Anti-hero in *The Seventh Day of Creation*: A Campbellian Reading

Abdollah Hosseini and Zahra Izadi
Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran

Abstract: From the mythological point of view, the hero of a literary text is an archetype in the collective unconscious who embodies the collective ideals of a culture while searching for his/her individual identity at the narrative level. In his seminal *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949), Joseph Campbell addresses the archetypal function of the hero in three main stages: departure, initiation, and return. Drawing on Campbell's model, this study examines the journey of the hero in the second storyline of *The Seventh Day of Creation*, i.e., *Al-Sirah al-Mutlaqiyeh*. Sirah al-Zatiyeh is a sequence to another study by same authors that examined the first storyline of the novel (Al-Sirah al-Zatiyeh) with regard to the author's personality and individuation. Proceeding from the analysis of *Al-Sirah al-Zatiyeh*, this study considers Mutlaq as an antihero based on Campbell's model and identifies a Hegelian dialectic relationship between the two storylines of the novel. Al-Sirah al-Zatiyeh and Al-Sirah al-Mutlaqiyeh, which respectively represent the individual code and the social code, are designed to showcase an ideal Iraqi society. More precisely, highlighting the opposition in the two main parts of the narrative points at the movement and dynamism desired by the author for changing the future of the country.

1. Introduction

Human beings cannot maintain their existence in the universe without believing in a system of collective mythologies (Campbell 2011: 3-4). Thus, history has witnessed similar myths in different cultures. It has been argued that the origin of mythological similarities is due to the essential similarity of basic human needs in all places and times (Frazer 2017: 810). Given that meeting the human need to harmonize mind and body is one of the goals of ancient myths (Campbell 1998: 114), numerous writers have exploited the potential of myths in creating their works. According to Campbell, myth has mystical, cosmological, sociological, and didactic functions, each of which authors may adopt according to their goals in writing a literary text (cited in Hasanpour, Eslami, and Hasanzadehniri 2020: 420).

Abdel Khaliq al-Rikabi's *The Seventh Day of Creation* is a perfect example in this regard. Fundamentally different from his previous works, this novel is considered a turning point in Al-Rikabi's artistic career. In an interview with *Al-Mawqif al-Thaqafi* (1998) about *The Seventh Day of Creation*, he acknowledges that he has previously written novels with limited ambition, but the subject matter of his last novel [i.e., *The Seventh Day of Creation*] is different, because it represents the culmination of his narrative production (Karim Ati 2012: 8).

The Seventh Day of Creation consists of thirteen chapters and includes two main stories. The subject of the first story, *Al-Sirah al-Zatiyeh*, is the collection of manuscripts of Al-Rawouq, which takes place in the present; the second story, *Al-Sirah al-Mutlaqiyeh*, narrates the life of Mutlaq and his sons and alludes to the events of 1920s, when Iraq was occupied by the British (Shahab Ahmad 2016: 10). Narration for Al-Rikabi is intertwined with history. He tries to collect the materials of his narrative from the history of Iraq and some other countries that were part of the Ottoman Empire; then, he aesthetically recreates them by drawing on native and global traditions of thought, culture, literature, and ethics (Al-Rikabi 2016: 10). Literary texts contain myths whose meaning can be unraveled by analyzing their relationship to each other. In adopting a structuralist approach to deal with the function of myths, one should look for binary oppositions in the narrative structure of literary texts; indeed, the appeal of the story is related to how these opposites are resolved (Payandeh 2019: 321). The study, accordingly, separates the two storylines from each other and considers them as binary oppositions. The authors, having read the first storyline from a Jungian perspective in another study, examine the second storyline based on Joseph Campbell's model to point out that these two storylines are binary opposites.

