE UNICORN IN “THE LAST UNICORN”
BY P. BEAGLE**

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“PĒDĒJAIS VIENRADZIS”

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Anotācija

Pītera Bīgla grāmata “Pēdējais vienradzis” tika publicēta 1968. gadā. Šis pētījums, ‘Vienradža tēls P. Bīgla darbā “Pēdējais vienradzis”’, ir veltīts grāmatas tēlu un varoņu analīzei no dažādām perspektīvām, lai atklātu sīkāku informāciju, kas veicinātu dziļāko teksta izpratni. Šajā analīzē tika izmantotas sekojošās metodes: izpētīt pieejamo teorētisko materiālu, kas attiecas uz pētījuma priekšmetu, izanalizēt, salīdzināt un apvienot teorijas, izveidot sistēmu, saskaņā ar kuru var to priekšmetu pētīt, un izanalizēt pētījuma priekšmetu atbilstoši izstrādātajai sistēmai. Kloda Levī-Strosa “Strukturālajā antropoloģijā” izklāstītās struktūras palīdz sistematizēt turpmāko pētījumu, apvienojot strukturālisma metodes ar vēsturiskiem un mitoloģiskiem faktiem, kā arī ar citu pieeju, kas balstās uz Džozefa Kempbela grāmatas “Varonis ar tūkstoš sejām” (1973). Šo pieeju kombinācija ļauj ilustrēt galvenā varoņa piedzīvojuma nozīmīgākos elementus ar diagrammām, kā arī iztēlot pašu varoni un pārējos personāžus struktūru formā. Veicot šo pētījumu tika pierādīts, ka sistēmu, ko izstrādāja saskaņā ar varoņa piedzīvojuma aprakstu Džozefa Kempbela grāmatā, var izteikt diagrammu formā, iesaistot struktūras, aprakstītas “Strukturālajā antropoloģijā”, un pēc tam izdarīt to pašu ar Pītera Bīgla grāmatā aprakstīto varoņa piedzīvojumu. Turklāt šī metode palīdzēja atšifrēt grāmatā izmantoto tēlu nozīmi, kā arī saprast, ka Pītera Bīgla grāmatā galvenā varoņa transformācijas struktūra galvenokārt atbilst modernā varoņu piedzīvojuma struktūrai Kempbela grāmatā. Ir, protams, daži interesanti izņēmumi, kuri tiks apspriesti tālāk.

Atslēgas vārdi: koncentriskā/diametrālā binārā struktūra, apļveida/diametrālā trīskārtējā struktūra, metamorfoze, vecāku tēli, robežas šķērsojums, mūsdienu sabiedrība

Abstract

“The Last Unicorn” written by Peter Beagle was first published in 1968. The present research, ‘Image of the Unicorn in “The Last Unicorn” by P. Beagle’, is devoted to analyzing the images in this story from different perspectives, in order to reveal subtler details that further a more profound comprehension of the text. The methods adopted for the present research are as follows: studying the available theoretical material relevant to the subject under discussion, analyzing, comparing and combining theories, developing a framework according to which the subject can be studied, and analyzing it according to the obtained framework. “Structural Anthropology” by Claude Levi-Strauss allowed systematizing further research, combining structuralist methods with historical and mythological data, as well as with another approach, based on “The Hero with a Thousand Faces” (1973) by Joseph Campbell, in order to express the hero adventure in diagram form. The results of the research have shown that the characters in Peter Beagle’s story can, indeed be subjected to structuralization. The framework developed according to Campbell’s description of the hero-adventure can also be expressed in diagram form, involving structures introduced by Claude Levi-Strauss. Furthermore, this approach proved to be helpful in deciphering the meaning carried by the images in “The last Unicorn”, as well as in determining that the structure of the transformation of the protagonist in Peter Beagle’s book mainly fits into the framework of a modern hero-myth developed by Campbell, with several interesting exceptions that will be discussed further.

Key words: concentric/diametrical binary structure, circular/diametrical ternary structure, metamorphosis, parental figure, the crossing of the threshold, modern society

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Introduction

A story can be interpreted from various points of view, relying on a multitude of approaches to a literary text. Depending on the strategy selected as the basis of the analysis, the images and symbols introduced in the text can be perceived and interpreted differently. Henceforth, analyzing one story according to different approaches could help, for instance, to uncover the purpose for which a particular element has been introduced into the storyline, reveal other, more subtle nuances of meaning. Consequently, it could allow a more profound interpretation that, had the reader disregarded the possibility of another approach, would have remained concealed, and, as a result, see another story behind the one created through the literal perception of the text.

An important part of analyzing a story is the analysis of the images used in it. The images communicated through the characters and setting can be perceived not as indivisible units, but as structures composed from various elements. Thus, each image can be subjected to ‘dissection’ in order to single out these elements, reveal the links between them and the rules according to which they are combined – in other words, to outline the pattern of the image. This could help understand the purpose for which each element has been used, thus enabling the reader to grasp the subtlest nuances of each image, their interrelation, as well as the origin and the meaning of the allusions intended by the author. Further, the reader is able to reassemble the elements and perceive the story anew, from a now sophisticated point of view. The element correlation helps understand how they influence each other and how they contribute to the creation of a complex, multidimensional image. The complexity of the image is enhanced by its interaction with other images, so that in certain cases whole systems of images are developed.

The **goal** of this research is to analyze the structures underlying the characters and setting in “The Last Unicorn” by Peter S. Beagle according to the works of Claude Levi-Strauss and Joseph Campbell.

The **enabling objectives**:

1. to identify structures developed by Claude Levi-Strauss in “Structural Anthropology”;
2. to define the patterns that may contain complex images in certain stages of an archetypal hero-adventure in “The Hero with a Thousand Faces” by Joseph Campbell, and express these patterns in diagram form according to the structures introduced by Levi-Strauss;

3. to analyze the images in “The Last Unicorn” by Peter S. Beagle according to the two sets of obtained structures: 1) according to Claude Levi-Strauss and 2) based on “The Hero with a Thousand Faces”;
4. to compare and analyze the results;

The **research questions**:

1. What features of the hero’s adventure described by Campbell can be recognized in the journey made by the protagonist of “The Last Unicorn”?
2. How do Strauss’ structures in “The Last Unicorn” change when regarded from the perspective of the hero’s journey described by Campbell?
3. How can the adventure of an archetypal hero described by Campbell in “The Hero with a Thousand Faces” be expressed using variations of structures introduced by Claude Levi-Strauss?
4. Which of the above structures are revealed among the images created by Peter Beagle in “The Last Unicorn”?

The **methods of research**: studying theoretical literature, analyzing and comparing relevant theories, applying one theory as the basis of the layout according to which the remaining theoretical material will be structuralized, developing a framework for further analysis, analyzing the target text according to all the developed criteria.

“The Last Unicorn”

Peter S. Beagle (1939) is an American fantasy writer, whose novel, “The Last Unicorn”, first published in 1968, tells a story of a unicorn who sets off on a journey to a faraway kingdom to find her long-disappeared kin. Throughout her journey the unicorn encounters a multitude of different characters, humans and mythical creatures including. The list of the characters that will be mentioned in the research is provided below, in order to facilitate the reader’s orienting within the multitude of character-based structures:

- ❖ The Unicorn – the protagonist of the story, the last unicorn in the world. She makes the journey from her lilac forest into the kingdom of Haggard in order to find other unicorns that are said to have been enslaved by the Red Bull.

- ❖ The Red Bull – the main antagonist in the story. He serves King Haggard and captures the unicorns for him, chasing them into the sea at the foot of Haggard’s castle. He tries to capture the Unicorn as well, but does not succeed, and is defeated by the protagonist in the end.
- ❖ The Lady Amalthea – a young and beautiful maiden that the Unicorn is turned into by Schmendrick. The transformation occurs shortly after the Unicorn encounters the Red Bull and is nearly enslaved. It helps the hero escape the Bull for the time being, until she is compelled to face him again and is turned back into a unicorn.
- ❖ Schmendrick – a sorcerer that the Unicorn meets on her way to Haggard’s castle in Mommy Fortuna’s Midnight Carnival. He accompanies the protagonist throughout the journey.
- ❖ Mommy Fortuna – a witch and also the proprietor of the Midnight Carnival. Her carnival displays ordinary animals under the guise of mythical creatures.
- ❖ Celaeno – a harpy, one of the prisoners in Mommy Fortuna’s Carnival, and, besides the Unicorn, the only real ancient magical beast among other animals.
- ❖ Captain Cully – the ringleader of the gang of highwaymen that kidnap Schmendrick and bring him to Cully. He mistakes Schmendrick for the famous folklorist Francis James Child and recites ballads of himself and composed by himself, while some of his comrades suspect that Schmendrick is in reality Prince Lír in disguise.
- ❖ Molly Grue – Cully’s helpmate. She runs off with the Unicorn and Schmendrick and accompanies them throughout the journey.
- ❖ Jack Jingly – one of Cully’s comrades, the one who kidnaps Schmendrick and brings him to Cully’s camp.
- ❖ The Mayor – the mayor of a town that the Unicorn, Schmendrick, and Molly Grue visit on their way to Haggard’s kingdom.
- ❖ King Haggard – the supposed owner of the Red Bull, for whom the Bull gathers the unicorns.
- ❖ Prince Lír – Haggard’s son, falls in love with Amalthea.

Theoretical literature: Joseph Campbell and Claude Levi-Strauss

In this research there will not be discussed such subjects as the connection of the events and characters described in “The Last Unicorn” with the realities of the period of history during which the book was written. The present analysis of this book is mainly based on two works – “The Hero with a Thousand Faces” (1973) by Joseph Campbell and “Structural Anthropology” (2011) by Claude Levi-Strauss – and concerns itself with the character interaction within a fictional universe, regardless of the historical or social context of the book.

Joseph Campbell is an American mythologist, writer and lecturer. His book “The Hero with a Thousand Faces”, first published in 1949, is devoted to identification of the image of a composite hero and the structure of the archetype of a myth by means of defining the principal motifs of a journey (either spatio-temporal or spiritual) undertaken by the protagonist in a multitude of ancient hero myths.

In the very preface to “The Hero with a Thousand Faces” Campbell mentions psychoanalysis as a common approach to interpretation of dreams. He intends to employ psychoanalysis as a means of deciphering myths in a manner very much like that of explaining dreams. Relying on the works of Sigmund Freud, Carl G. Jung, Otto Rank, and many others who introduced the idea that ‘the patterns and logic of fairy tale and myth correspond to those of dream’ (Campbell, 1973: 255), or, in other words, the elements of myth are reproduced in our dreams, Campbell explains that dreams and myths are very much alike, because ‘their figures originate from the same sources – the unconscious wells of fantasy – and their grammar is the same’ (ibid.: 256). Henceforth, he undertakes the task of discovering the symbolic meaning of the elements of myths, regarding them as dreamlike reflections of the unconscious.

Psychoanalysis applied to a myth or a fairytale aids the researcher in breaking the plot up into constituent parts, understanding their symbolic meaning, and then easily stripping the parts of all unnecessary details – in a way, this process can be considered similar to valency reduction in linguistics (when the number of arguments controlled by a verbal predicate is reduced, sometimes to zero). After that, it becomes easy to identify common elements in not so different now frameworks of various tales, and find recurring motifs and plot twists characteristic of all the myths under discussion. As a result, not only a diagram of an archetypal adventure is created, but also an archetype of a Hero that has to meet with this adventure in myths and fairytales created by different civilizations in different periods of history. As Campbell notes, ‘it will be always the one, shape-shifting yet marvellously constant story’ (ibid.: 3), no matter what the setting and the characters are.

The process of reducing a plot to an out-of-time-and-space framework of main directions and basic destinations, introduced by Campbell in “The Hero with a Thousand Faces” parallels the main idea of structuralism, a school of thought in cultural anthropology founded by Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908-2009), a French social anthropologist. Structuralism views cultures as systems and analyses them ‘in terms of the structural relations among their elements’ (Online 2). According to Lévi-Strauss, the purpose of structural analysis is ‘to reduce the enormous amount of information about cultural systems to [...] the essentials’ (ibid.). In other words, a complex

cultural system can be subjected to simplification, which results in converting it into a structure generalized enough to seek out regularities common to a number of structures. This idea is discussed in many of Claude Lévi-Strauss' works – Daniel Chandler refers to some of them in his “Semiotics for Beginners” (1994). According to Chandler, Lévi-Strauss applied the aforementioned principles of structuralism in his studies of ‘systems of cultural practices’, namely, myths, totemism and kinship rules. He considered myths to be representations of concepts, that could be expressed ‘in the form of a pair of oppositions’, so that the process of myth development could be traced through ‘layers of paired opposites which are transformations of the primary pair’, these layers beginning with ‘classifications based on physical perception’ and gradually becoming ‘increasingly more generalized’ (Chandler, 1994). Due to these transformations, as Lévi-Strauss argued in his work “The Savage Mind” (1974), within a given culture some pairs of opposites can gradually become perceived as ‘metaphorically resembling the “similar differences” of other oppositions’ (Chandler, 1994). For example, the pair *edible/inedible* can become associated with the pair *native/foreign*, etc.

In “Structural Anthropology” Claude Lévi-Strauss applies the same analytical method to classification of different systems in the social organization of the tribes in America and Indonesia. He investigates how the notions that accompany the tribe's everyday life change from ‘terms all more or less drawn from sensory qualities’ to pairs of oppositions ‘whose nature is different to the degree that they involve not so much a logic of qualities as one of forms’ (Chandler, 1994). Thereby, the variety of entities and phenomena subjected to classification in “Structural Anthropology” is not reduced to the location of buildings in a settlement, nor does this method confine itself to dividing the population of a given tribe into social classes. In other words, Claude Levi-Strauss extends the categorization to metaphysical, abstract notions, such as marital status or age. A settlement being divided into areas according either to their functions - the role they play in the life of the tribe, or the landscape of each area, or the people that inhabit each particular part of the settlement, represents general principles of the tribe's perception of reality, as well as their social and religious life. As an example, Claude Levi-Strauss describes the Omarakana village in the Trobriand Islands, where the tribe's culture and religious beliefs are represented through the division of the village into sectors. In brief, the central part of the village is where the sacred (sacral) rituals are performed, whereas the peripheral part deals with the secular (profane) aspects of tribal life (Levi-Strauss, 2001: 155). Another example of the layout of the settlement being a simplified reflection of the system of traditions would be the settlement of the Bororo people. Strauss notes that the houses being divided into the ones that the bachelors

live in and the ones for women and married couples expresses the difference between the male and female roles in the spiritual part of the tribe's life (ibid.: 148), again, dividing the village into the sacral (masculine) part in the centre and the secular (feminine/domestic) part surrounding it.

It should be noted that this phenomenon – the shift of notions from physical to abstract – is investigated in Campbell's "The Hero with a Thousand Faces" as well. For instance, as it will be demonstrated further, moving through space is regarded as a metaphorical representation of the process of maturation. Similarly, a literary character or a group of characters, or any other entity, when regarded as a receptacle of certain concepts, can also be scrutinized following the structuralist method as the basis of the research.

In the first chapter of this research – "Types of Structures" – there will be developed a set of structures based on "Structural Anthropology" by Claude Levi-Strauss. The second chapter, "Metamorphoses of the Archetypal Hero", will be devoted to developing the structures underlying some of the components of the journey completed by the protagonist in "The Last Unicorn", the components in question being identified according to "The Hero with a Thousand Faces" by Joseph Campbell. The third chapter "Structural Analysis of the Images in 'The Last Unicorn'" and the fourth chapter "Transformations of the Unicorn", respectively, will consist of the analysis of "The Last Unicorn" according to 1) the system introduced by Claude Levi-Strauss and 2) the diagrams representing elements of the hero-adventure developed on the basis of "The Hero with a Thousand Faces".

