

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG HEROES
IN *THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING*
AND *THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE***



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Abstract: This paper will attempt to analyse the role of children and young heroes in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Fellowship of the Ring* and C.S. Lewis' *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* based on Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* and his treatment of the hero during the first adventure stage, the Departure. The paper focuses its analysis on the selected heroes of the second book of *The Chronicles of Narnia*, the Pevensie siblings — Peter, Edmund, Susan and Lucy — , and the four Hobbits — Frodo, Sam, Merry and Pippin — chosen for the first book of *The Lord of the Rings*. Once this is understood, we may pursue the question as to what extent Campbell's scheme is valid in delineating the nature of children and heroism as reflected in the selected novels.

Keywords: *The Fellowship of the Ring* – *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* – Children – Hero.

In 2006, Catherine Schlegel and Henry Weinfield published a clear and updated translation and introduction to Hesiod's poem *Works and Days* (700 BC). In his work, Hesiod presents the "Five Ages of Man". The first and most glorious is the Golden Age, when there was a time where men could live with the gods in harmony and life was easy, "In the beginning [there

was] made a race of mortals that was gold. These people lived in Krono's time, when he was heaven's King; Like gods they lived, with carefree heart, remote from suffering" (SCHLEGEL/ WEINFELD 2006: 60). Secondly, the Silver Age comes, an age where an ungodly race of men is destroyed by Zeus because they refused to venerate the gods, "A second, much inferior race, a silver race of men, Neither in understanding nor in stature like the other" (*Ibid*: 61). Then, the Bronze Age, a time where men lived only for war, but were undone by their own violent ways, "Then Zeus the father made another race of mortal ones, In nothing similar to the silver –this third race he made bronze And of the ash tree" (*Ibid*: 61). After this one, we find the Heroic Age, an age in which men lived with honour and participated in great battles such as Troy "A race of heroes, godlike men" (*Ibid*: 62). Finally, the Iron Age, that is the time where Hesiod belongs —and us—, an age abandoned by gods where life is surrounded by dishonour and suffering, the worst of all ages "I wish that I were not among this last, fifth race of men...For this race now is iron indeed, and never, night or morn, Will leave off from their suffering" (*Ibid*: 62).

European mythologies use Greek, Roman and Nordic mythologies as a reference. As a starting point they used the epic and heroic legends in which humans were the featured protagonists. This type of mythology is what interests us in this study about the heroic role of the characters Frodo and his three Hobbit friends¹ in *The Fellowship of the Ring* (1954), the first book of the trilogy *The Lord of the Rings* (1955) by J. R. R. Tolkien, and the Pevensie siblings in the book *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1950), the second book in the final heptalogy order of *The Chronicles of Narnia* (1956) by C. S. Lewis.

¹ "Hobbits are an unobtrusive but very ancient people, more numerous formerly than they are today; for they love peace and quiet and good tilled earth... For they are little people, smaller than Dwarves: less stout and stocky, that is, even when they are not actually much shorter" (*LotR* 1-2).

In *The Magical Worlds of Narnia: a Treasure of Myths and Legends* (2005), David Colbert summarizes the five ages of humanity listed by Hesiod. Colbert adds that, apparently, Lewis shares Hesiod's vision of God having created men in total perfection and that, since then, the species has been degenerating progressively (2005: 86-89). We can add to Colbert's interpretation another that is still more relevant. In *The Chronicles of Narnia*, there is a golden age that is called to mind throughout the remainder of the books. It is a period in which Narnia is ruled by the Kings Peter and Edmund and their sisters, the Queens Susan and Lucy in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. These years comprise a wonderful and idealized time that passes from generation in unscathed from one generation of Narnians to the next, and represents the First Age of Man according to Hesiod.

And then he remembered (for he had always been good at history when he was a boy) how those same four children who had helped Caspian had been in Narnia over a thousand years before; and it was then that they had defeated the terrible White Witch and ended the Hundred Years of Winter, and after that they had reigned (all four of them together) at Cair Paravel, till they were no longer children but great Kings and lovely Queens, and their reign had been the Golden Age of Narnia (*CoN* 57-58).