Among the models proposed based on Jung's theory, Joseph Campbell's seems to be more flexible as its steps can be removed and replaced. In addition, Campbell's model reveals Mutlaq's failure to realize his national identity in *Al-Sirah al-Mutlaqiyeh*, illustrates the working of the principle of opposites in the two main stories of the novel, and helps understand the structure of the [entire] novel. Therefore, the present study aims to answer the following questions by examining the second narrative of *The Seventh Day of Creation*:

1. What is the function of the hero archetype in *Al-Sirah al-Mutlaqiyeh* according to Campbell's model?
2. How does archetypal criticism of second story in *The Seventh Day of Creation* help understand the structure of the novel?

It seems that the first and the second storylines form a binary opposition which is eloquently evident in the characters' different conduct in the novel. In *Al-Sirah al-Mutlaqiyeh* part the author arguably characterizes Mutlaq as an antihero, which as an antithesis, stands as an opposite to Al-Sirah al-Zatiyeh whereby they form a Hegelian synthesis.

2. Background

So far, most studies on this novel have focused on its unique structure. According to Abdul Elah Ahmad, this novel features an unprecedented approach and an innovative style with a complex structure, incorporating multiple narratives within a broader one (Ahmad 1998: 119). Some researchers have interpreted this novel from a postmodernist perspective. Examples include *Sard Ma Baed Alhadathat: Riwayat Sabie 'Ayaam Alkhalq Miftahaan 'Ijrayyaan* by Sami Shihab 'Ahmad (2016) and *Sard Ma Baed Alhadathat* by Abbas Abd al-Jassim (2013). Similarly, in *'Athar Alzaman Fi Khalq Albinyt Aldilaliyt Fi Rawayt Sabie 'Ayam Alkhalq*, Karim Hassan Ati (2012) dealt with the function of time in creating the events of

the novel. In *Rawayt Sabie 'Ayam Alkhalq Li Abd Al-khaliq Al-Rikabi Dirasat Wa Tahlil Fi Anasiriha Al'Asasiy*, Karim Ahmed Jawad Al-Tamimi and Adawiya Al-Gharawi (2005) considered the time, place, and plot of this novel. In *Alwaey Alfaniyu Fi Alrawaayt Aleiraqiyt Almueasirat Wa Almarjieiyt Altarathiyt Fi Rawayt Sabie 'Ayam Alkhalq Li Abd Al-khaliq Al-Rikabi*, Abdul Elah Ahmad (1998) compared *The Seventh Day of Creation* with *Al-Rawouq* and *Qabl 'An Yahlaq Al-Bashiq*, two historical novels by the same author, and described them as *Al-Rawouq Trilogy*.

It should be noted that the salient aspects of Sufism in this novel have also been investigated. For instance, Abd al-Rasheed Hamisi (2018) in his doctoral dissertation *Hudur Altasawuf Fi Alkhitab Alriwayiyi Alearabii Almueasir* explored the presence of Sufism in this novel. On the other hand, in *Individuation in The Seventh Day of Creation: A Jungian Analysis*, (Hosseini, Falahati, Izadi 2021) studied this novel through a psychological perspective and suggested the author achieves self-discovery in the first part of the work, Al-Sirah al-Zatiyeh. This article introduces Al-Rikabi as a hero who discovers his true identity in a symbolic journey where he faces various archetypes such as shadow, sage, and anima (Hosseini, Falahati and Izadi 2021: 213). The first study was written based on Jung's theory as the principle of binary opposites is of prime significance in this theory. For Jung, existence itself depends on the principle of opposition, meaning that everything in this world has an antithesis and existence is inconceivable without such opposites. Thus, he explains, neither heat can be taken from the cold nor can the top be imagined without the bottom; Opposites either exist in their dual form or do not exist at all (Jung 1995: 167). To flesh out the function of psychic energy and human behaviors, Jung appropriated concepts from physics and introduced the three basic principles of opposites, equivalence, and entropy (Schultz and Ellen 2015: 94-97).