Types of structures

This chapter will be devoted to the structures developed by Claude Levi-Strauss in “Structural Anthropology”. The structures will be systematized and diagrammed in order to demonstrate graphically the relations between the elements in each structure. The structures that Levi-Strauss develops in his book can be further reduced to a still simpler frame consisting of empty cells and links between them by isolating the description of the structures from the context of the social organization of tribes. Among the tribes Strauss describes in “Structural Anthropology” there exist two main types of structures: binary (that can also be referred to as dual structures) and ternary. Dual structures are divided into diametrical and concentric, and each type has its distinctive features.

Binary structures

A concentric binary structure (see Appendix 1, Fig. 1.1) consists of a circle inscribed in another circle – they are referred to as the central and the peripheral one, respectively. In the context of social organization and locality, this means that the settlement of a tribe is divided into two areas, one circumscribing the other. In some cases, contrasting series of additional meanings are attached to both areas. The examples of such cases are the aforementioned Omarakana village (2001: 141) and the settlement of the Bororo people (ibid.: 147). The meanings that accompany each of the areas in both settlements are as follows: central part-sacred (sacral)-masculine-bachelors, peripheral part-secular (profane)-female(domestic)-married couples.

A diametrical binary structure (see Appendix 1, Fig. 1.2) is defined by Strauss as a result of symmetrical dichotomy that creates the equilibrium between social groups distinguished by the sides of a physical world and moral or metaphysical entities (ibid.: 145). In other words, while the concentric structure mostly refers to the physical location of the settlement, the diametrical structure to a great extent reflects the principle according to which a certain community is divided into social groups. Graphically it can be represented either as 1) a figure (here - a circle) divided into two sectors by its diameter or 2) two figures acting as the endpoints of an axis.

Symmetry of binary structures

There are several properties according to which binary structures can be classified further. According to the elements of the system being symmetrical or asymmetrical, binary structures fall into three categories. The first one is a completely symmetrical diametrical structure (see

Appendix 2, Fig. 1.3) that can be referred to as the absolute binary structure, since its elements are completely equal, or, rather, belong to one group of similar elements. In his book Claude Levi-Strauss notes that such system is practically non-existent (ibid.). However, if we turn from structural anthropology to literature and mythology, it is possible to regard a completely symmetrical diametrical structure as a relation between two characters that are different and yet have a common unifying feature like belonging, as it has been noted earlier, to one group. An appropriate example would be two ancient Greek deities among other Olympians. The distinction that takes the two randomly chosen deities to the opposite endpoints of the axis can be based on either their function (god of war, god of sky and thunder, etc.), or their parentage or sibling connection. Thereby, the relation between the characters is interpreted in terms of how they interact in the plot, that is, regardless of any reference point to which one of the characters is closer than the other, and therefore is superior or inferior according to an imaginary scale. In this case the axis connecting the two elements (see Appendix 2, Fig. 1.3) is not an indication of an antithesis, but rather an emphasis of their connection, so that these elements can be compared, but not contraposed. Elements of a diametrical binary structure can also be unequal (ibid.). Thus there appears the second category of binary structures – an asymmetrical diametrical structure (see Appendix 2, Fig. 1.4). Its most prominent feature that distinguishes it from the first category is the fact that its elements are usually each other's opposites, in terms of being the extremes of one and the same essence or condition. As an example of such system Claude Levi-Strauss enlists such pairs of oppositions as superior–inferior, elder–younger, aristocratic–plebeian, strong–weak, etc (ibid.). This structure can be viewed as an intermediate between the completely symmetrical diametrical structure and an always asymmetrical concentric structure (see Appendix 2, Fig. 1.5) that forms the third category. Due to its construction a concentric structure is considered to be asymmetrical by default, since both its elements – the central figure and the peripheral figure are defined in relation to one and the same reference point (the centre) to which one of the figures is closer than the other, simply because it includes the centre within itself.

One should keep in mind that one and the same system can be regarded as being based on either one or another structure, depending on the criteria according to which it is interpreted. That is to say, a certain system or entity can demonstrate elements of several structures at a time, or even include elements of all types of, say, binary structures. In such cases the main attention should be paid to the elements that are either more prominent than the others or most relevant in a particular context.

Homogeneity/heterogeneity of binary structures

In relation to the character of the structures Strauss also introduced such terms as homogeneity and heterogeneity by stating that the symbols that are used to express the opposition of the sides of the diametrical binary structure can be either homogeneous or heterogeneous (ibid: 160). 'Homogeneous' is defined by the Webster Dictionary as being 'of the same kind of nature; consisting of similar parts, or of elements of the like nature' or 'possessing the same number of factors of a given kind'(Online 1). Homogeneous elements clearly fit into the same categories and can be described and compared according to the same points (see Appendix 3, Fig. 1.6). For example, summer-winter (both are seasons), earth-water (elements), white-black (colours). The two types of classification – the symmetrical/asymmetrical and the homogeneous/heterogeneous – can hardly parallel each other. However, recurring to the previous division of binary structures, one could say that the structures that can be classified in terms of their symmetry are most likely to be homogeneous in nature, since all types (the completely symmetrical diametrical structure, the asymmetrical diametrical structure, the always asymmetrical concentric structure) require that the elements are of similar nature, or fit into the same categories, or at least have a common reference point, so that the evaluation is possible.

Heterogeneity, in its turn, introduces a completely new set of elements. The definition of 'heterogeneous' by the same dictionary is as follows: 'consisting of elements that are not of the same kind or nature', 'differing in kind; having unlike qualities; possessed of different characteristics; dissimilar; - opposed to homogeneous, and said of two or more connected objects'(ibid.). Thus, in the case of heterogeneous elements one can hardly speak of evaluating them according to the same criteria, since they have no common categories conspicuous enough to allow comparison and be labelled as homogeneous (see Appendix 3, Fig. 1.7), and are connected within a particular context only. The examples of such pairs would be 'state-process', 'being-becoming', 'simple-dual', etc (Levi-Strauss, 2001: 160). In a way, heterogeneous structures resemble completely symmetrical diametrical structures, since it is the connection that is important, rather than the contraposition of elements. At the same time, the elements of a heterogeneous pair are clearly contrasting each other.

Derivations of binary structures

The division of binary structures into diametrical and concentric structures implies another division that emphasizes the difference between these two types. Claude Levi-Strauss (2001) characterizes the diametrical structure as being always static. The static system does not exceed

its own limits – in other words, the elements of a diametrical structure are defined by means of contrasting (or just being connected to) each other, with no third element involved (see Appendix 4, Fig. 1.8). The concentric structure (see Appendix 4, Fig. 1.9) is considered to be dynamic by default, since it requires a third element, say, a forest surrounding the binary complex of the settlement, that outlines and defines it, so that the central figure is to the peripheral one as the peripheral one to the forest (ibid.: 144). Triplicity, described by Claude Levi-Stross as inability to exist without a certain third element that completes the structure (ibid.: 144), is one of the most remarkable properties of this structure.

Apart from implied triplicity there are other, individual cases of interweaving of two or even three structures, since the types of these systems are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Thus, either a system can be viewed as belonging to one or another structure depending on the position of the viewer in this system (ibid.: 140), or the arrangement of the structure of many tribes can include elements from different systems. The second option particularly refers to the concentric binary structures, since it is the type of social organization that welcomes various foreign elements (mostly it tends to adopt features of a diametrical structure) due to the fact that the interpretations of its structure can vary. Claude Levi-Strauss accounts for the emergence of such elements by stating that concentric duality, similarly to the diametrical, comprises a homogeneous contraposition suggested by and expressed through its spatial organization – the central element contrasts the peripheral one (ibid.: 145). Concerning the first option, he admits that the contrasted elements are not equal in terms of their social or religious authority (ibid.) – it is understandable if we assume that the elements of the tribe are defined as *the one of religious significance* and *the one of social significance*, since in this way they appear to deal with two completely different spheres of tribal life. However, if the same elements are defined as *the religious one* and *the non-religious one*, the religiousness being the reference point, – then they can be regarded as the elements of a homogeneous structure. The idea is that, as it has been emphasized earlier, the structure belonging to one or another type depends on the criteria according to which it is interpreted.

The second option is illustrated in “Structural Anthropology” by the description of the tribe inhabiting the islands of Java and Sumatra, where there exists a concentric binary structure in the location of the buildings in the tribe’s territory; it consists of the place where the dwellings are accumulated in the centre of the settlement, and the outside territory – the area of undulated land (ibid.: 143-144). Furthermore, this concentric structure is the source of the facetious opposition between ‘the sailors’ and ‘the soldiers’ (ibid.) that assumes the air of a performance put on by the

representatives of these groups, facing each other, following the diametrical structure in their location.

Another example of diametrical contrast between the parts of a concentric binary structure is the aforementioned Omarakana village. Apart from the ‘sacred (sacral) - secular (profane)’ division of the village, there exists a set of other oppositions related to the pair of antonyms ‘central – peripheral’, these antonyms being at the same time the elements that are normally compared according to their position towards the central point. ‘East – West’, ‘Sun – Moon’, ‘day – night’ (ibid.: 155) are other possible pairs of oppositions related to the initial pair.

Ternary structures

The discussion of the existence of a certain third element leads to the next step - ternary structures. This case is illustrated by the description of the aforementioned Omarakana village that is divided into two concentric circles that in their turn are divided into three sectors (ibid.: 143). This and all the examples of such systems provided by Strauss include ternary elements interweaving with other constructions. This suggests an idea that ternary structures rarely exist unless they are parts of binary structures - at least in relation to the layout of a populated locality and social organization.

Concerning intertwined systems, Claude Levi-Strauss notes further, that what is normally called a binary organization in many cases is more of a mix of all three types: diametrical binary structure, concentric binary structure and ternary structure (ibid.: 157). Furthermore, triplicity and duality are closely, if not inseparably interconnected, since duality should be perceived as a limit which triplicity strives to reach, so that it could be viewed as an absolute form of triplicity. From this point of view, a ternary system can be organized as a scale consisting of three levels, the extremes of which are the endpoints of an axis along which all three levels are marked (see Appendix 5, Fig. 1.10). The axis can be viewed as a diameter that connects two opposite elements, thus, reducing such ternary structure to the opposition of its extremes, creating a diametrical binary structure (ibid.: 158). An example of such diametrical triplicity would be the discrimination between the upper, the middle and the lower classes of society.

Lastly, here also should be mentioned one of the most prominent subdivisions of ternary structures that can be referred to as a circular ternary structure. It exists in combination with binary structures, but when separated from the elements of dual systems, it results in a simple scheme. Graphically this scheme is represented by three elements arranged in a circle, belonging to one circumference and, henceforth, equidistant from the centre (see Appendix 5, Fig. 1.11). On

the one hand, the three elements are equivalent - of equal importance to the creation of the system – this quality is represented graphically by the three radii of equal length that connect the elements to the centre. On the other hand, the functions of these elements are essentially different (ibid.: 162). Thus, unlike in the case of a diametrical structure, the elements cannot be defined by means of comparing and contrasting them to one another, since it is impossible to arrange them along one scale, which is illustrated with the elements belonging to separate radii. Therefore, concerning the impossibility of the assessment of the elements according to common categories, as well as the fact that the roles these elements play in a system are different, they can be considered heterogeneous.

To sum up, there are four main types of structures distinguished according to: 1) the amount of the elements and 2) the arrangement of these elements in a structure. These four types are: concentric binary structure, diametrical binary structure, circular ternary structure and diametrical ternary structure.

As it has been stated before, the structuralist analysis discussed by Lévi-Strauss in “Structural Anthropology” can be applied to a wide range of cultural practices, including mythology and totemism. According to Daniel Chandler, in his structuralist research Claude Lévi-Strauss ‘even turned his attention to the textual codes of literature’ (Chandler, 1994). Thus, following Lévi-Strauss, in the present research the structuralist approach will be applied to the analysis of a literary work, namely, to the categorization of images used in the work. The structures discussed above will further be superimposed on the images, or groups of images, that have been created by Peter Beagle (1968) on the basis of classical fairytale characters, such as the Prince, the King, the Sorcerer, etc., as well as on the basis of the mythical creatures, like the Unicorn or the Harpy. One of the episodes in “The Last Unicorn”, the one that revolves around the protagonist - the Unicorn - undergoing a certain metamorphosis on her way to Hagsgate, is particularly interesting to regard from the structuralist perspective, due to the fact that character transformation here represents a peculiar case of character interaction in the sense that the Unicorn not only interacts with other characters, but also becomes other characters, distancing herself from her previous form. Consequently, the protagonist can be regarded as a composite image or a group of images, representing the case of enhanced complexity, mentioned in the introduction.

Therefore, the structures that the protagonist may belong to can be expected to be more difficult to locate, in contrast to other characters, that are relatively easy to recognize as belonging to one or another structure. Due to its complexity, the system of images that appears as

a result of hero metamorphosis requires an additional pattern supporting the structures introduced in “Structural Anthropology”, following which the system could be successfully reduced to the essentials. “The Hero with a Thousand Faces” by Joseph Campbell demonstrates how a multitude of myths and fairytales can be simplified to a generalized framework – this can be employed as the basis for the pattern, that could help decompose the system in question into elements, discover their meaning, facilitate omission of unnecessary details, and subsequently reassemble the elements according to the structures by Claude Levi-Strauss. Therefore, in the following chapter, “Metamorphoses of the Archetypal Hero”, there will be discussed only a particular stage of the hero-adventure described in “The Hero with a Thousand Faces”, the one that concerns itself with the metamorphoses occurring in the protagonist as the journey progresses. The most important elements of this stage of the hero-adventure will be converted to diagrams on the basis of the structures developed by Claude Levi-Strauss.

Metamorphoses of the archetypal hero

As follows from “The Hero with a Thousand Faces”, the transformation begins with the hero crossing the symbolical threshold separating ‘the world of common day’ (Campbell, 1973: 30) and the world he must visit in the course of his adventure, and ends with the crossing of the return threshold, as in “The Hero with a Thousand Faces” the threshold is also referred to as ‘the gates of metamorphosis’ (ibid.: 105). Campbell himself considers transformation to be an essential part of the hero-path. He specifies that ‘transformation, fluidity, not stubborn ponderosity’ is the characteristic of the mythological hero, for he is the personification ‘not of things become but of things becoming’ (ibid.: 337). Consequently, the enemy he must defeat in order to complete his adventure can be regarded as ‘the monster of the status quo’ (ibid.: 337) – the symbol of stagnation.

The adventure begins with the hero realizing that he himself or the world around him ‘suffers from a symbolical deficiency’ (ibid.: 37). This somewhat discomfiting inadequacy is what compels the hero to set out on a journey to procure what is missing. That which the hero is looking for lies concealed beyond the boundaries of his habitual world. Henceforth, in order to acquire it, he must leave his world behind and venture into the unexplored territories.

Thereby, this part of the research deals with the hero’s sojourn in these territories, ‘the zone of [...] darkness, the unknown, and danger’ (ibid.: 77). However, one should not think of the world beyond the threshold as the abode of ‘deceitful and dangerous presences’ (ibid.: 78) that the imagination populates the unknown regions with. In fact, the hero is torn between the superstitious fear and the irresistible attraction to the zone beyond – amidst ‘ogres’ he sees ‘sirens of mysteriously seductive, nostalgic beauty’ (ibid.: 79), the ‘sirens’ being the promises of ‘supernatural wonder’ (ibid.: 30), pleasures, and revelations.

Crossing the threshold

The hero must proceed across the border separating the two worlds into ‘the Belly of the Whale’ – as Campbell metaphorically named the region of the unknown (ibid.: 90). He considers the passage of the threshold to be ‘a transit into a sphere of rebirth’ (ibid.), which, consequently, should be understood as ‘the belly of the whale’ being a symbol of the womb. Another thing that emphasizes the resemblance between the zone of the unknown and the alimentary apparatus of a marine mammal, according to Campbell, is the hero’s inability to control the process of crossing

the threshold – he is rather being ‘swallowed into the unknown’ (ibid.), devoured by the world beyond.

