



poetry, then in the popular literature there is adventure, mystery, romance, alien being and state, as well as the melodrama or tragedy.

The appeal of adventure fiction is argued by literary scholar John Cawelti to be due to psychological wish-fulfillment. He asserts that the most popular works are those that ‘help people to categorize artistically with actions they would like to perform but cannot in the ordinary course of events’ (Cawelti 22). Cawelti seems without doubt of the ideological effect of the adventure genre when he posits formulaic literature as ‘a ruling-class device for keeping a daily measure of amusing anxieties from the majority of the people’s satisfied (Cawelti 25).

This structural formula represented an involvement between the reader and the author in which individual developments and turns in the plot are not apathetically anticipated, often within a storyline's formation that is conventional, relatively easy to follow and thus reassuringly familiar to the mass viewers that enthusiastic with adventure fiction. The significance of these narrative structures is also responsive well by publishers. Cawelti sums awake this three-way relationship succinctly: 'well-established conventional structures are particularly essential to the creation of formula literature and reflect the interests of audiences, authors and distributors' (Cawelti 9). First, by delivering a suspenseful plot and epic styles of heroism, the interests of audiences were satisfaction and distraction, understood in language that was easily reached to a mostly learned, but largely unrefined, popular market.



value in identifying recurrent underlying ideological motifs in adventure fiction which, although published in the last thirty years of the nineteenth century, were often set at earlier historical moments, such as in the Elizabethan or Napoleonic era.

In Cawelti's view, 'one cannot write a successful adventure story about a social character type that the culture cannot conceive in heroic terms' (Cawelti: 6), the adventure hero brings a set of recognizable traits to a recognizable situation. This familiarity with a formula, for readers of adventure fiction, is one of the ways in which the genre exemplifies Culler's theory of how 'readers produce meaning by making connections, filling in things left unsaid, anticipating and conjecturing and then having their expectations disappointed or confirmed' (Culler 123).

Conforming the view of adventure genre, John G. Cawelti defines adventure fiction as the story “of the hero - individual or group - overcoming obstacles and dangers and accomplishing some important and moral mission (2). He also alludes to the archetypal nature of this story pattern, which can be traced back to ancient myths and epics. Thus, novels in the adventure genre are action-packed, feature a hero on a mission, and are often set in exotic locales during the journey times.

In the adventure fiction, there is always an identifiable hero, a character whom readers like and to whom they relate. Through ingenuity and skill, he accomplishes his desperate mission. The nature of the hero is another



interpretation.

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particular moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities by inferences from what











of his or her everyday life to undergo a journey to a special world where challenges and fears are overcome in order to secure a quest, which is then shared with other members of the hero's community.

To undergo a special adventure to the special world, a hero requires special characteristics. In fact, a hero is always special, born to the world in special circumstances and destined to undergo a special journey, and back with special rewards. In Western culture, and in any culture, the hero stories have been part of life since the emergence of the culture itself (Hourihan 10). The oldest extant written version is The Epic of Gilgamesh which, according to its English translator, probably belongs to the third millennium BC (Sandars in Hourihan 10).

Surprisingly, though has undergone thousands of years of history of storytelling and narrative writing, the presentation of hero has changed only a little. Hourihan in his book *Deconstructing the Hero* (2005) lists the characteristics of heroes commonly found in Western narratives which occur almost in narratives from any given time. He (9-10) states that whether it is *The Odyssey*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, *Treasure Island*, *Doctor Who*, *Star Wars*, the latest *James Bond* thriller, or *Where the Wild Things* are, the hero story takes the form of a journey and follows an invariable pattern". He elaborates the hero story as having the following traits,

- a) The hero is white, male, British, American or European, and usually young. He may be the leader of a group of adventurers go together with a single male or companion.
- b) The hero leaves the civilized order of home to venture into the wilderness in pursuit of his ambition.
- c) The wilderness may be a forest, a fantasy land, another planet, Africa or some other non-European part of the world, the mean streets of London or New York, a tropical island, et cetera. It lacks the order and safety of home. Dangerous and magical things happen there.
- d) The hero run into a series of complexities and also susceptible by hazardous enemies. These may include dragons or other fantastic creatures, wild animals, witches, giants, savages, pirates, criminals, spies, aliens.
- e) The hero overcomes these enemies because he is strong, brave, resourceful, rational and determined to succeed. He may not dispatch support from wise and generous beings who recognize him for what he is.
- f) The hero achieves his goal which may be golden riches, a treasure with spiritual significance like the Holy Grail, the rescue of a virtuous (usually female) prisoner, or the destruction of the enemies which threaten the safety of home.
- g) The hero returns home, perhaps overcoming other threats on the way, and is gratefully welcomed.

- h) The hero is rewarded. Sometimes this reward is a virtuous and beautiful woman.

However the characteristics of hero can also be viewed from his physical, emotional, and social traits attributed to him/her. Further, Hourihan suggests seven characteristics of the hero related to his race, class and mastery, gender, age, relationship, rationality, action violence (Hourihan 57-95). These characteristics are more commonly found in action hero story, they are:

- 1) Race, the hero is white, and his story inscribes the dominance of white power and white culture. In those versions of the myth which belong to the last four hundred years or so, the period of European expansion and colonialism, white superiority is frequently an explicit theme. However we may be approaching the time when black heroes are possible in Western literature, but to date they have been almost a conceptual contradiction in terms. While black men could be noble, in the tradition of the 'noble savage', like Timothy in Theodore Taylor's perceptive children's book, *The Cay* [1969], they could not be heroes.
- 2) Class and mastery, one aspect of that identity, as we have seen, is a matter of race but the hero is also dominant over the lower orders of his own people. He is the symbol of elite. In early legends he is typically a king or a prince, the leader and representative of his people, and his quest involves their aspirations. Most contemporary realistic

children's stories have moved beyond a preoccupation with social position but this is not the case with fantasy and science fiction where it is common to find pseudo-mediaeval societies and aristocratic heroes.

- 3) Gender, the hero typically avoids any significant sexual involvement for such a relationship would compromise his dedication to his mission, and one of the attributes of maleness, as defined by the story, is contempt for such involvement, a preference for the sublimation provided by action and male bonding. Hero stories inscribe the male/female dualism, asserting the male as the norm, as what it means to be human, and defining the female as other—deviant, different, dangerous.

The essence of the hero's masculinity is his assertion of control over himself, his environment and his world. The world of these texts is a place of Manichean opposites: monsters exist and must be opposed. The hero's life, therefore, consists of a succession of struggles. His struggle is with his own unconscious as much as with external opponents: he puts down the things which rise from the inner darkness, because to him they are enemies. Emotions and imagination threaten his control, and threaten to come between him and his goal; therefore they too must be suppressed.

- 4) Age, Heroes are young. In most versions of the myth there is no recognition of a future in which they will grow old. The closure is final







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