Almost at the very beginning of *The Fellowship of the Ring*, when Tolkien writes about topics concerning hobbits, he too, situates the reader, in an age similar to Hesiod's Fourth Age, the Age of Heroes: "Those days, the Third Age of Middle-earth, are now long past, and the shape of all lands has been changed" (1996: 2).

This is the time that interests us, the age of the heroes. Those two previous references are examples which show that both Lewis and Tolkien were clearly familiar with Hesiod's work. Yet did they also share his ideas on heroism? Or did they stray far from tradition? Did they strive to develop

something completely new? By the year 1949, when Lewis had started *The Chronicles of Narnia* and Tolkien was immersed in *The Lord of the Rings*, Joseph Campbell, the North-American theorist of myths published his influential study about *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*.²

Tolkien, Lewis and Campbell were men of similar ages and similar backgrounds and it is not surprising that Campbell's theories overlap the concept of heroism shared by both other writers³. For this reason, out as we carry out a more exhaustive analysis of the hero in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and *The Fellowship of the Ring*, we will use the scheme that talks about the Hero's Journey proposed by Campbell. There are several reasons for this choice: the first is the chronological similarity in the progression development of the hero; secondly, the ease with which his theories can be compressed and applied quickly and accurately to these specific works of Lewis and Tolkien.⁴

² "Campbell posits the existence of a *Monomyth* (a word he borrowed from James Joyce), a universal pattern that is the essence of, and common to, heroic tales in every culture. While outlining the basic stages of this mythic cycle, he also explores common variations in the hero's journey, which, he argues, is an operative metaphor, not only for an individual, but for a culture as well" (JCF, <http://www.jcf.org/new/index.php?categoryid=11>).

³ Chance writes in her chapter about "Heroic Narrative Structure" compiled in her book *The Lord of the Rings, The Mythology* how Campbell's structure can be applied easy to Tolkien's masterpiece: "Joseph Campbell, in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, has designated "Departure" and "Return" the significant phases in monomyth of the hero's quest. So, too, do they mark the beginning and end of Tolkien's epic-romance. What the four Hobbits learn on their adventures both wounds and heals them and the Shire" (2001: 128).

⁴ Chance adds how created characters in Tolkien's story "were deeply influenced by medieval Renaissance models, among them the fairy-tale hero (Frodo), the epic hero and the healing King (Aragon), the loyal retainer Wiglaf and Bedivere (Sam Gamgee), and the Grendel-like monster in *Beowulf* (Gollum, originated in *The Hobbit*)" (2001: 15).

In *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Campbell tries to apply the tenets of psychoanalysis, especially from the school of C. G. Jung, to the study of mythologies⁵. After pointing out that one can easily superimpose dream symbolism and certain characteristic elements of myths, Campbell, goes on to list and rank their occurrence in the mythologies of most diverse cultural groups.

Campbell's model is divided into three stages: Departure, Initiation and Return. They are all essential parts of any hero's adventure and can readily be found in the legends, traditions and rituals of all the peoples of the world. To Campbell, these symbolic systems represent natural creations of the human mind and he further goes on to point out that the disturbing situation in which Western society seems to have immersed itself in recent times could be traced to the progressive discredit into which mythologies have fallen and how mythology itself has been damaged by a world where 'the rational' is worshipped. And arguably the ultimate standard bearer of 'the rational' is the inexorable, unbending, and voracious force of capitalism to which the world has harnessed itself. Severely crippled, the mythological and the divine, accompanied by the symbols that they embrace, find themselves fleeing for shelter in the only space left to hide, their birthplace – the unconscious. Is it possible that without collective mythological systems, modern man has come to isolate himself?