On the face of it, the two worlds could be represented by a simple concentric binary structure (see Appendix 1, Fig. 1.1) However, when it comes to deciding which of the worlds should be regarded as the centre of the structure, and which should form the peripheral element, one cannot but notice that there is a contradiction between the two variations of the process of proceeding from one world into another. The crossing of the threshold implies that the hero is moving outwards from the habitual world into the zone of the unknown surrounding it (see Appendix 6, Fig. 2.1) – breaking out from the confines of the familiar world, developing, and expanding one’s horizons. Being ‘swallowed’, on the contrary, is definitely an inward motion (see Appendix 6, Fig. 2.2) – the hero is being enclosed in a place that seems to have no exit, and therefore, on the face of it, could be interpreted as a hopelessly stagnant condition with no chance of development. Moreover, the hero being swallowed can be regarded as the death of the character, as Campbell himself noted, ‘the passage of the threshold is a form of self annihilation’ (ibid.: 91), which runs counter to the symbolism of the womb. However, further Campbell cites Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, the author of “Akimcanna: Self-Naughting” (1940), who states that ‘no creature [...] can attain a higher grade of nature without ceasing to exist’ (ibid.: 92). Only then can the hero be reborn into ‘new life, [...] new knowledge of existence’ (ibid.: 162). Thus, the ‘inwards vs. outwards’ conflict is solved: Campbell then explains that the act of being ‘swallowed’ can be compared to ‘the passing of a worshipper into a temple’ (ibid.: 91), since both are the passages to rebirth, as the temple is the place where one attains enlightenment (spiritual rebirth) or, in other words, gets access to ‘the heavenly land beyond, above, and below [in other words, outside] the confines of the world’ (ibid.: 92) which alludes to the world beyond the threshold. Thus, ‘the passage into a temple and the hero-dive through the jaws of the whale are identical adventures’ (ibid.). Graphically, this act of simultaneously moving inwards and outwards can be represented through another concentric structure (see Appendix 6, Fig. 2.3). In this diagram the figures symbolizing the zone of the unknown and the temple are filled in with the same pattern, indicating the identity of these notions, as well as the fact that the motions represented by the two arrows are one in essence.

As a sacred place, every temple must be entered properly, having abandoned the vanity of the world and being prepared to embrace the new experience. In Campbell’s interpretation, the hero ‘at the moment of entry into a temple undergoes a metamorphosis’ that consists in ‘shedding the secular character’ (ibid.). This process, according to Campbell, equals being divested of one’s

‘mere humanity’ (ibid.: 136). Naturally, these metamorphoses prepare the hero for the encounter with the entity that dwells in the region of the unknown, freeing him from all-too-human foibles, like hope, desire, or fear - Campbell also refers to those traits as ‘personal limitations’ (ibid.: 237) - that could prevent him from realizing the true meaning of the encounter, and no longer fear submitting to this devouring entity, fully confident of that death is not the end. It is essential that the hero does exactly so, for ‘anyone unable to understand a god sees it as a devil’ (ibid.: 92), and is, therefore, doomed to perish. In general, the process of abandoning secularity is equal to the passage into the temple – the hero enters his un-human and wise self, the *Übermensch* embryo, fully prepared for the future revelations. Thus, the state that the hero is in at the moment of crossing the threshold can be illustrated by a simple concentric binary structure (see Appendix 6, Fig. 2.4). Interestingly enough, to a certain extent these diagrams (see Appendix 6, Fig. 2.3, Fig. 2.4) parallel Claude Levi-Strauss’ views on what meaning is usually attached to each of the elements of similar structures in the settlements, that is, the division of the settlement into the secular and the sacred part. In the first diagram (see Appendix 6, Fig. 2.3), the temple, located in the centre, is the sacral element, and the habitual world, respectively, represents secularity. The peripheral element in this structure representing the zone of the unknown merely conveys an additional meaning of getting access to the world beyond. The central element in the second structure (see Appendix 6, Fig. 2.4) can also acquire the connotation of sanctity, as opposed to the peripheral element representing the secular humanity.

Encounters in the zone of the unknown

In the world beyond the hero meets an entity the contact with which could be compared to that with a parent. One should keep in mind that this does not mean meeting someone who has a calling for executing an act of paternal care upon the hero. The parent-like stranger in this case should be regarded as an essence capable of performing the function of the life-creator. Moreover, it is not necessarily personified by a living creature, nor even by a physical body or substance - in some cases the meeting is represented through a symbolical act of the hero entering a certain state of being or experiencing a certain revelation, gaining (or being granted) access to the source of life-enhancing force and all the sirens’ promises redeemed.

However, even in the cases where the parent is immaterial and cannot even be regarded as a character – only as a circumstance or a phenomenon, one can still regard the hero’s interaction with it in terms of social and biological connections between a parent and a child, and consequently, between a man and a woman as parents. Moreover, Campbell considers that the

entire process of transformation can be represented in sexual terms like pregnancy and birth (ibid.: 273). Such approach could help to determine the type of change occurring in the hero in the result of this interaction and the principle behind his connection to the source of revelation. Further in this research this element of the hero-path, regardless of how it is represented in a particular story, will be referred to as *parental figure*, for short.

In “The Hero with a Thousand Faces” Campbell introduces a generalized image of a god or a godlike being as one of all possible embodiments of the parental figure. According to Campbell, the godhead of this creature can be perceived as ‘a pattern of the divine state to which the human hero attains who has gone beyond the last terrors of ignorance’ (ibid.: 150-151), a symbol of what the hero is looking for. In other words, a god functioning as a parental figure in a myth or a story is the most precise representation of the hero’s spiritual development and his passage into a new, enlightened state of being, very much like the godlike being himself. Reverting to the idea of the hero entering the symbolical temple and being divested of his secular state, it is possible to say that the godhead is the one that awaits the hero inside the temple – the hero reveals his initially concealed self, which equals entering the temple, thus, discovering the godhead within himself – he is the seeker and what has been sought for combined.

In the same chapter Campbell touches upon the issue of gender in relation to the parental figure and stresses the fact that in different, apparently unconnected mythologies such beings are not infrequently possessed of both feminine and masculine features. Numerous examples include the following: Bodhisattva, who is represented both by masculine Avalokiteshvara and feminine Kwan Yin; Awonawilona, the chief-god in Zuni mythology, mostly referred to as ‘he’, but being, in fact, androgynous; in Greek mythology it is Hermaphrodite (the name speaks for itself) – the child of Hermes and Aphrodite; the Chinese chronicles mention ‘the holy woman’ T’ai Yuan, containing within itself both the masculine Yang and the feminine Yin (ibid.: 152-153).

The androgynous nature of a parental figure personifies the harmony originating from the opposites being united: the positive aspects of one principle balance the negative aspects of the other principle, and vice versa. Henceforth, dividing an entity that is supposed to be androgynous into separate principles can be regarded as upsetting the balance, which could lead to nothing but trouble for the hero. Indeed, if the entity that greets the hero beyond the threshold is possessed of just one set of features, say, only masculine – the metamorphosis it furthers in the hero is inevitably going to be, so to say, ‘lopsided’. For example, as stated above, before the hero experiences the second birth, he must be annihilated. Henceforth, there exists an annihilating agent - a seemingly malignant, destructive aspect of the father, that, in reality, is an indispensable

element of the life-giving mother-womb. When the feminine principle is missing, the parental figure assumes a downright perilous air, becoming ‘the ogre aspect of the father’ (ibid.: 129) that has retained the devouring essence of the parental figure, but with no maternal aspect to balance it. For the hero this means being permanently annihilated, with no chance of being reborn.

The case of dividing a bisexual entity into separate male and female characters is reflected in one of the most well-known Christian fables: the making of Adam and Eve on the sixth day of creation. Campbell alludes to the cabalistic teachings of the medieval Jews, as well as the Gnostic Christian writings of the second century, where the state of Adam, as he was created, was described as androgynous (ibid.: 152-153). However, when the woman, Eve, was removed from Adam into a separate form, the initial perfection was broken into the duality of masculine and feminine. The temporary restoration of the harmony becomes possible when a new life - a child combining the features of both parents within itself - is created through the act of love in which the two principles – ‘her darkness and his light’ (ibid.: 169) - rejoin.

As it is well-known, the formation of gender duality in Adam and Eve was ‘naturally followed by the discovery of the duality of good and evil, exile from the garden where God walks on earth’ (ibid.: 153). Therefore, in this case the image of a woman can be considered to be explicitly malevolent: she is the symbol and the cause of the hero’s downfall, resulting in his return to secularity, being banished from the source of bliss, deprived from the grace of God. Campbell thereby mentions other examples from literature and mythology, as well as lives and writings of the saints, that represent women as the source of temptation and the consequent corruption: Hamlet, Oedipus, etc (ibid.: 122-123). He states that because we are living beings, everything we think or do is inevitably submitted to the impulses of flesh. The consciousness of this connection fills the person with revulsion towards ‘life, the acts of life, the organs of life, woman in particular as the great symbol of life’ (ibid.: 122). In terms of a hero-path, for the protagonist who fails to control this aspect of the feminine principle and succumbs to it, there is no victory whatsoever – only defeat. The structures of the two malevolent aspects of the parental figure (see Appendix 8, Fig. 2.6, Fig. 2.7) will be discussed further.

The benevolent, maternal aspect of the female figure in myths shows in the presence of the paternal aspect and performs the functions of the ‘transforming medium’ (ibid.: 297) – the life-begetting spirit of the father reproduces itself through the mother of the world. The image of the mother in myths is frequently associated with water. ‘She is a personification of the primal element named in the second verse of Genesis, where we read that “the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters”.’ (ibid.: 297) Among other examples Campbell mentions the *Kalevala*,

also known as “The Land of Heroes” by Elias Lönnrot. In this work, among many other stories, it is told of the Water-Mother, floating on ‘the everlasting waters’ of ‘the primeval sea’ (ibid.: 299). Campbell notes further (ibid.: 301) that the water represents the ‘elemental cosmic ocean’ that is, in its turn, the symbol of the ‘second mother-womb’ that the hero enters in order to be reborn and ready to meet the masculine principle of the parental figure (or rather, worthy of doing so) - the benevolent father, the illuminating aspect of the androgynous god.

The momentous encounter with the benevolent masculine principle of the parental figure can frequently be preceded by the hero having to slay an enemy encountered beyond the threshold – Campbell defines it as ‘the tenacious aspect of the father’ (ibid.: 352). Technically, it is the same power that through annihilation guides the hero into the mother-womb – the annihilating/life-begetting parent, the ogre-father. The reason this entity is reverted to and discussed separately here is that, in isolation from the maternal aspect of the parental figure, the ogre aspect of the father plays another role in the hero’s adventure. As Campbell specifies further, in the result of the encounter, the ogre-father is not exactly defeated, but rather devoured – the hero ‘discovers and assimilates his opposite [...] either by swallowing it or by being swallowed’ (ibid.: 108). After that the hero ‘finds that he and his opposite are not of differing species, but one flesh’ (ibid.: 108), and ‘the hero himself is that which he had come to find’ (ibid.: 163). In other words, the slaying protagonist is, in fact, a part of the antagonist that is being slain. Therefore, the result of the encounter with the father is the realization of having combined within oneself the parental figure and the enemy, through which the hero becomes conscious of the fact that there is no real duality since the opposites are the same. The unity motif is duplicated in the idea of the godhead being what the hero strives to become (see above), as well as in the image of the androgynous parental figure – the latter, according to Campbell, in every myth ‘conduct the mind beyond objective experience into a symbolic realm where duality is left behind’ (ibid.: 152). Moreover, everything that the hero encounters in the course of the adventure can be considered a reflection of his inner life, and all the apparitions, however grotesque they may seem, are parts of the hero himself, ‘projections of its own being; and as it returns to its true state they are all reassumed’ (ibid.: 371). Henceforth, fighting and defeating one’s enemy, when regarded as the act of mutual devouring or merging with one’s opponent, is at the same time a display of the hero’s non-resistance to the inevitable metamorphoses - he ‘willingly relaxes to whatever may come to pass in him’ (ibid.: 237), and through doing so, attains the long-awaited perfection, for the hero becomes ‘more than man’ (ibid.: 154), having gone through the trials of the nether world.

One would think that the diagram representing the hero's encounter with the parental figure should resemble a simplified version of the widely known yin yang symbol, that is, a diametrical structure in the form of a circle divided by its diameter into two equal sectors symbolizing two opposite yet mutually complementing essences (very much like Yin and Yang) – the feminine and the masculine aspect of the parental figure. However, apart from the functions based on gender distinction, these aspects are possessed with another set of functions – those of a parent, namely: the birth-giving mother-womb, the life-begetting (here: devouring), and the illuminating father. These functions taken into consideration, it could be concluded that the elements of a parental figure should rather be arranged in a concentric ternary structure (see Appendix 7, Fig. 2.5). The division into two sectors is retained; however, the diameter separating one sector from another designates not the distinction between the feminine and the masculine principle, but the contrast between the benevolent and the malevolent aspect of the father, as well as the contrast between the images of the hero before and after the encounter with the parental figure. The hero crosses the threshold, in the diagram marked with the dotted line and circumscribing the two inner circles, and enters the zone of the unknown, where the parental figure dwells. As it can be seen in the diagram, the father himself can be regarded as a sort of a threshold surrounding the mother-womb, the boundary that separates the hero from the ultimate goal. He is the obstacle that the hero must overcome in order to reach the goal, and, at the same time, the chance of admission open only to those who follow the above discussed directions for entering the temple properly – the only way to get from one world to another and back. The hero's goal is the very centre of the circumferences, corresponding to the moment of rebirth. In the diagram there are also marked two perpendicular diameters: the vertical symbolizes the threshold that the hero must cross on his way into the new, illuminated state of existence, and the horizontal represents the hero's route through the zone of the unknown. It is of interest to note, that, as follows from the above-discussed material, the encounter with the father may occur repeatedly. First, the hero is annihilated (thus the devouring function of an abstract father-figure is expressed), then reborn through the mother-womb, and only then, on the hero's way out, onto the other side, the illuminating aspect of the father appears before him as another threshold to be crossed before the hero returns to the world of common day.

On the basis of this diagram it is now possible to envisage the structures of the 'lopsided' encounters described above, that is, the encounters with the incomplete and therefore malevolent parental figure, possessed of only one set of features: either feminine or masculine. The two obtained structures – the one containing only the feminine principle (see Appendix 8, Fig. 2.6)

and the other one, possessed of the masculine aspect only (see Appendix 8, Fig. 2.7) – can also be referred to as *no-way-in* and *no-way-out* respectively. In the *no-way-in* structure, in the absence of the life-begetting father the potentially motherly feminine essence is deprived of her birth-giving function and becomes merely a woman, assuming, thus, the role of a temptress. In diagram form this could be expressed through a concentric binary structure, containing only the element that stands for the feminine aspect. In this encounter the hero may elude the annihilation (since there is no ogre-father), but he cannot be reborn either – he is drawn to the alluring yet sterile temptress and bound to wander idly in circles or meet his demise, having fallen victim to her enchantment. In the case of the *no-way-out* structure, the hero's lot is just as lamentable – he enters the central element of the structure, being devoured by the ogre-father, but cannot leave it, since the birth-giving maternal element is absent, and is, therefore, annihilated permanently.

After a successful encounter with the fully-fledged parental figure the hero, now illuminated, is compelled to return to the society. Ideally, he is not only compelled, but also willing to cross the return threshold, like Bodhisattva, who, having achieved illumination, became 'filled with compassion for the self-terrorized beings who live in fright of their own nightmare' (ibid.: 166), these sufferers being the inhabitants of the ordinary world. Thus, the hero returns, according to 'the norm of the monomyth', that 'requires that the hero shall now begin the labor of bringing the runes of wisdom [...] back into the kingdom of humanity' (ibid.: 193) The boon that the hero brings from the divine world is supposed to further 'the renewing of the community, the nation, the planet, or the ten thousand worlds' (ibid.: 193). There can, of course, be cases of the hero refusing to return - the adventure has changed him so much, that at the return threshold he may feel shock that after experiencing the blissful revelations of the divine world, he must return to 'the passing joys and sorrows, banalities and noisy obscenities of life' (ibid.: 218). Moreover, the hero has to share his wisdom with the people who do not even realize they need it, being mere 'fractions', yet imagining themselves to be 'complete' (ibid.: 216), while consumed with base passions. However, even though a common individual is not conscious of one's lameness, a common society, on the contrary, is 'jealous of those who remain away from it' (ibid.: 207) – it wants the hero to share whatever it is he has gained beyond the threshold. Therefore, in most of the myths the hero crosses the return threshold.

“The Hero Today”

The technological progress and the quick succession of ramifying views on the place of a human being in this world, as well as the 'development of the scientific method of research' has changed

the human conscience so drastically, that ‘all gods and devils have been rationalized out of existence’ (ibid.: 104). The modern societies have learned to exist on their own – they do not need the support of the gods anymore. Their seeming independence in reality turned out to be a weakness: unlike the ancient people who have been guided through all dangers ‘by the symbols and spiritual exercises of their mythological and religious inheritance’ (ibid.: 104), we today are alone, so far as the world has changed, and ‘our inherited beliefs fail to represent the real problems of contemporary life’ (ibid.: 104). This is the problem of modern, ‘enlightened’ individuals.

Speaking of individuals – another change characteristic of the modern world consists in the shift of social significance from a group towards an individual. ‘Then all meaning was in the group [...] none in the self-expressive individual; today no meaning is in the group – [...] all is in the individual’ (ibid.: 388); the ‘fractional’, incomplete individual, unaware of his own flaw, becomes the centre of attention. Basically, these changes can be reflected in a simple formula representing the shift of scientific focus through the ages: ‘from seventeenth-century astronomy to nineteenth-century biology’ and finally to ‘twentieth-century anthropology and psychology’ (ibid.: 391). The heavens are of no interest to a modern society anymore – ‘man himself is now the crucial mystery’ (ibid.: 391). Campbell thus proclaims ‘the universal triumph of the secular state’ (ibid.: 389). This means that in stories that took the place of myths in modern societies ‘where then there was darkness, now there is light; but also, where light was, there now is darkness’ (ibid.: 388). Therefore, the adventure of a modern hero, though similar in structure to the canonical hero-adventure (it comprises similar stages, like crossing the threshold and defeating the enemy, etc), has a different purpose – that of restoring spiritual values in the world that has reached incredible heights of scientific progress. The idea, of course, is not to plunge the world back into the dark ages, but to help create a scientifically sophisticated society capable of retaining spiritual purity and open mind to that which cannot be explained by modern sciences.

Structural analysis of the images in “The Last Unicorn”

In “The Last Unicorn” the main characters are parts of structures that are composed for different reasons. In this chapter the most prominent cases will be examined at an ever-increasing rate: first of all minor cases will be discussed, and in the end - the central image of “The Last Unicorn” – the trio Bull-Unicorn-Maiden. The division of the images into groups according to the framework provided below will be discussed and structuralized further in the chapter.

Depending on the number of the characters involved, the structures in “The Last Unicorn” can be divided into two groups as follows:

- ❖ One character being the nucleus of the structure – in other words, this group includes characters ‘in disguise’, so that he or she is seen as somebody else;
- ❖ Two or more characters interconnected, so that the resultant combination can be perceived as a whole.

The first group comprises two subdivisions that differ according to the origin of the ‘disguise’ - to the factors that contribute to the acquisition of the ‘disguise’ by the character. These are:

- ❖ Human factors – the situations in which a character was mistaken for somebody else, due to misunderstanding, or deliberate self-deception, etc.
- ❖ Magical factors, or, to be more exact, cases of magical interference that resulted in the character being perceived differently by other characters.

The second group is divided into three sectors according to the manner in which the characters are interconnected:

- ❖ By putting them into a situation that enforces them to interact closely. The purpose of this method is: through interaction make both or one of the characters manifest themselves, reveal certain qualities, display their true strength, potential, or nature.
- ❖ By deriving one feature of a character into a relatively independent character;
- ❖ By merging certain characters together.

The last two cases, as it will be demonstrated further, exist simultaneously in the most prominent structure in “The Last Unicorn” – the trio comprised of the Bull, the Unicorn, and the Maiden.

Human factor group

The human factor group is determined by the delusions of certain characters about the heroes and heroines. People see whatever they want to see – several characters, through other characters’ fault, become enclosed in a layer of images - other people’s expectations, hopes and fears. This group falls under the category of concentric structures – not just binary, but also ternary, depending on how many images are projected on one character.

In “The Last Unicorn”, there is a pronounced tendency to make the characters seem to be something they are not. For instance, in the very beginning of the story, the Unicorn meets a man. She expects the man to know whom he is dealing with, but he, while trying fruitlessly to catch her, addresses the Unicorn as a ‘pretty little mare’, creating a very simple concentric binary structure (see Appendix 9, Fig. 3.1.), in which the Unicorn herself is the real character, and the image of a white mare is the disguise (Beagle, 1968: 13). This fills her with indignation and astonishment over the fact that the man did not recognise her – “‘A horse, am I?’ she snorted. “‘A horse, indeed!’” (ibid.) – but further in the story she is to realise that most of the men she will meet on her journey have deliberately ‘blinded’ themselves, editing their reality to make it correspond to their notions of truth, so that their existence is more comfortable.

Sometimes one illusion is covered by another one, so that there is a disguise that conceals another disguise. This tendency reaches its height in that part of the story where Schmendrick the Magician is captured by the band of outlaws and brought to their camp in the greenwood. Captain Cully asks the magician: ‘You wouldn’t be Mr. Child himself, now would you?’ (ibid.: 105) meaning the actual Francis James Child, an American scholar, educator, and folklorist, and after Schmendrick says that he is not, Cully keeps addressing him as Child, because his eagerness to share the ballads he wrote is so great that he refuses to accept the actual state of affairs. Further Jack Jingly says that the magician is not Francis James Child, and confidently states that in reality Schmendrick is ‘Haggard’s son, the prince Lír, as foul as his father and doubtless handy with the black arts’ (ibid.: 114). Thus, one illusion is replaced by the other. The most interesting thing about it is that at the same time, the real, sweet and harmless prince Lír himself is mistaken by these two men for a dangerous and insidious man, who loves to play ‘the gormless innocent’ (ibid.), and this time pretended to be Francis James Child.

To sum up, by the end of Cully and Jack Jingly’s discussion, Shmendrick has found himself wrapped in a veil of images: he was considered to be the treacherous prince pretending to be a nice fellow, this time – a folklorist (see Appendix 9, Fig 3.2). In another fragment, when someone from Hagsgate notes that ‘the old standards are gone, the old values have been

abandoned' and adds, referring to Schmendrick, that 'a real magician has a beard' (ibid.: 143) it is interesting to observe how people in the story tend to reduce the person's identity to a set of stereotyped features.

Magic factor group

The magic factor group contains characters in an elaborate disguise, a mask, created by means of magical interference. According to the function of the mask, these characters (each being a binary or ternary structure) can be divided into the ones whose identity is concealed by the mask, so that the spectators see the mask only, and the ones whose true identity is revealed due to this disguise.

Most of the prisoners of the Midnight Carnival belong to the first subdivision – concealing the identity. They all fit into the same structure: each creature is a central element of a concentric binary structure, the peripheral element being Mommy Fortuna's created illusion that made a 'hungry, unhappy dog with only one head and hardly any coat at all' (ibid.: 30) look like the legendary Cerberus, an 'old ape with a twisted foot' (ibid.) seem to be a satyr, and a 'baleful boa' (ibid.: 34) - the Serpent of the Midgard (see Appendix 9, Fig. 3.3). There are, however, several creatures that stand apart from the rest of the captives. First of all, these are the harpy Celaeno and the Unicorn.

They are the characters whose identity is revealed by means of Mommy Fortuna's 'spells of seeming' (ibid.). The mask performs a dual function in this case: firstly, it acts as camouflage – it conceals the true appearance of the character (see Appendix 9, Fig 3.4). It gives the character a new face – a face the sight of which human eyes can endure. To put it differently, the real appearance of the characters is so inconceivable, that without magic people could not recognise them. Both, Celaeno and the Unicorn are ancient, mythical beasts, old as the hills – the world has belonged to them since the stars were young - but in these days people have their own notions on how such creatures should look (mostly because there are very few who actually remember them). That is why, when Mommy Fortuna uses magic in order to efface their appearance, she explains: 'I had to give you an aspect they could understand, and a horn they could see. These days, it takes a cheap carnival witch to make folk recognize a real unicorn' (ibid.: 50). Thus, she provides Celaeno and the Unicorn with the new appearance, accessible to the people because it corresponds to their idea of the creature they have never seen.

The above structures can also be discussed from the perspective of their compliance with the distribution of sanctity/secularity among the elements of a concentric structure according to Strauss' research. The systems that revolve around such characters as the Unicorn or Celaeno –

the revealing concentric structures (see Appendix 9, Fig. 3.1, Fig. 3.3) reproduce the structures described by Strauss: the image of the central character, originally a mythical, mysterious creature is simplified, secularized in the sense that it is rendered intelligible to ordinary people. The concealing concentric structures (see Appendix 9, Fig. 3.2) demonstrate the inverse arrangement – an ordinary, ‘secular’ creature, like a dog or an ape, is ‘sanctified’ by means of the magical disguise, and made an object of reverential contemplation.

Structures based on character interaction

In the case of two characters interconnected, the most common manner in which the characters are combined is their close interaction in a certain situation. Through this interaction the characters’ features that have previously been concealed come to light. These cases fit into the diametrical binary structure. Moreover, since the Unicorn is the main character of the story – her feelings, fears and thoughts being revealed to the reader – she can be considered the main element in this structure, thus, making it an asymmetrical diametrical structure (see Appendix 9, Fig. 3.5). It should be emphasized that the elements of this structure are homogeneous – since both the Unicorn and the harpy belong to one world, the ancient world of magical creatures.

The belonging of the pair Unicorn-Celaeno to the diametrical structures is revealed, among other things, through a simile that Peter Beagle applies in relation to their fight – he writes: ‘they circled one another like a double star’ (ibid.: 69). A double star (also known as a binary star) is an astronomical phenomenon that is composed of two stars orbiting around their common centre of mass, never moving away from each other and never coming any closer. Interestingly, this comparison even conforms to the structure being asymmetrical: one of the stars in this union is always brighter than the other, and is referred to as the primary star, the other one being named the secondary star.

The bond between the Unicorn and Celaeno is emphasized by the words: ‘the unicorn saw herself reflected on the harpy’s bronze breast and felt the monster shining from her own body’ (ibid.). Like the parts of a double star, they are drawn to each other. No matter how deadly their union is, they both embrace a part of each other within themselves. They are one in the sense that they both are strangers to this world. Their not-belonging to these times unifies them, as the Unicorn observes: ‘Oh, you [the Harpy] are like me!’ (ibid.). Peter Beagle writes further: ‘under the shrunken sky there was nothing real but the two of them’ (ibid.) – thus, reducing the whole world to a phantom, ephemeral vision that comes and goes, and singling out the Unicorn and

Celaeno as the ones that will walk through time and outlast hundreds of thousands of such phantoms.

The ability of such structure to help reveal the true power of the character is manifested through the words of Mommy Fortuna: ““Not alone!” the witch howled triumphantly at both of them. “You never could have freed yourselves alone! I held you!”” (ibid.) that indicate that only together have they acquired their true power – most probably because they both, of all, believe in the real each other, understand the true strength of each other.

Another diametrical binary structure is Harpy-Mommy Fortuna. This binary is a little bit more unstable than the first one, due to the fact that harpy Celaeno is a replaceable element in this structure. There could be any other creature instead of her – any real ancient beast or magical being – any real thing she possesses makes Mommy Fortuna a real witch, proving that she is powerful enough to capture such creatures and hold them in their cages. That is why she would rather die than deprive herself of ‘the presence of [their] power’ (ibid.: 48), but she would never let the harpy and the Unicorn go.

The Bull, the Unicorn, and the Maiden

The same images can appear in the text as elements of several different structures. Sometimes, the only thing that changes is the type of relationship between the elements in a structure – and the collection of elements remains the same, nevertheless, creating a completely different system. For instance, the following structure can be viewed as created both by *deriving one feature of a character into a fully functional character* and by *merging two characters together*, considered, thus, as the most elaborate image of the story – the Bull-Unicorn-Maiden trio. Taking into account that there are three elements, the graphical representation of this structure will be a form of triplicity. It is possible to perceive the trio from different points of view, labelling it as either a circular ternary structure, or a diametrical ternary structure, depending on the principle, according to which the relations between the characters can develop.

To begin with, the trio represents a case of extracting a constituent part of a character with a view to developing this part into an independent character. For instance, possessing physical features of a certain animal could indicate the presence of respective emotional or moral qualities that could serve as the basis for the newly-developed character. In order to discuss this case more thoroughly, it is useful to take a look at the origins of the characters that form the trio.

The descriptions of a unicorn, found in different sources, frequently include features that connect the unicorn with a bull or an ox. For example, the entry in Jewish Encyclopedia, devoted

to unicorns in the Bible, written by Hirsch and Casanowicz (2002) examines the word 're'em' found in the Bible. In the course of time there appeared various interpretations of this word. One of them was "wild ox" (margin, "ox-antelope"). Further Hirsch and Casanowicz (2002) note that 'the allusions to the 're'em' as a wild, untameable animal of great strength and agility, with mighty horns [...], best fit the aurochs', an aurochs being an animal belonging to cattle and closely related to the bull. Further they add: 'This view is supported by the Assyrian "rimu", which is often used as a metaphor of strength, and is depicted as a powerful, fierce, wild, or mountain bull with large horns'. Other references to the image of the bull, are found, for example, in the description of a mythical animal that is considered to be an oriental analogue of a unicorn - Ki-Lin. Charles Gould in his book "Mythical Monsters" notes that Ki-Lin is one of 'several distinct unicorn animals', references to which are found in 'the Chinese classics and books of antiquity' (1886: 348). The distinctive feature of this animal that note should be taken of, according to Gould, is an ox's tail (ibid.: 349). Gould also refers to Cosmas Indicopleustes, a merchant of Alexandria, who lived in the sixth century, and described a unicorn, comparing the attack of this 'ferocious beast' to that of a musk ox (ibid.: 341-342). In the encyclopaedia "Мифы Народов Мира", in the entry devoted to unicorns, it is stated that in archaic tradition unicorn was depicted with the body of a bull. (1987: 429). In archaic art the unicorn is frequently depicted as a bull-like animal, or a unicornous bull, for example, Robert Brown in "The Unicorn, a Mythological Investigation" describes the Assyrian sculpture "Assurnatsirpal hunting Wild Bulls", two bulls are represented, each with a single large horn (1881: 25). Thus, in "The Last Unicorn" the Red Bull can be perceived as a part of the Unicorn that has gained independence, a certain feature that has developed into a separate character.