⁵ Carl Jung's notion of cultural archetypes and of the *collective unconscious*, which he (Campbell) felt provided the foundation of mythological thinking in a great diversity of cultures. He mixed in a hefty dose of both Freudian and Jungian psychoanalysis in his work, seeing the hero's journey as a simultaneous journey of the ego to achieve oneness with the world, to overcome its fears of both id and superego, of the seductive Mother and the ogre-like Father. Cf. Douglas Mann (2008), *Understanding Society* (Oxford UP).

Analysis

Following the scheme proposed by Campbell, let us take a closer look at the concept of heroism as exemplified in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and *The Fellowship of the Ring*, focusing on just the first point — Departure — as presented in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*.

Before we begin, it is worth mentioning that, in the case of Lewis, our study does not coincide with the more traditional view in which the Pevensie siblings do not figure among the heroes presented in the chronicles⁶. And as for Tolkien's novels, we should make it clear that while clearly indebted to Jane Chance's "Heroic Narrative and the Power of Structure" as presented in her work *The Mythology of Power* (2001) our work here suggests a new way of interpreting what Departure encompasses: seeing it not as individual movements within the first two novels of the trilogy as Chance proposes⁷, but rather as one, single, unique movement comprising the concept of Departure that is valid for *The Lord of the Rings* as a whole.

1. Departure

By nature, young people are inquisitive. They rarely hesitate to ask a question if they are confronted by something that lies beyond that which they have come to understand. Adults often misinterpret this curiosity. For example, a student looks out a classroom window. An adult taking notice

⁶ E. J. Kirk carries out a general survey on the Chronicles of which we highlight the chapter "The People and Creatures of Narnia" dedicated to the heroes that come together in the work. See Kirk, *The Chronicles of Narnia. Beyond the Wardrobe. The Official Guide to Narnia* (2005). Allen Lucy Shea also sees Aslan, as in the case of Kirk, as "The Greatest Hero" and also mentions none of the children who belong to our world —Pevensie siblings — as possible heroes of the story that happens in Narnia. See Shea (1993), *C. S. Lewis and the Chronicles of Narnia: A study of heroes*.

⁷ See Chance, Table 1. Narrative Pattern in *The Fellowship of the Ring* (2001: 134-135).

assumes the student is easily distracted, and attempts to refocus the child's attention.

The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe tells of four London siblings, Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy. Because of the constant German aerial bombardment during World War II, they are sent to a house in the country inhabited by an elderly teacher and his housekeeper. When they arrive, just a quick glance is enough for them to discover that the mansion is huge, and full of rooms and passageways. Forced to play indoors because of the uncooperative weather, the youngest of the quartet, Lucy, discovers a cupboard while playing hide-and-seek with her brothers and sister. Driven by curiosity, she tries to open it.⁸

'Nothing there!' said Peter, and they all trooped out again – all except Lucy. She stayed behind because she thought it would be worthwhile trying the door of the wardrobe, even though she felt almost sure that it would be locked. To her surprise it opened easily, and two mothballs dropped out (*CoN* 15).

The Fellowship of the Ring refers to four Hobbits, Frodo and his three Hobbit friends — Sam, Merry and Pippin — who will have to carry one special ring to Lórien. This ring, named the One Ring, belonged to Sauron, the Dark Lord, who is looking for it because the ring is extraordinarily powerful and would help Him to enslave the Middle-earth — a fictional world created by Tolkien⁹. Bilbo Baggins, Frodo's uncle, possesses a mysterious ring. When

⁸ Why a Cabinet? Colbert (2005: 25-29) points that the choice of Cabinet is motivated by the fact that there was no better than the home somewhere for the own Lewis and adds the most likely influence of a history of Nesbit 'The Aunt and Amabel': "In Lewis home was a wardrobe that his grandfather had made for him - and which", according to his brother, Warren, was the inspiration for the title of the first of the Chronicles... It seemed to be lighted by stars, which is, of course, unusual in a booking office, and over the station clock was full moon'.