Contrary to the Bull, there exists another image closely connected to the Unicorn - the virgin maiden, in the story incarnated by the Lady Amalthea. There exists a widespread belief that a unicorn can be captured only by a virgin. Odell Shepard, the author of the "Lore of the Unicorn", cites Friar Felix Fabri, who went on pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1483 and was believed to have encountered a unicorn, of which he says: 'the animal can be captured only by using a virgin as a decoy' (1930). In the course of time, due to this belief, the Unicorn has become so tightly associated with a virgin maiden that it could be considered a part of the image of the Unicorn as a totality of notions and beliefs connected to it, representing the second of the aforementioned cases of character interconnection – two characters merging together.

Thus, the structure these three elements form can be referred to as the universal unicorn, since of all three elements the Unicorn is the one that at some point has included each of the other

two images within itself or was connected to these images in some other way. Knowing all this, it is possible now to determine, according to what structures the image of the universal unicorn is built, and what relations exist between them (all three at a time, and in each possible pair).

In case the elements are considered to form a diametrical structure, it is necessary to determine, according to what category they will be compared, as well as what the point relative to which the elements will be marked along the axis connecting the end point elements is. The gradations are most likely to be arranged according to the proportion of female/male principle in the characters so that the endpoints of the axis would be the Bull and the Lady Amalthea, and the Unicorn would be the middle element, as a creature that can be considered to combine both the male and the female principle within itself. Cyril Korolev in his book “Энциклопедия Сверхъестественных Существ” adduces several cases of a unicorn being referred to as a symbol of either masculinity or femininity. Firstly, he cites W. Bauer, who notes that a unicorn is a symbol of masculine power (2005: 564). Further Korolev refers to the legendary Slavonic book of sacred texts - “Голубиная книга”. There exist many variants of this book – in some of them a unicorn is represented as a creature that has power over water, which, according to Korolev, emphasizes its connection with the female principle (ibid.: 565). In a survey of world mythology written by Padraic Colum, originally titled “Orpheus, Myths of the World”, in the section devoted to Chinese mythology it was stated that ‘the Unicorn [...] combines in itself the principles of *Yang* and *Yin*’ (1930: 238). As it is well-known, in Chinese philosophy *Yang* and *Yin* are the male and the female principles respectively.

Finally, a bull symbolizes masculinity. According to the encyclopedia “Мифы Народов Мира”, in mythology of different civilizations a bull was either one of many earthly incarnations of a masculine deity, or its symbol that takes part in various rituals (1987: 203). The examples would include Zeus, Poseidon and many other water deities in Greek mythology, Jupiter in Roman mythology, etc. Moreover, many ancient tribes unambiguously identified the man with a bull in their beliefs and rituals (ibid.).

Thus, the Bull and the Maiden become antonyms, which allows to view them as the endpoints of a scale of degrees of femininity/masculinity. The unicorn, due to its ambivalent nature, becomes the middle gradation on this scale, at the same time, being the centre of an imaginary circumference, and therefore, the central, basic element that unites the other two elements within a diametrical ternary structure (see Appendix 10, Fig. 3.6).

On the other hand, the Bull, the Unicorn and the Lady Amalthea can be perceived as heterogeneous elements that could not be classified according to the same categories. These three

creatures belong to different worlds: the Unicorn is a mythical animal – a magical, but quite material living being; Amalthea belongs to the human world – the dissimilarity between her and the Unicorn she used to be is emphasized through the fact that in the course of time she starts to forget who she was. One of the most important signs of her having turned into a ‘proper’ human is the moment when she starts to sing the song that she heard a long time ago from a very mediocre and down-to-earth girl – a princess that tried to decoy a unicorn, but did not succeed and claimed that there is no such thing as unicorns after all (Beagle, 1968: 272). The Bull is not exactly an animal, nor is he human – he is a force embodied, a concentrate of passions, an element, a destructive power. Thus, since all the three elements are heterogeneous, they fit into a circular ternary structure (see Appendix 10, Fig 3.7), however, with a slight alteration of the features of the structure and the relations between its elements. First of all, in the story the Red Bull and Amalthea never actually interact: the Bull doesn’t notice her in her human form – he only hunts for the Unicorn – that is why Schmendrick turns her into a human being (ibid.: 185). Thus, the chart would lack the line connecting these two images.

It is interesting to notice how Peter Beagle adjusts the transformation of the unicorn to the entrance of the Red Bull. Besides the fact that the appearance of the Lady Amalthea is a logical result of the Red Bull’s attack, consistent with the development of the plot, there can be found an explanation why Schmendrick has not turned the Unicorn into any other thing.

It can be said that the very existence of the Bull in the story determined the fate of the Unicorn. The Bull is the fierce and animalistic part of the Unicorn that is separated from it – so there is nothing left but the concentrated femininity. The Unicorn is deprived of the male principle – she becomes vulnerable and fragile, she is subdued, her resistance is already broken when the wizard turns her into a maiden – the image of the bull ‘extracted’ from the androgynous essence of the Unicorn induces the transformation of the latter into a young lady, thus, consolidating this gender division.

Transformations of the Unicorn

This chapter is devoted entirely to the central image of “The Last Unicorn” – the Bull-Unicorn-Maiden trio, as well as to a very particular stage of the adventure (closely connected to the trio) that the Unicorn completes in the course of the story, namely: the encounter with the Red Bull and the consequences that this encounter entails. In “The Last Unicorn”, Peter Beagle introduces certain images that, when interpreted literally, represent metamorphoses in terms of biological classification. The Unicorn, though being an ancient mythical creature, endowed with magical faculties and a human-like power of reason, still is a quadrupedal, ungulate mammal. However, when attacked by the Red Bull, she transforms into a human being, the Lady Amalthea, that can also be referred to as the Maiden.

According to some scholars, the work of art can carry more meaning than the author himself originally intended to include in it, since the interpretation of the work depends on the reader. Roland Barthes, for instance, in his essay “The Death of the Author”, written in 1977, argues that it is possible to ‘remove’ the Author, since ‘a text is not a line of words releasing a single “theological” meaning (the “message” of the Author-God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings [...] blend and clash’. Once the Author is ‘removed’ – there is no limit to the amount of explanations that can be applied to the text and no definitive interpretation.

Therefore, the following chapter is based on the idea that “The Last Unicorn” can be regarded as being more than just a fairytale with magical transformations, and that the images introduced by the author imply other, more sophisticated relations between the characters, which can be represented in diagram form. Additionally, the further part of the research is conducted on the working assumption that the manifest transformation of the unicorn into the Lady Amalthea is exactly the hero-metamorphosis discussed by Campbell. It is, thus, devoted to deciphering the meaning of the hero metamorphosis and analyzing its most prominent elements according to the structures developed on the basis of the works by Claude Levi-Strauss and Joseph Campbell.

From sanctity to secularity

The world that Peter Beagle describes in “The Last Unicorn” corresponds to the period of the development of societies, according to J. Campbell, when ‘the hero in human form’ (1973: 337) first appeared in stories and fairytales. Throughout this period the humanity has discovered and populated new areas, many villages and cities have expanded over the land, so that there are

quite few unexplored territories left. However, there are still many ancient creatures remaining from primeval times. Now, when the earth belongs to men, these creatures abide in the few remaining regions that men, still guided by superstitious fear, are careful not to wander too far into. This is exactly the world that Peter Beagle introduces in “The Last Unicorn” – the people live in kingdoms, in towns or villages, and have no recollection of the primeval wilderness. The times described in the story are the times when the image of a hero assumes human form – the great deeds are performed (or are supposed to be performed) by brave knights, adventurous princes, like Prince Lír, who is ‘a true hero’ (Beagle, 1968: 260), or noble highwaymen, like Cully and his men.

However, in Beagle’s book the hero is herself an ancient creature. From the point of view of the hero-path, the metamorphosis that she undergoes is the opposite of the canonical transformation of the mythological hero, discussed by Campbell in “The Hero with a Thousand Faces”, where the hero is supposed to be divested of his secular character and take a step towards the apotheosis. A unicorn has been regarded as a symbol of sanctity and purity from time immemorial. Odell Shepard, the author of “Lore of the Unicorn” (1930), adduces numerous examples of such associations in his book. For instance, in Christianity a unicorn is ‘an emblem of purity’, represented, among other images, through the portrayal of the unicorn kneeling at the foot of the Cross. There also exists ‘the strange metaphor connecting the unicorn’s horn with the central beam of the Holy Cross’, etc. However, the most important symbolical meaning of the unicorn is that ‘in which he stood for Christ’ – as Saint Basil writes, cited by Shepard, ‘the unconquerable nature of God is likened to that of a unicorn’. And this incredibly pure, unearthly creature, turns into a human being with eyes betraying ‘a human look of loss’ (Beagle, 1968: 261) – fragile, vulnerable, and liable to weaknesses.

This mismatch – an un-human hero in a plot depicting the times when, according to Campbell, the hero should be a human being – prevents immediate discerning whether the story will develop as a canonical adventure, or according to the formula that Campbell has deduced for the modern societies (see chapter “Metamorphoses of the Archetypal Hero”) where the problems of mankind are said to be precisely opposite to those of men living in the period of ‘coordinating mythologies’ (Campbell, 1973: 388) in which the hero frequently was un-human in form.

Moving through worlds

In the course of her adventure the Unicorn travels through three worlds. At the very beginning she leaves her enchanted lilac forest behind and steps into the human world (Beagle, 1968: 10).

However, in terms of the hero-path, this transition cannot be considered the crossing of the threshold – it is merely a symbol of the hero being alien to the world through which she travels. When the Unicorn arrives at the kingdom of Haggard, the real crossing of the threshold occurs regardless of the fact that this kingdom is inhabited by men as well as any other land the hero traverses in “The Last Unicorn”. The idea is that the kingdom, and especially the town Hagsgate can be viewed as the nether realm of the human world; the cave that the hero is forced to descend into – ‘the great cavern beneath the castle’ where the Red Bull ‘lies up by day’ (ibid.: 138) is the heart of the kingdom, the abode of the monster inseparable from the king that took this land when he came over the sea. The very process of descending is a reflection of the general motif of the descent of the hero into the nether world, highlighted by Campbell as an essential element of entering the zone of unknown (1973: 321). Therefore, the diagram representing the Unicorn’s traverse from one world to another (see Appendix 11, Fig. 4.1) is concentric structure constructed around a central element that stands for Haggard’s kingdom. Descending, the hero moves towards the centre (the cavern) and, consequently, away from the periphery of the structure. As the initial phase of the movement, the peripheral figure, thereby, corresponds to the point of the hero’s departure in the story – the lilac forest.

It must be admitted, though, that the above structure cannot be considered entirely correct, for it communicates merely the idea of the Unicorn advancing further into the regions of unknown and the sequence in which she traverses the worlds, skipping such aspects as the meaning assigned to this particular arrangement of locations in the story. The following structure (see Appendix 11, Fig. 4.3) retains only two of the three initial concentric elements: Hagsgate, as the final destination, and the human world. This structure demonstrates the approximate supernatural-to-ordinary ratio in the contemporary world through the location of the element that stands for the lilac forest. It shows that the secular state does, indeed, triumph in the world – the unexplored territories are merely islets of the mysterious surrounded by the ordinary human world.

Recurring once again to the meanings commonly assigned to each of the elements in a concentric binary structure, according to Claude Levi-Strauss, it is possible to superimpose the division of these meanings onto the diagram representing the worlds that the Unicorn traverses (see Appendix 11, Fig. 4.1) and determine whether the distribution of meanings among the elements of the structure based on “The Last Unicorn” corresponds to the one discussed in “Structural Anthropology”(it will be recalled that the central element of a concentric binary

structure is usually associated with sanctity, whereas the peripheral element carries secular connotation).

In “The Last Unicorn”, both the kingdom and the rest of the human world exist within the period of the development of societies, defined by Campbell above as the ‘triumph of the secular state’. In that day and age ‘the realm of the gods is a forgotten dimension of the world we know’ (1973: 217). For instance, when the Councilman of one of the towns the protagonists stopped in on their way to Hagsgate wondered that the animals at the pasture ‘don't seem to be afraid of her [the Unicorn]’, but ‘have an air of awe, as though they were doing her some sort of reverence’ (Beagle, 1968: 85), Shmendrick explained: ‘They see what you have forgotten how to see’ (ibid.). This fragment highlights the idea that sophistication is, in fact, conducive to a certain degree of narrow-mindedness, and the Bull dwelling under Haggard’s castle is the modern society embodied; his blindness (ibid.: 171) stands for spiritual numbness of the people. The author of “The Last Unicorn” introduces into the story a personage that is perfect as a generalized representation of contemporary human society described by Campbell. It is the farmer that has already been mentioned in the chapter “Structural Analysis of the Images in ‘The Last Unicorn’” in relation to the human factors that distort perception of a character. He is a relatively modern, spiritually shallow individual, the so-called ‘unbeliever’ that sees a ‘pretty little mare’ (ibid.: 13) instead of a unicorn. The author places this character into a reality that he is not conscious of (he sees a unicorn and does not realize it) and simultaneously lets the readers (who themselves belong to the modern society with all its problems) observe how the farmer functions within this reality. Hence the readers as if observe themselves, ‘the sighted’ watching ‘the blind’ – which suggests that at this very moment the readers, too, are unknowingly wandering somewhere beyond the boundaries of the familiar world, and someone else is watching them, smiling condescendingly at the thought that he might be observed as well.

Hagsgate, although being ‘the nether realm of the human world’, and the zone of the unknown from the protagonist’s point of view, is still secular in essence. Moreover, it is a parody of a sophisticated society where rationalization of existence is carried to the point of absurdity – for instance, the people of Hagsgate have no children, because they have found it to be counterproductive: ‘We have no children. We have had none since the day that the curse was laid upon us [...] It seemed the most obvious way of foiling the witch’ (ibid.: 154). Economically Hagsgate is flourishing, but the townsfolk take no pleasure in their possessions, for they live in permanent fear of losing them: ‘We have taken not a moment’s joy in our wealth – or in anything else – for joy is just one more thing to lose’ (ibid.: 152). They are alone, being abandoned by

whatever benevolent powers they used to have faith in – they believe in the unicorns no more than any other supporting character in the story (with the few exceptions). Whenever the conversation turns to unicorns, the main idea is always the same: ‘Unicorns are long gone [...] If, indeed, they ever were’ (ibid.: 5). All they have left is ‘tales to make children behave – monsters, werebeasts, witch covens, demons in broad daylight, and the like’ (ibid.: 139) – and these are not mere fairytales – this is the reality that the people of Hagsgate have chosen for themselves. And the Red Bull is the deity that they willingly live in fear of, for it appears that believing in something becomes much easier when one’s beliefs are sustained by fear. Therefore, both the kingdom of Haggard and the rest of the human world are marked as secular in the diagram (see Appendix 11, Fig. 4.2), contrary to the lilac forest that could be considered ‘sacred’ as the only remaining realm where the magical creatures still live.

On death and rebirth

In the previous chapter “Structural Analysis of the Images in ‘The Last Unicorn’” it has been demonstrated that the property of belonging to a particular gender can be attributed to each of the elements of the trio as follows: the Bull represents the masculine principle, the Lady Amalthea – the feminine, and the Unicorn is an androgyne. Therefore, taking into consideration the fierceness of the Bull, his belligerent nature and his function of the antagonist-enslaver in the story it would be logical to assume that the Bull can be the malevolent aspect of the father, the ogre-father that urges the hero to reunite with the mother. According to the structure of the relationship between these aspects of the feminine and masculine principles, developed by Campbell, the Bull can be regarded as ‘the jaws of the whale’ (Campbell, 1973: 92); consequently, ‘the belly of the whale’ (ibid.: 90) or the womb would be the place he drives the hero into – the sea at the foot of Haggard’s castle. The sea seems to be an entity suitable for representing the maternal aspect in “The Last Unicorn”, taking into account a vast amount of myths containing associations connecting the image of water to the image of a mother, which Campbell has compiled in his book. For instance, there is the world-surrounding sea that the legendary king Gilgamesh reached in the course of his travels (1973: 185), and the sea that the bard Taliesin was committed to as a child (ibid.: 198). All this taken into consideration, the structure of the parental figure in “The Last Unicorn” (see Appendix 12, Fig. 4.4) appears to be corresponding to the structure developed previously in the chapter devoted to the encounters in the zone of the unknown (see Appendix 7, Fig. 2.5) - the Unicorn meets the Bull as the annihilating father, transforms into a maiden, meets the sea-mother and then meets the father in the form of the Bull once again.