⁹ When Simonson speaks about the Middle Earth, he underlines the importance of the place: "Creating a secondary world in which the different traditions are given space to interact with natural ease, Tolkien constructs a powerful alternative to high modernism in

he puts it on, he becomes invisible. On his 111th birthday, Bilbo decides to leave the Shire and give all his belongings to his nephew Frodo, but incomprehensibly, he refuses to abandon “his ring”. In *The Hobbit* (1937) written by Tolkien, Bilbo is the one who finds a ring in a deep cave and takes it back to the Shire, opening the door to the future events that will occur to his nephew and friends in *The Lord of the Rings*. Gandalf, Bilbo’s wizard friend, explains to Frodo just what this extraordinary and dangerous ring is. While speaking with Frodo, Sam Gamgee, Frodo’s best friend, is driven by curiosity and cannot resist the temptation of listening secretly Gandalf’s story.

‘Well, well, bless my beard!’ said Gandalf. ‘Sam Gamgee is it? Now what may you be doing?’

‘Lord bless you, Mr. Gandalf, sir!’ said Sam. ‘Nothing! Leastways I was just trimming the grass-border under the window, if you follow me.’ He picked up his shears and exhibited them as evidence.

‘I don’t,’ said Gandalf grimly. ‘It is some time since I last heard the sound of your shears. How long have you been eavesdropping?’

‘Eavesdropping, sir? I don’t follow you, begging your pardon. There ain’t no eaves at Bag End, and that’s a fact.’

‘Don’t be a fool! What have you heard, and why did you listen?’ Gandalf’s eyes flashed and his brows stuck out like bristles (*LotR* 62-3).

2. “The Call to Adventure”

Both stories begin with a seemingly happenstance situation which arouses the curiosity of children, and will later place them into precarious situations and into the midst of unknown circumstances that they do not initially understand. The element of *chance*, being in the right place at the right

portraying the recapitulation of previous tradition implied by writing in the mode of ironic myth” (2005: 168).

time¹⁰, is the first stage of the journey of initiation and reveals a yet unsuspected world in which the protagonists are exposed to an unexpected situation. At some point, the error ceases to be merely an accident and becomes a pathway to some undisclosed destination that beckons them on. It appears as a preliminary demonstration of invisible forces of chance that begin to come into play and that will eventually lead to "The Call to Adventure".

In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Lucy, who has felt an attraction to the old wardrobe since the first time she laid eyes on it, advances, driven by a force that is no longer mere curiosity. The wardrobe is, to all appearances, simply a piece of. But it becomes the entrance to a different world. This happens by the will of Aslan, an almighty being who, while unknown to the Pevensie siblings requires their presence to save Narnia.

'This must be a simple enormous wardrobe!' thought Lucy, going still further in and pushing the soft folds of the coats aside to make room for her. Then she noticed that there was something crunching under her feet. 'I wonder is that more mothballs?' she thought, stooping down to feel it with her hand. But instead of feeling the hard, smooth wood of the floor of the wardrobe, she felt something soft and powdery and extremely cold (CoN 16).

Frodo, although reluctant at the beginning, accepts the task of bringing the Ring to Lórien as Gandalf has asked. He needs time to give up his peaceful

¹⁰ David Colbert (2005: 67) explains how Lewis does not follow a regular pattern governing the inputs and outputs to the world of Narnia. His friend Tolkien differing with him about this lack of internal regulatory order of the magic that is repeated throughout the Chronicles. "Other writers might have invented a single rule for moving characters into Narnia and out of it." Lewis invented new tricks whenever he felt like it: a wardrobe, a painting, the call of Horn, magic rings...". This casual attitude towards the rules of Narnia is one reason Lewis' friend J. R. R. Tolkien didn't love the Chronicles.

life in the Shire, until the call of duty becomes too compelling, and the adventure unfolds:

They began to hum softly, as hobbits have a way of doing as they walk along, especially when they are drawing near to home at night. With most hobbits it is a supper-song; but these hobbits were hummed a walking-song (though not, of course, without any mention of supper and bed). Bilbo Baggins had made the words, to a tune that was as old as the hills, and taught it to Frodo as they walked in the lanes of the Water-valley and talked about Adventure (*LotR* 76).

The protagonists of both works, having once accepted the call to adventure, do not know precisely where this call will take them¹¹. Narnia and Middle-Earth, just like our world, have different countries, Islands and seas. Therefore, the stories' protagonists are directed to unknown regions where possible treasures and/or dangers may lurk: distant and unknown lands, a forest, an underground Kingdom, a desert island, a place under the sea or in heaven, or a myriad of possible destinations; yet no matter how remote or seemingly unrelated, these places, all share a strange, fluid existence replete with magic, strange beings, supernatural events and impossible dreams.

'But do you really mean, sir,' said Peter, 'that there could be other worlds – all over the place, just round the corner – like that?'

¹¹ Duriez (2003: 99-100) picks up a conversation that Tolkien and Lewis kept about the unknown, the world that lurks on the other side and that starts with the adventure of the trip: "Tolkien sucks on his pipe to encourage its dying embers". "Some of the Scientifiction evokes wonder around – sometimes offers much glimpses of genuine other worlds". There's some appalling stuff, too, but that's true of all the genres. "Space and time stories can provide Recovery and Escape". He says the last two nouns with sudden loudness, perhaps to emphasize that they should have capitals. "I hope to soon on this quality as lecture of Fairy Story". I relish stories that survey the depths of space and time". "To be sure, to be sure", Lewis agrees.

'Nothing is more probable,' said the Professor, taking off his spectacles and beginning to polish them, while he muttered to himself, 'I wonder what they *do* teach at these schools' (CoN 57).

'Do you feel any need to leave the Shire now – now that your wish to see them has come true already?' he asked.

'Yes, sir. I don't know how to say it, but after last night I feel different. I seem to see ahead, in a kind of way. I know we are going to take a very long road, into darkness; but I know I can't turn back. It isn't to see Elves now, nor dragons, nor mountains, that I want – I don't rightly know what I want: but I have something to do before the end, and it lies ahead, not in the Shire. I must see it through, sir, if you understand me' (LotR 85).

3. "Refusal to the Call"

While Frye defined in his *Powerful Words* (1990) the classic hero as someone who "tends to be a tragic figure, divided by a combination of human and divine," the young heroes of this study have no divine part that affects their creation. They are heroes of flesh and blood with real mothers and fathers. They are not children of deities although it is true that there is always an aura of mystery about their parents, who are always presented in the vaguest of terms. The hero can obey this call to adventure or attempt to avoid it. In the latter instance, such refusal turns the adventure into a negative. In what Campbell refers to as the "Refusal of the Call" (2008: 49) he states, "Walled in boredom, hard work, or 'culture,' the subject loses the power of significant affirmative action and becomes a victim to be saved". When this happens, the individual becomes unhappy and incomplete and this will eventually destroy it. In both novels we see a clear examples of this process. Some of the main characters deny their responsibility and try to avoid their destiny:

'I – I wonder if there's any point in going on,' said Susan. 'I mean, it doesn't seem particularly safe here and it looks as if it won't be much fun either. And it's getting

colder every minute, and we've brought nothing to eat. What about just going home?' (CoN 66).

'I do really wish to destroy it!' cried Frodo. 'Or well, to have it destroyed. I am not made for perilous quests. I wish I had never seen the Ring! Why did it come to me? Why was I chosen?' (LotR 60).

However, this attitude does not commune with the spirit of heroism presented in this study, for despite their doubts and fears, and guided by a sense of right and duty, both characters, Susan and Frodo, begin to assume their heroic stature as they put aside their own security and self-interest:

'I've a horrid feeling that Lu is right,' said Susan. 'I don't want to go a step further and I wish we'd never come. But I think we must try to do something for Mr. Whatever-his-name is – I mean the Faun' (CoN 67).

'No!' answered Frodo, coming back to himself out of darkness, and finding to his surprise that it was not dark, and that out of the window he could see the sunlit garden. 'Or perhaps, yes. As far as I understand what you have said, I suppose I must keep the Ring and guard it, at least for the present, whatever it may do to me' (LotR 60).