However, this structure does not quite explain the reverse metamorphosis. Furthermore, the Bull at the time of their second encounter with the Unicorn can hardly be regarded as the illuminating aspect of the father, since during both of their encounters his only purpose was to destroy the Unicorn. Moreover, the sea as the water-mother does not imply immediate rebirth following the destruction of the protagonist. In “The Last Unicorn” the sea is, indeed, the abyss, the womb that will never give second birth to anything that has disappeared in its deep. The unicorns that the Red Bull herded into it are not supposed to ever break free; as Haggard said once to Amalthea: ‘I wonder if they will take their freedom even then. I hope not, for then they will belong to me forever’ (Beagle, 1968: 280). Instead, the sea grants them a mockery of freedom: the unicorns ‘live in the sea, and every tide still carries them within an easy step of the land, but they dare not take that step, they dare not come out of the water’ (ibid.: 277). It is the perfect example of ‘the monster of the status quo’ (Campbell, 1973: 337), the symbol of stagnation, oblivion and defeat, hiding under the guise of the mother. Consequently, the Red Bull as the ogre-father does not assume the role of the life-begetting element under the influence of the birth-giving maternal principle, through annihilation leading the hero to the second birth. On the contrary, affected by the stagnant, malevolent false mother, the Bull becomes the emblem of the hero’s irrevocable destruction. Beagle himself draws a parallel between the sea and the Bull, “blind and patient as the sea” (1968: 334), “his neck swelling like a wave” (ibid.: 324). The very smell of the sea, along with the presentiment of the inevitable encounter with the Red Bull inundates the space that the characters exist in, drifting in the air and mixing with ‘a dark, sly reek [of the Bull] easing through the night’ (ibid.: 81). They are one, but the life-centering cycle of death and rebirth turns out to be nothing but the belly of a monster that swallows and hoards other lives within itself until it bursts apart. Since the sea and the Bull are both malevolent and destructive, the structure (see Appendix 12, Fig. 4.4) loses the central element symbolizing the mother-womb and therefore turns into the no-way-out model (see Appendix 12, Fig. 4.5) with only the devouring aspect of the father to meet the hero at the threshold.

In the chapter “Metamorphoses of the Archetypal Hero” there has been discussed such case as the enemy or the antagonist being one with the protagonist. Concerning “The Last Unicorn”, this idea implies the connection between the Bull and the Unicorn, as they are the most prominent opponents in the story. The chapter “Structural Analysis of the Images in ‘The Last Unicorn’” touched upon this subject from the historical and cultural point of view, taking into consideration the etymology of each character. It has been proved that the Red Bull can be perceived as a part of the Unicorn, as a certain feature that has developed into an independent character, since in

different sources the unicorn is frequently described as a beast possessing features of a bull or an ox. The present chapter, based mostly on the psychoanalytical approach introduced by Joseph Campbell, supplements the motif of the protagonist and the antagonist being one with the episodes of this particular story rather than the mythological context. For instance, Beagle writes: ‘her [the Unicorn’s] eyes widened, and it seemed [...] that the Bull moved in them, crossing their depths like a flaming fish, and vanishing’ (1968: 185), illustrating the close connection between two seemingly conflicting entities.

At this point, the question may arise as to whether it is possible to regard Haggard as the parental figure instead of the Bull. The reader might get the impression that the king is the leading element in their mysterious bond, as Haggard says: ‘The Red Bull gathered them for me, one at a time, and I bade him drive each one into the sea’ (ibid.: 277); ‘he can only tell the difference between what I want and what I do not want’ (ibid.: 278). In spite of this, the Bull is an entity much older than Haggard. However mysterious or intimidating, the king is only human – the Bull will outlast him and many others that will come after him, and Haggard knows it: ‘when I am gone [...] the Red Bull will [...] be off to find a new master’ (ibid.: 280). The Bull needs a master only because he is the power that has to serve a particular purpose in order to assume and retain a certain shape for a period of time; and Haggard’s will is merely a transmitter of this boundless energy into the world. Thus, it is very likely that Shmendrick was right when he said: ‘Haggard belongs to the Bull’ (ibid.: 74). The Bull is the character that interacts with the Unicorn directly, in order to subdue her, and is, thereby, considered to be the personification of the general malevolent paternal aspect.

All things considered, in “The Last Unicorn” the objective of the hero appears to be the escape from the ogre-father, and subsequent reaching the end of the adventure in a sort of a ‘roundabout way’, skirting the false mother. The hero-task of the Unicorn, in other words, would be to find and reunite with the real mother. In the context of “The Last Unicorn” this motif is represented by the reunion of the Unicorn with her folk. The place that the unicorns are held captive in – the deep of the sea – can also be considered as a symbol of the unicorns being the maternal aspect of the parental figure. The image of water here can be perceived as the connecting element between the unicorns and the image of the mother-goddess, introduced by Campbell – the mother, ‘who sleeps in timelessness, at the bottom of the timeless sea’ (Campbell, 1973: 341) – ‘time sealed her away, yet she is dwelling still’ (ibid.: 341). In this case, the maternal aspect represented by the unicorns should be perceived in its most literal sense – as the

symbol of the family: the Unicorn returns to her kin, her roots – and becomes thereby reunited with the universal parent.

Since the sea is technically an appendage of the Red Bull as the ogre-father, the ‘roundabout way’ of escaping the false mother implies trying to elude the Bull as well. However, for the Unicorn as the hero such an outcome is not an option, since the only way for the hero to reunite with the real mother is through the act of submission to the annihilating father. So the Unicorn is compelled to encounter the Bull and, as it further turns out, the false-mother as well. The inevitability of the encounter becomes particularly conspicuous when reflected in diagram form (see Appendix 13, Fig. 4.6) – the unicorns are encircled, so the only way for the hero to reach them is through other elements.

The hypothetical existence of the new mother implies yet another image, besides the sea, that could be interpreted as the symbol of a life-renewing womb. Among many records on the dreams of patients taking a course of psychoanalysis, Campbell mentions an example that corresponds to a certain stage in the adventure of the Unicorn: “I stood before a dark cave, wanting to go in, [...] and I shuddered at the thought that I might not be able to find my way back” (ibid.: 101) – similarly, the cave under the castle of Haggard, where the Red Bull sleeps, is the new mother-womb, the real one, the one that the hero enters in order to be reborn.

The structure of the relationship between the ‘false’ and the ‘real’ images in “The Last Unicorn” resembles a false bottom built into a trunk. On closer examination, the ‘real’ ones turn out to be much more unsophisticated and literal than one could expect after getting thoroughly familiar with the theoretical material, and at the same time more ingenuous than the ‘false’ ones – seemingly obvious, yet counterfeit. This structure reflects the idea that Campbell developed in “The Hero Today” – the necessity to rediscover spiritual values (the real bottom of the trunk) in the world that has grown out of its own mythological inheritance, combine sophistication and primeval purity.

Woman: the inner story

The transformation of a unicorn into a human being assumes the character of dividing a bisexual entity into separate male and female personages discussed above. Previously, in the chapter “Structural analysis of the images in ‘The Last Unicorn’” it has been demonstrated that the image of the bull extracted from the entity of the unicorn induces the transformation of the latter into a maiden. In other words, the hero-metamorphosis into a maiden is the result of separating the masculine aspect, represented by the Red Bull, from the Unicorn, whose nature has been proved

to be androgynous on the basis of historical and cultural records. However, the remaining feminine aspect (here represented by Amalthea), appearing from the originally androgynous entity, according to Campbell, symbolizes the collapse of the protagonist – which is a reversal of the hero-metamorphosis that involves the process of abandoning one’s secular character and taking a step towards the apotheosis or rebirth. Therefore, the transformation here is inseparable from the process of the development of a malevolent, destructive character. It should be noted that after having provided several examples of literary and philosophical texts that represent women as the source of corruption, Campbell adds that the feeling of revulsion towards a woman develops into ‘a tendency to adopt an attitude of distrust, contempt, disgust or hostility towards the human body’ (1973: 113) as the product and the receptacle of life, of which the woman is the source and the greatest symbol. In other words, ‘woman’ in “The Last Unicorn” equals ‘human’ and, consequently, ‘secular’, suffice it to mention how much the hero is terrified by her new appearance, while she still remembers who she used to be:

‘What have you done to me?’ she cried. ‘I will die here!’ She tore at the smooth body, and blood followed her fingers. ‘I will die here!’ [...] ‘This body is dying. I can feel it rotting all around me. How can anything that is going to die be real?’ (Beagle, 1968: 185)

Thus, Amalthea, being so unintentionally harmful to the Unicorn, is a perfect example of a malevolent feminine character and the emblem of the hero’s downfall: ‘her eyes were not the unicorn’s eyes. They were lovely still, but in a way that had a name, as a human woman’s beautiful’ (ibid.: 234). Her gradual transformation into an ordinary girl could have led to the extinction of the very last unicorn in the world.

However, this interpretation runs counter to the very purpose of the canonical hero-metamorphosis that Campbell defined as being ‘miraculously reborn’ and becoming ‘more than we were’ (1973: 162), because, obviously, turning into a human being for a creature like Unicorn is becoming less than she was. Henceforth, there must exist an interpretation that would reconcile the conflicting versions on the meaning of the transformation. First of all, the transformation is an escape route. The Unicorn, as Amalthea, hides from the Bull in a new fairytale, concealed within “The Last Unicorn”. She transforms into a maiden in order to avoid any development of the situation that could only get worse at that time – should she remain a unicorn, the Bull would have probably driven her into the sea along with her folk. Thus, she disappears from his sight, simply escaping from her own story into another one that has its own hero – the Prince Lír. Beagle himself repeatedly refers to the prince as the hero: ‘it’s hard to give up being a hero, once

you get used to it' (1968: 253), 'heroes are meant to die for unicorns' (ibid.: 334), 'his adventures had [...] given him, besides, a hint of the musky fragrance of death that clings to all heroes' (ibid.: 253), etc. And Amalthea gradually becomes a beautiful but ordinary princess, for whom the prince writes poems and traverses his own hero-path: 'For her sake, I have become a hero – I, sleepy Lír, my father's sport and shame' (ibid.: 224). She forgets who she was and falls in love with the prince. She is now merely a supporting character in this new story, perceived mostly as the target of other characters' projections: a riddle for some, a muse for the other. The other characters are left to their own devices, each trapped in his own drop of resin: 'Schmendrick fooled and juggled and flimflammed as the king bade him, [...] he no longer sought to discover the secret way down to the Red Bull' (ibid.: 269); 'Molly Grue cooked and laundered, scrubbed stone, mended armor and [...] read over Prince Lír's new poems to Amalthea, and praised them, and corrected the spelling' (ibid.). The story of the Unicorn has come to a standstill for the time being, waiting for something to happen and get the story moving again.

This inner story follows the classical formula and almost reaches its happy ending – the prince has slain numerous monsters and villains, and is about to marry the Lady Amalthea. However, when they have to confront the Red Bull again, the prince is powerless – 'the Bull ran over him and left him lying on the ground' (ibid.: 335), and Amalthea has to face the Red Bull on her own, turning back into the Unicorn: 'the wonder blossomed where she had been – sea-white, sea-white, as boundlessly beautiful as the Bull was mighty – [...] the Lady Amalthea [...] was no longer there' (ibid.: 330). Thus ends the inner story.

Return

One might ask what the purport of this inner story was, apart from letting the protagonist evade the encounter with the Red Bull to the delight of a particularly sensitive reader. Campbell argues that 'the original departure into the land of trials' represented only taking the first step along the path of 'preliminary victories' (1973: 109). Thus, turning into a maiden is not a hero-metamorphosis, as one might assume, but the beginning of a chain of certain rites, throughout which the hero must 'put aside his pride, his virtue, beauty and life' (ibid.: 108). The real metamorphosis is the transformation of the maiden back into the Unicorn. This corresponds to the fact that, according to Campbell, in some cases the adventure could be regarded as 'a labor not of attainment but of reattainment, not discovery but rediscovery' (ibid.: 39). The Unicorn rediscovers herself, and this second metamorphosis represents the classical model of the adventure, resulting in transition from secularity back to sublimity (see Appendix 13, Fig. 4.7).

As it has been discussed earlier, the moment of hero-triumph is characterized by the annihilation of the tenacious paternal figure – the Red Bull. In “The Last Unicorn” the connection between the Bull and the Unicorn mentioned earlier in the chapter is proved additionally by the final encounter of the two, where the Bull retreats into the sea without giving a battle: ‘he would neither fight nor fly, and she knew now that she could never destroy him’ (1968: 337). This is a reflection of the idea that defeating one’s enemy is at the same time a display of the hero being ready for the transformation – the Unicorn reassumes her true shape and the enemy submits, emphasizing their likeness through mimicking her own behaviour during their first encounter: ‘he retreated and retreated, backing steadily down the beach, as she had done’ (ibid.: 337). At the same time, the hero does not assimilate his enemy, for she knows it to be beyond her powers – moreover, the Bull himself expressly tries to avoid any contact with the hero, retreating into the water. Nevertheless, the motif of unity still persists, though expressed through different images. The fact is that this diagram (see Appendix 13, Fig. 4.7) also indicates that there is no character prominent enough to assume the role of the illuminating aspect of the father that is supposed to meet the hero after the rebirth. To a certain extent this role can be played by the combination of the two malevolent entities – the sea and the Red Bull. It has been noted at some point in this chapter that the sea and the Bull are one. Since the sea, though malevolent like the Red Bull, still retains its belonging to the feminine principle, it can be regarded as the female counterpart of the Red Bull, the opposite of his explicit masculinity. When the Unicorn chases the Bull into the sea during their second encounter, the sea devours the Red Bull – the destructive, annihilating aspect of the father merges with the infertile false-mother that finally releases the unicorns, restoring the sought-for harmony: ‘he [...] walked slowly into the sea. The unicorns in the water floundered wildly to let him by’ (ibid.: 340). This act parallels the idea of the initial perfection of an androgynous figure being restored through the reunion of masculine and feminine, creating a new life, the released unicorns being the new life and the initial perfection – the Unicorn – at the same time. Therefore, the unicorns, since they are the hero’s kinsfolk, can be perceived not only as the mother that the hero reunites with, but also as an allusion to the image of the illuminating father, being rather a generalized image of the sought-for benevolent parent.

As concerns the part of the structure (see Appendix 13, Fig. 4.7) featuring Amalthea, it can be interpreted in two ways. On the one hand, it is possible to disregard it completely on the basis of the above statement that Amalthea is merely a background character from the inner story. On the other hand, this part of the adventure could be considered as the period of the hero undergoing a preliminary trial intended to prepare her for the final and definitive metamorphosis.

Before the hero reaches the source of revelation, he sometimes has to go a long way, somewhat similar to that of the Sumerian goddess Inanna, who, during her descent to the nether world through a series of gateways, had to ‘remove at each portal a part of her clothing’ (Campbell, 1973: 106) In the Unicorn’s case, however, contrary to the Sumerian myth, the rites concern gradually assuming and retaining certain ‘parts of clothing’, represented by the traits characteristic of a human being. After having completed the adventure, the Unicorn observes to the magician that the metamorphoses have not passed without leaving a trace: ‘I am not like the others now, for no unicorn was ever born who could regret, but I do. I regret. [...] I have been mortal, and some part of me is mortal yet’ (Beagle, 1968: 367) – due to that long sojourn among humans and in a human body, she has attained that state of consciousness in which the hero becomes filled with compassion for those deprived of the boons he possesses, and feels compelled to return.