4. "Supernatural Aid"

The acceptance of the call involves a "Supernatural Aid". As Campbell points out (57), the first meeting of the day of the hero tends to be with a protective figure, often an old crone or old man, who provides the adventurer with amulets to ward off or counter-act the evil forces which would otherwise annihilate them.

When Lucy enters Narnia through the wardrobe, the first creature that she stumbles upon is a Faun, telling who informs the girl about Narnia and her situation within it. Having arrived in the magical land, Lucy and her brothers and sister find that a beaver and his wife will be the ones to lead and assist the Pevensie siblings throughout their adventure. However, the

true supernatural aids—in keeping with Campbell’s model— appear when Father Christmas delivers gifts to Lucy, Peter and Susan (at this point Edmund has escaped with the White Witch). These magical items include a sword, a shield, a bow and arrows, a horn a dagger and a potion¹². All of them will be of great value in this first volume, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and all the ones to follow. To understand the meaning of “magic” in the context of the Chronicles, see Downing (2005: 120-124) where he writes that “Nowadays the word magic refers most often to sleight-of-hand tricks performed by entertainers. Lewis used the term more seriously and more broadly to describe anything marvellous or unexplained, from divine mysteries to diabolical sorcery. Most of the ideas and attitudes in the chronicles stay consistent from the first book in the series to the last.

Some of the pictures of Father Christmas in our world make him look only funny and jolly. But now that the children actually stood looking at him they didn't find it quite like that. He was so big, and so glad, and so real, that they all became quite still. They felt very glad, but also solemn...

"Peter, Adam's Son," said Father Christmas.

"Here, sir," said Peter.

"These are your presents..."

[...] "Merry Christmas! "Long live the true King!" and cracked his whip, and he and the reindeer and the sledge and all were out of sight before anyone realized that they had started (*CoN* 115-117).

The Fellowship of the Ring also presents this figure of an old crone or old man in the character of Tom Bombadil, a fellow capable of communicating with Nature, “I know the tune of him. Old grey Willow-man!” (117), while

¹² To understand the meaning of “magic” through the context of the Chronicles, see Downing (2005: 120-124) where he writes that “Nowadays the word magic refers most often to sleight-of-hand tricks performed by entertainers. Lewis used the term more seriously and more broadly to describe anything marvellous or unexplained, from divine mysteries to diabolical sorcery. Most of the ideas and attitudes in the chronicles stay consistent from the first book in the series to the last.

being the only creature that the ring cannot affect “Then Tom put the Ring round the end of his little finger [...] There was no sign of Tom disappearing!” (130). In a sense, Tom Bombadil looks like as he belongs to the world before the world the Hobbits know existed. At the end of the hobbits’ misfortunes in the Old Forest¹³, Tom saves the four Hobbits from a terrible death while giving them valuable weapons for their adventure.

But Tom shook his head, saying: ‘You’ve found yourselves again, out of the deep water. Clothes are but little loss, if you escape from drowning [...] For each of the hobbits he chose a dagger, long, leaf-shaped, and keen, of marvelous workmanship, damasked with serpent-forms in red and gold’ (*LotR* 141-2).

5. “Cross the First Threshold”

Heroes, according to Campbell (64), should “Cross the First Threshold” that take them from their world to the world of the unknown. They must move on through their adventure until they reach a place where “the hero ... comes to the ‘threshold guardian’ at the entrance of the magnified power. Such custodians bound the world in all four directions.” In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, once the Pevensie siblings realize that something terrible is occurring in this newly discovered world in which they find themselves (Chapter 6, ‘Into the Forest’) they meet their guardian-to-be, a Talking Beaver, who will invite them to his house where they will also meet the

¹³ Throughout *The Lord of the Rings*, Nature is exceptionally important. The relation that characters and events have with the different manifestation of the natural world will determine the fate of the Ring. Patrick Curry, in his chapter about “Middle-Earth: Nature and Ecology” says: “Every forest in Middle-earth —Mirkwood, the Old Forest, Fangorn, even Woody End in the Shire — has its own unique personality. And none of them is more memorable than the green city of Caras Galadhon in Lothlórien, ‘the heart of Elvendom on earth,’ the height of whose mallorn-trees ‘could not be guessed, but they stood up in the twilight like living towers [...]’. Tolkien does not romanticize nature, however. You can easily freeze to death, die of overexposure, drown or starve in Middle-earth.” (2004: 52-53).

Beaver's wife (Chapter 7, 'A day with the Beavers'). *The Fellowship of the Ring* follows exactly the same pattern. Once the Hobbit are in the Old Forest, which also gives its name to the chapter, the next episode is "In the house of Tom Bombadil" where, among other things, they also meet Goldberry, Tom Bombadil's wife.

6. "The Belly of the Whale"

The idea that the passage over the magic threshold is a transit to a sphere of rebirth tends to be symbolized with the image of "the Belly of the Whale". Campbell says: "The hero, instead of conquering or conciliating the power of the threshold, is swallowed into the unknown, and would appear to have died" (74). When our heroes of Narnia — Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy — leave our world and cease to exist in this, in some way, it is as if they had died for us, but to once again become aware of who they are and where they are, seem to be able to conquer or control the force of the threshold. There is an episode where one of the brothers, Edmund, is unable to control the force of his own avarice and, having been easily hypnotized by all the White Witch's vain promises is driven to the point where his situation becomes uncontrollable. As a result, he becomes prisoner of the Witch, captured and without hope; yet continuing to grow as a person and all the while preparing the path for his true development as a hero:

Meanwhile the dwarf whipped up the reindeer, and the Witch and Edmund drove out under the archway and on and away into the darkness and the cold. This was a terrible journey for Edmund [...] And Edmund, for the first time in this story, felt sorry for someone besides himself [...] The dwarf obeyed, and in a few minutes Edmund found himself being forced to walk as fast as he could with his hands tied behind him. He kept on slipping in the slush and mud and wet grass, and every time he slipped, the dwarf gave him a curse and sometimes a flick with the whip (CoN 121-128).

Something similar happens with the four Hobbits when Tom Bombadil frees them from the barrow-downs. They were almost dead, the four of them, inside the belly of the earth, but are reborn just as naked as they came into the world: "Run naked on the grass, while Tom goes a-hunting!" (140). Unfortunately for our heroes, this is nothing more than mere chimera, because despite the hero apparently is in control of the situation, there is something in it that drags them far away and cannot avoid being swallowed by the unknown.

'How perfectly dreadful!' said Susan as they at last came back in despair. 'Oh, how I wish we'd never come.'

'What on earth are we to do, Mr. Beaver?' said Peter.

'Do?' said Mr. Beaver, who was already putting on his snow-boots. 'Do? We must be off at once. We haven't a moment to spare!' (CoN 91).

Conclusion

Joseph Campbell recognizes three stages in the development of the heroic adventure. Our interpretation of Campbell's heroic system for C.S. Lewis' *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Fellowship of the Ring* has shifted the readers attention to the first stage, the Departure, and the characters of the Pevensie siblings: Peter, Edmund, Susan and Lucy, and four Hobbits: Frodo, Sam, Merry and Pippin.

The study has pointed to a parallel between the four young Hobbits who appear in *The Lord of the Rings* who, in a certain sense, represent that same idea of innocence and youth that we see with the Pevensie children in *The Chronicles of Narnia*. Additionally, they possess pure and truly heroic spirits as set forth by Campbell, and pass through the various stages of

Departure, namely: The Call to Adventure, Refusal to the Call, Supernatural Aid, the Crossing of the First Threshold, and the Belly of the Whale.

This article is intended as the first step to further studies that will explore these characters as heroes in the entire series that comprises *The Chronicles of Narnia* and *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy using the complete model proposed by Campbell. These later explorations will take into account not only the Departure, but also Campbell's framework for Initiation and Return.

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