At this point another question arises as to where exactly the Unicorn is going to return, or rather, what society or world she is going to share the attained boons with. There are two possible variants: the unicorns or the human world. On the one hand, the unicorns are her kin in terms of biological classification. They are the ‘society’ that awaits the boons that the Unicorn has brought from the nether world, and the boon that she brings them is their release from captivity. On the other hand, the unicorns themselves are the boon that the hero attains and shares with the humans. From this point of view the rescue of the unicorns is an amusingly literal implementation of Campbell’s ‘the hero himself is that which he had come to find’ (1973: 163). However, in this case there is something that prevents this variant from corresponding to the canon completely. The released unicorns have brought spring into the human world, but they could not change the people. The townsfolk of Hagsgate saw ‘an earthquake’ (Beagle, 1968: 356), ‘a storm, a nor’easter straight off the sea’ (ibid.), ‘a mighty tide had washed over Hagsgate; a tide as white as dogwood and heavy as marble, that drowned none and smashed everything’ (ibid.) – anything but the unicorns. The self-centered individuals have overlooked the very fact that the world has finally regained something long lost. Therefore, even though the unicorns have returned, nothing much has changed for the mankind. As the Unicorn stated: ‘men will not catch sight of them much more easily than if they were still in the sea’ (ibid.: 367). Besides, one cannot really return to the society he never belonged to. In other words, for the Unicorn, the human world is only an intercommunicating room, leading from her forest into the kingdom of Haggard and back, and the human society is the modern society that failed to notice the spiritual values and purity restored in the world.

Conclusions

The above research was conducted for the purpose of analyzing the structures underlying the images in “The Last Unicorn” according to the works of Claude Levi-Strauss and Joseph Campbell. The task was to determine, whether it is possible to express certain elements of the adventure of an archetypal hero in diagram form, through the structures introduced by Claude Levi-Strauss, as well as compare the structures of the images created by Peter Beagle in “The Last Unicorn” based on the two works, register and explain possible changes. The above actions were supposed to help decipher the relations between the images in “The Last Unicorn”.

First of all, regarding the structures, it should be noted that from the perspective of Claude Levi-Strauss’ work all the diagrams in “The Last Unicorn” are character-based. In other words, most of the elements comprising these structures are personages, as opposed to settings or geographical locations. As follows from the chapter “Structuralist analysis of images in ‘The Last Unicorn’”, diametrical structures represent groups of characters in the story – the elements are characters that have a certain point of contact, but are, otherwise, independent. Therefore, diametrical structures, unlike concentric structures, can be disassembled without detriment to the characters that can exist outside the structure. All concentric structures in “The Last Unicorn” represent complex characters constructed on the basis of one character as the central element. The peripheral elements – disguise, magical camouflage, other character’s projections, etc. – cannot be considered independent characters, since they have been created on the basis of the central element and, had this element been removed, would cease their existence.

As concerns the Bull-Unicorn-Maiden trio, from the structuralist point of view, it is perceived as a group of characters that have a common point of contact, rather than one complex image. This is reflected in the diametrical nature of both structures representing the trio (see Appendix 10, Fig. 3.6, Fig. 3.7). In the case of the circular structure (see Appendix 10, Fig. 3.7), “diametrical nature” means that its heterogeneous elements are connected in pairs, and each pair can be perceived as the endpoints of a diameter, which, as stated in chapter “Structuralization”, is, first of all, an indication of their connection, rather than contrast or comparison. It would not be possible to express the relations between these three characters in the form of a concentric structure, relying on “Structural Anthropology” only, owing to the fact that this framework does not provide any additional information on the basis of which it would be possible to determine in what order the concentric elements should be arranged. As follows from “Structuralization” chapter, the elements in a circular structure are equivalent yet essentially different, so they cannot

be defined by comparing them to one another (for instance, the centre of the circumference in this structure is not a reference point, but merely an indication of a certain unifying circumstance). Thus, it must be admitted here that these two structures are not capable of fully reflecting the complexity of the trio; for they merely signify that the elements are connected, failing to convey such concepts as character development throughout the story, etc.

Campbell's method, however, combined with Claude Levi-Strauss' structures, makes it possible not only to register the presence of certain elements or the order in which they appear in the text, but also to demonstrate through a concentric structure how exactly the elements interact. The structures that have been developed in this part of the research can be perceived as setting-based, even in the cases when the elements comprising the structure are characters. For instance, the process of maturation that a character goes through in the course of the story is represented through a literal hero-adventure – a journey to a fairyland, a single combat against a monster, etc., so that in the story the hero's goal can actually be found on a map. Likewise, a literary character or a group of characters, or some other entity, can be “converted” to geographical terms – a case of character interaction, for instance, can be interpreted as a spiritual journey (see Appendix 14, Fig. 4.7). Henceforth, the characters and the settings from the perspective of “The Hero with a Thousand Faces” are interconnected and, so to say, “mutually implying”, since one stands for the other and vice versa.

The theoretical framework based on Campbell's book has also influenced the overall selection of the types of the structures. All the diagrams illustrating the adventure of an archetypal hero belong to concentric structures. As stated above, concentric structures are complex, multi-layered images, not groups of relatively independent elements. A reflection of this idea of image indivisibility can be found in the unity motif recurring throughout the analysis based on “The Hero with a Thousand Faces”: the hero is one with the entities that he encounters beyond the threshold, and the journey itself is a part of the hero. Interestingly, in diagram form, the indivisibility of the trio has been illustrated most precisely and profoundly by the structures developed on the basis of “The Hero with a Thousand Faces”, not “Structural Anthropology”, relying on which the idea of the trio initially occurred.

The concentric structures that deal with the transformation of the hero comprise a common element that could be considered diametrical in nature. It occurs in the structures representing the hero's traverse into the zone of the unknown (see Appendix 7, Fig. 2.5) as well as in the structures illustrating the Unicorn's relations with the Bull and the Maiden (see Appendix 12, Fig. 4.4; Appendix 14, Fig. 4.7), although its function differs from that of the same element in the

structures introduced by Claude Levi-Strauss. It is the vertical diameter that separates two stages of the adventure and two states of being of the hero – before and after the metamorphosis, and functions as a reference to the diametrical binary structure (see Appendix 1, Fig. 1.2 (1)).

At some point in the research, in the chapter “Metamorphose of the Unicorn”, there has been made an observation about certain elements of the adventure described by Peter Beagle that prevent the reader from defining whether the adventure corresponds to the canonical or the modern model. According to Campbell, in a modern society a hero-adventure requires that a hero in human form returns from his journey to the human world and restores spirituality in the society that has established the predominance of the secular state. The world in “The Last Unicorn” corresponds to the above described model. The journey made by the Unicorn parallels the idea introduced by Campbell and discussed in the present research in the chapter “Metamorphoses of the Archetypal Hero”, that in the modern hero-adventure “where then there was darkness, now there is light; but also, where light was, there now is darkness” (1973: 388). Contrary to the canonical adventure, the Unicorn assumes a secular, human aspect in order to venture from her habitual world (the “sacred” lilac forest) into the human world; and the kingdom of Haggard, though also inhabited by humans and worldly in essence, is the zone of the unknown, containing a secular temple for a modern hero.

There are two aspects that contradict the overall model of the modern hero-adventure in “The Last Unicorn”. Firstly, the hero traveling through the modern world is not human. Besides, when she returns, ready to share the successfully reattained boons with the world, it turns out that the society is unable to recognize, left alone appreciate the gift. Thus, the Unicorn symbolizes that there is no hero that could save the modern society – even though filled with compassion and able to understand human emotions, she chooses another world to return to, and the human society is left to wallow in its sophistication. Therefore, it can be concluded that in “The Last Unicorn” there is depicted not a real modern hero-adventure, but rather a grotesque version of one, in which the “modernity” is a neglected case, carried to the point of absurdity.

Besides the protagonist being a unicorn, there are other elements that emphasize the lamentable state of the modern society: several ambiguous and misleading images (e.g., the false mother) and grotesque caricatures of the modern society (e.g., the people of Hagsgate). These elements reflect the tendency of the modern society to become narrow-minded – like the hero could be cast into the abysmal belly of the monster-mother if it was not for the miracle of preliminary transformation, the mankind is about to sink into its blindfolded rationality, like the townsfolk of Hagsgate.

Interestingly, the idea that the modern society is in desperate need of restoring spiritual purity is paralleled by the function performed by a certain category of images created by Peter Beagle in “The Last Unicorn” and represented by concentric structures. These images are used in the story for the purpose of demonstrating different levels of falsehood that modern people create, indulging their own fears and desires that in the course of time became more and more primitive and utilitarian (see Appendix 9, Fig. 3.1-Fig. 3.7). For instance, in the old times men wanted to capture the fierce and mysterious beast, not exactly knowing what to do with it after that; now they are chasing a white horse with the purpose of selling it.

All things considered, in general, the research has shown that the framework developed according to Campbell’s description of the hero-adventure can be expressed in diagram form, involving structures introduced by Claude Levi-Strauss. There have proven to be certain differences in the structures developed on the basis of different theories. However, in general, there appears to be a remarkable coordination of the two approaches – Strauss’ and Campbell’s – that allowed combining them into one framework in the first place.

As concerns suggestions for further research, it would be of interest to investigate the hero-adventure in “The Last Unicorn” from the perspective of other characters. After the Unicorn disappears together with her kin, the story continues, depicting several more episodes from the lives of other characters: Schmendrick, Molly Grue and Prince Lír. In other words, “The Last Unicorn” begins with one protagonist and ends with another. Thus, the research could be devoted to explaining that and based on the assumption that these characters were the real heroes that have undergone their own metamorphoses.

Theses

- 1) From the perspective of “Structural Anthropology” all the diagrams in “The Last Unicorn” are character-based – the main elements in these structures are personages, not locations.
- 2) Structures introduced in “Structural Anthropology”, as well as the images in “The Last Unicorn” can be divided into groups, the most prominent of which are as follows: according to the number of the elements comprising each structure (binary/ternary structures), and according to the manner in which the elements are arranged (circular/concentric/diametrical structures).
- 3) The trio Bull-Unicorn-Maiden is the structure with an extensive historical, mythological and cultural background, having its roots in the ancient cultures.
- 4) Relying on Claude Levi-Strauss’ work, the Bull-Unicorn-Maiden trio can be perceived as a group of images, rather than one complex image, and is represented through two structures, both containing diametrical elements indicating the connection between the images.
- 5) When it comes to analyzing the transformation of a character, the possibilities that Claude Levi-Strauss’ method provides for the research prove to be limited due to the fact that the structures based solely on this framework merely demonstrate that the elements are connected, and not how they interact in a structure.
- 6) Myths, as well as dreams and fairytales, always follow one and the same structure in their development, so that there can be established a common framework representing the archetype of adventure completed by the archetype of a hero.
- 7) The additional framework based on “The Hero with a Thousand Faces” in combination with Claude Levi-Strauss’ structures makes it possible to express through concentric diagrams how the elements in the trio and other structures influence each other.
- 8) The structures developed in the result of combining Campbell’s method and the structuralist approach can be perceived as setting-based.
- 9) In general, the world depicted in “The Last Unicorn” corresponds to the framework of a modern hero-adventure, with the exception of two aspects that do not agree with the model of the modern hero-path: the hero is not human in form; the human society does not acknowledge the restoration of spiritual values.
- 10) The Unicorn in this story symbolizes that saving the modern society from its hypertrophied rationality is beyond the power of any hero.

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Appendix 1

Binary structures

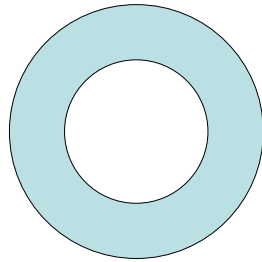
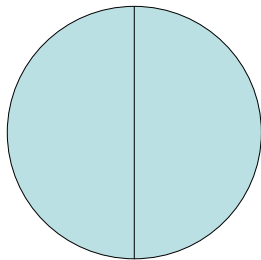


Figure 1.1 A concentric binary structure

1)



2)

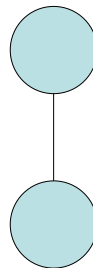


Figure 1.2 Variants of diametrical structures

Appendix 2

Symmetry

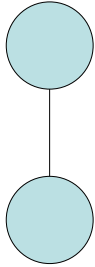


Figure 1.3 A completely symmetrical diametrical structure

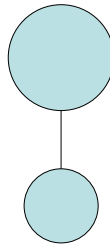


Figure 1.4 An asymmetrical diametrical structure

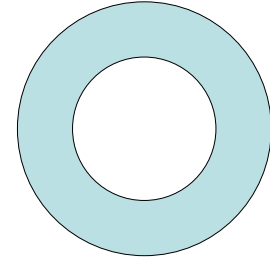


Figure 1.5 An always asymmetrical concentric structure

Appendix 3

Homogeneity/heterogeneity of binary structures

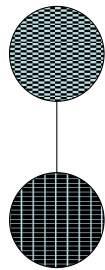


Figure 1.6 A homogeneous structure

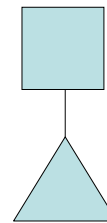


Figure 1.7 A heterogeneous structure

Appendix 4

Derivations of binary structures

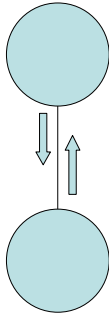


Figure 1.8 An always static diametrical structure

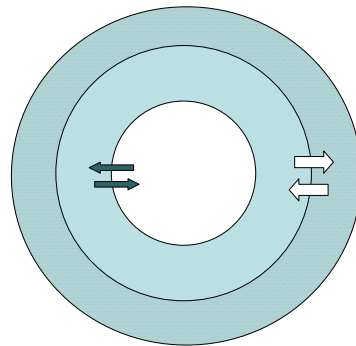


Figure 1.9 An always dynamic concentric structure

Appendix 5

Ternary structures

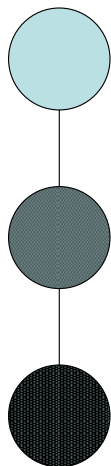


Figure 1.10 A diametrical ternary structure

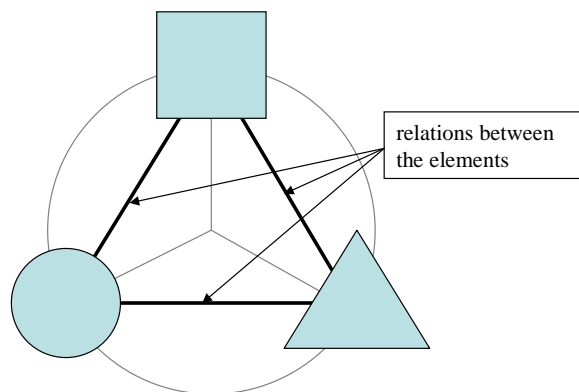


Figure 1.11 A circular ternary structure

Appendix 6

Crossing of the threshold

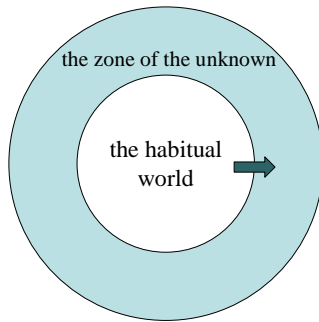


Figure 2.1 **Breaking out from the confines of the familiar world; a concentric binary structure**

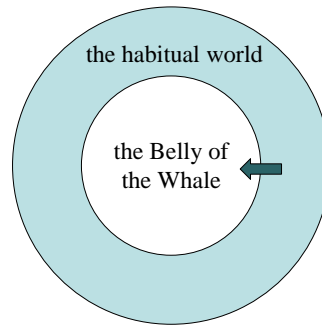


Figure 2.2 **Entering the Belly of the Whale; a concentric binary structure**

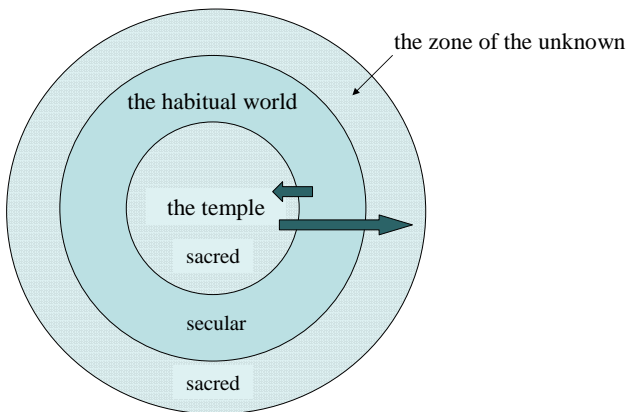


Figure 2.3 **Crossing the threshold; a concentric ternary structure**

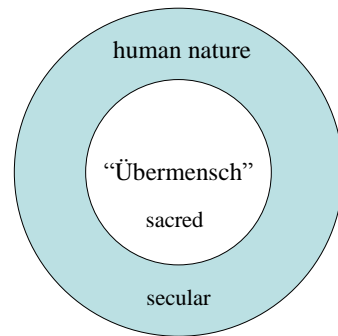


Figure 2.4 **The hero at the threshold; a concentric binary structure**

Appendix 7

Encounters in the zone of the unknown

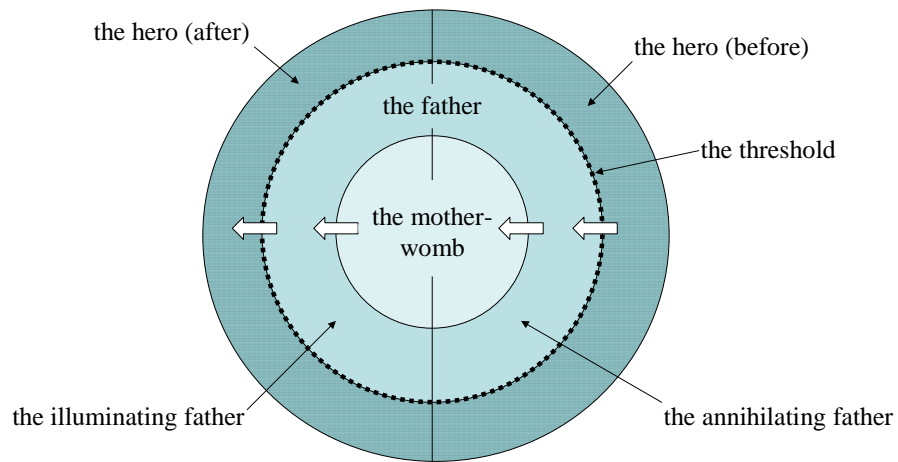


Figure 2.5 The encounter with the parental figure; a concentric ternary structure

Appendix 8

The “lopsided” structures

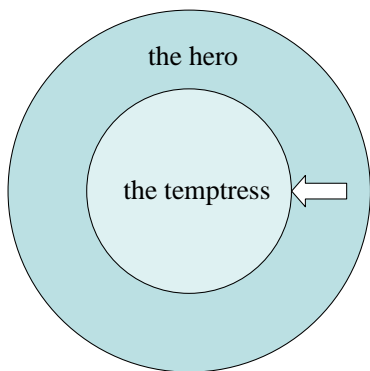


Figure 2.6 No-way-in; a concentric binary structure

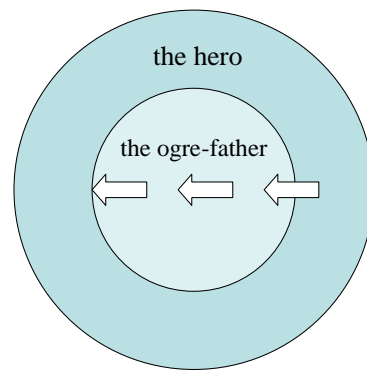


Figure 2.7 No-way-out; a concentric binary structure

Appendix 9

Structures in “The Last Unicorn”

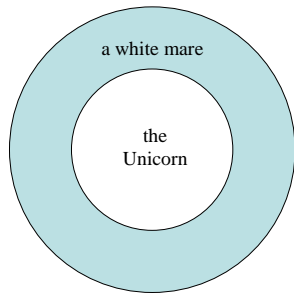


Figure 3.1 A concentric binary structure

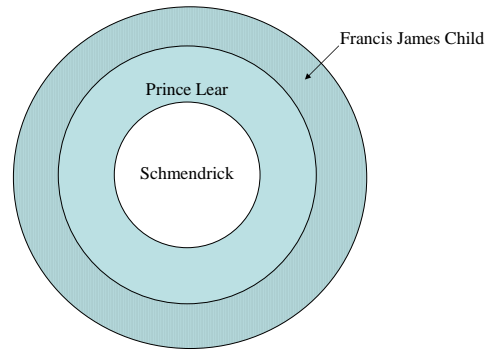


Figure 3.2 A concentric ternary structure

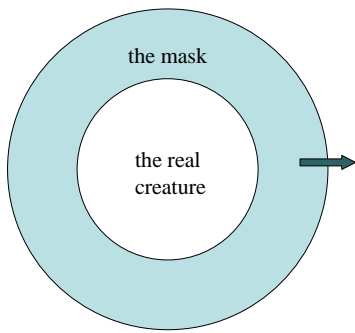


Figure 3.3 A concentric binary structure (concealing)

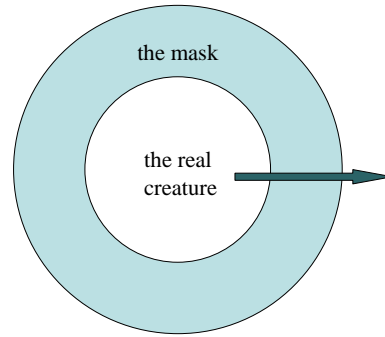


Figure 3.4 A concentric binary structure (revealing)

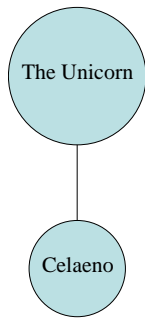


Figure 3.5 An asymmetrical diametrical binary structure

Appendix 10

The Bull, the Unicorn, and the Maiden

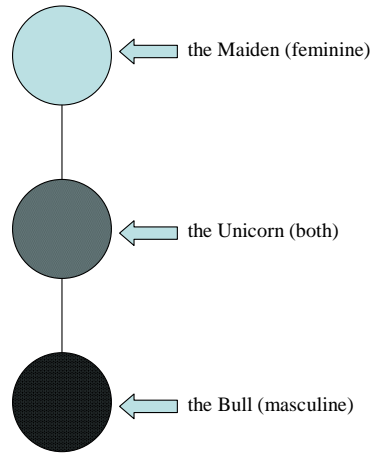


Figure 3.6 A diametrical ternary structure

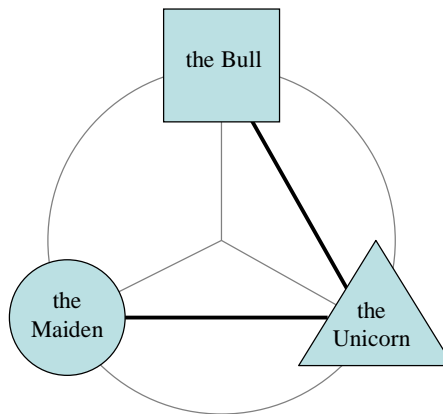


Figure 3.7 A circular ternary structure

Appendix 11

Moving through worlds

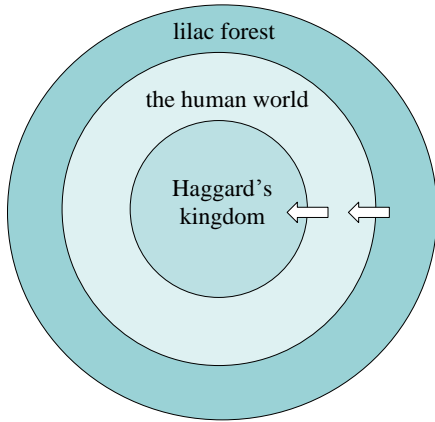


Figure 4.1 A concentric ternary structure

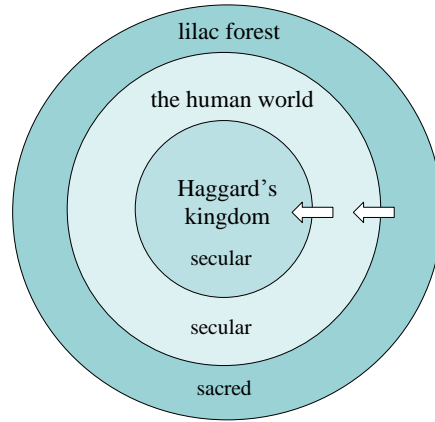


Figure 4.2 Sacred/secular distinction; a concentric ternary structure

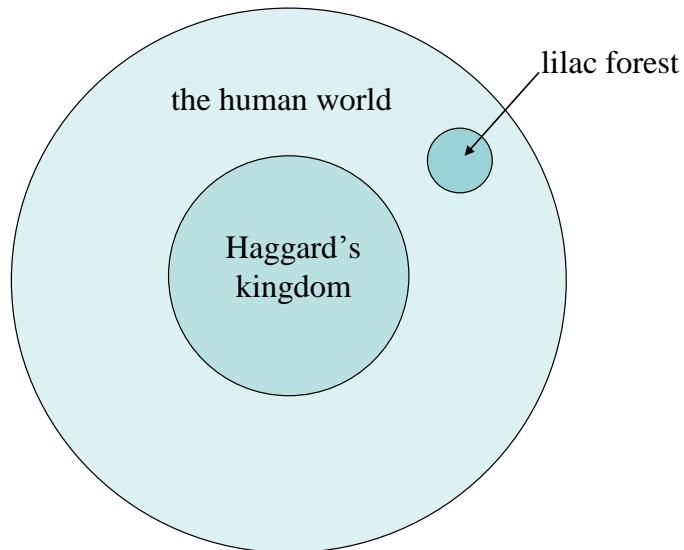


Figure 4.3 Arrangement of locations

Appendix 12

Encounters in the zone of the unknown in “The Last Unicorn”

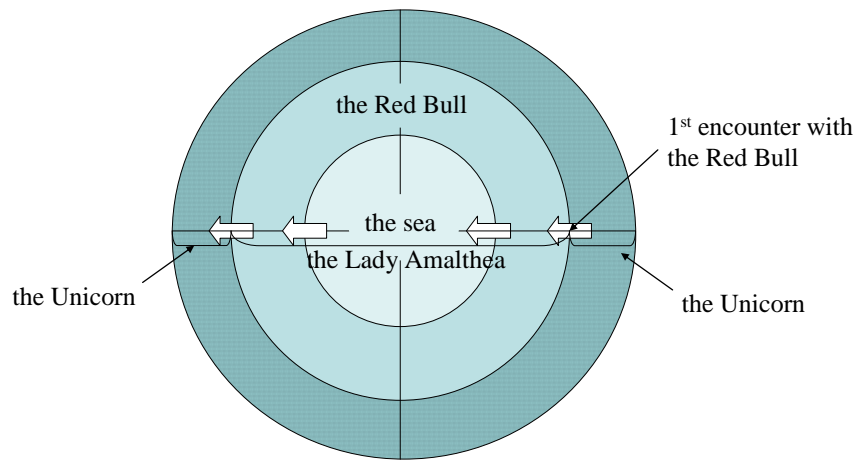


Figure 4.4 The encounter with the parental figure; a concentric ternary structure

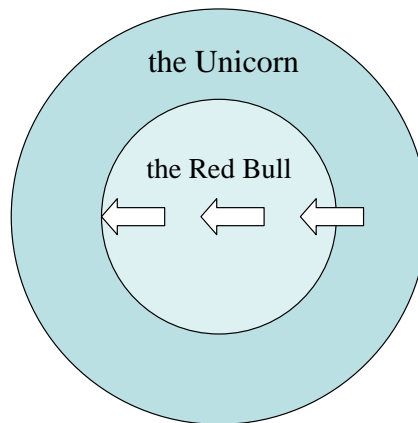


Figure 4.5 The “no way out” structure in “The Last Unicorn”; a concentric binary structure

Appendix 13

On death and rebirth

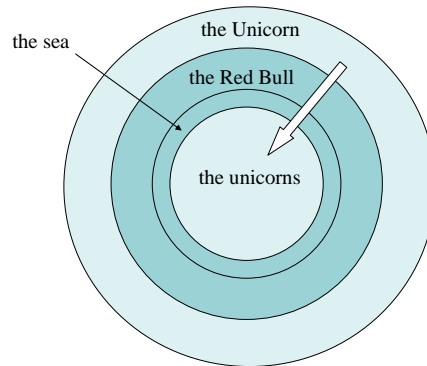


Figure 4.6 The Red Bull and the sea being one; a concentric structure

Appendix 14

The return

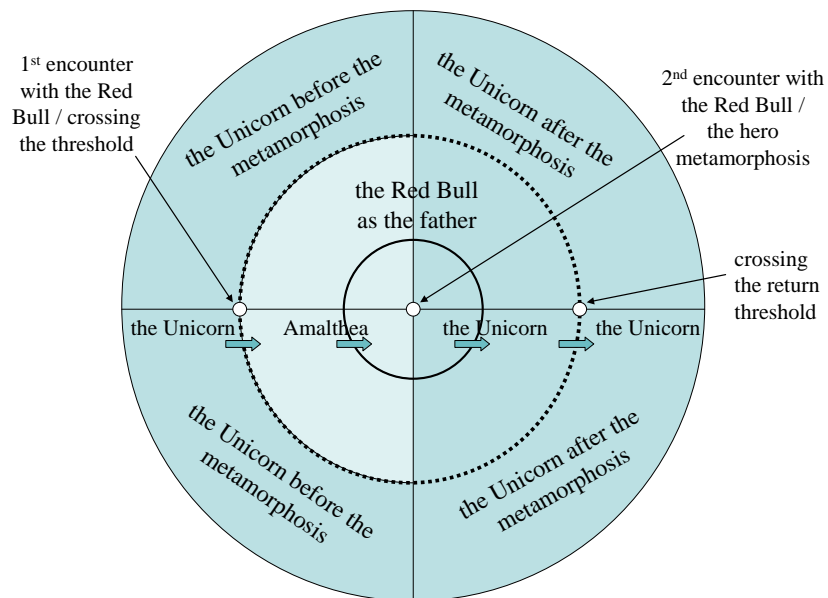


Figure 4.7 The real hero-metamorphosis; a concentric structure

Dokumentārā lapa

Bakalaura darbs “Image of the Unicorn in ‘The Last Unicorn’ by P. Beagle” (Vienradža tēls P. Bīgla darbā “Pēdējais vienradzis”) izstrādāts LU Humanitāro zinātņu fakultātē.

Ar savu parakstu apliecinu, ka pētījums veikts patstāvīgi, izmantoti tikai tajā norādītie informācijas avoti un iesniegtā darba elektroniskā kopija atbilst izdrukai.

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19.05.2012.

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Darbu pieņēma:

Darbs aizstāvēts bakalaura gala pārbaudījuma komisijas sēdē

..... prot. Nr., vērtējums

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