The importance of opposites in analytical psychology is such that some have called it the psychology of opposites, in which the process of self-realization is defined as the integration of opposing poles in an individual (Feist 2009: 146). In the first part of Al-Rikabi's novel, *Al-Sirah al-Zatiyeh*, this integration takes place through individuation, and the hero, symbolizing the intellectuals of the society, achieves self-discovery by matching himself and the anima (Warqa). The principle of opposites continues in the second part, *Al-Sirah al-Mutlaqiyeh*, through a dialogue between Mutlaq (symbolizing evil) and Al-Sayyid Noor (symbolizing good).

3. Summary of the second narrative, *Al-Sirah al-Mutlaqiyeh*

Al-Sirah al-Mutlaqiyeh is narrated in three parts, the first of which includes Mutlaq's characterization as an anti-hero. Longing for sovereignty over Dayrat al-Hashima and gaining respect among his people, Mutlaq travels to Balada in the west and, upon his return, brings seeds for farming in the lands of Dayrat al-Hashima. He sows seeds imported from Balada, and other people follow him. Al-Sayyid Noor warns him against it and points to the expectations that Balada [inhabitants] have in return for the donation of seeds. But Mutlaq does not pay attention to these words and continues to grow the seeds. A great storm arises and destroys the fields of

Mutlaq and other farmers, but it does not dissuade Mutlaq from continuing his relationship with Balada.

To promote his status, he decides to rebuild the old castle of the city, but he is opposed by Al-Sayyid Noor (Wen-chin Ouyang n.d: 7). Al-Sayyid Noor swears that if Mutlaq starts constructing the castle, he will desert Dayrat al-Hashima in protest. This threat does not shake Mutlaq's determination, and he continues the construction of the castle despite Al-Sayyid Noor's warnings. Al-Sayyid Noor leaves the village thereafter. Meanwhile, a young couple named Razqiyah and Mejbel seek refuge in Dayrat al-Hashima because their families have opposed their marriage. This issue is happily resolved thanks to Mutlaq's mediation. The couple marry after obtaining the consent of their families. Mejbel feels obliged to Mutlaq and, to compensate for his favor, decides to work for him as a servant and assistant. But it does not take long for the calamities that Al-Sayyid Noor had warned to take place. Mutlaq, who had traveled to Balada, contracts the plague. The disease soon spreads to Dayrat al-Hashima and infects all people. It kills many people in Dayrat al-Hashima, including Mutlaq's wife, Mejbel (Razqiyah's husband), and his child. Considering this disease to be the result of ignoring Al-Sayyid Noor's warning, Mutlaq takes refuge in him and expresses regret [over his actions]. Eventually, the plague disappears from the city and the situation returns to normal. Mutlaq and Razqiyah, who have both lost their spouses, get married.

The second part of *Al-Sirah al-Mutlaqiyeh* deals with the transformation of Mutlaq's behavior after the plague. Mutlaq begins to distribute [agricultural] products equally among people, which leads to livelihood prosperity in the village. However, Dayrat al-Hashima is exposed to natural disasters. This time famine strikes the village, but this problem is handled well thanks to Mutlaq's competent management; consequently, the people choose him as their leader. But this joy turns into sorrow when a message comes from Balada: In addition to demanding taxes from previous years, Balada envoys command a number of young people to take part in the impending war with a neighboring country, and they threaten Mutlaq and the villagers with their weapons.

After this incident, Mutlaq thinks of acquiring weapons; but they are only in the possession of thieves and bandits, such as Ziab Al-Moaidy, who live in groups on the other side of the southern waters of the village and make a living by rubbing people's property. Nevertheless, some strange events cause Mutlaq to achieve his dream, which is to be armed against Balada. This was accomplished through the marriage of his eldest son, Tarash, who had fallen in love with Al-Moaidy's daughter Fitne. This event led to the transfer of weapons to the village. Thus, Mutlaq and his sons learned to shoot and prepared to encounter Balada.

The third part of *Al-Sirah al-Mutlaqiyeh* introduces Mutlaq's sons and describes their personal lives. It also refers to Balada's conflict with the neighboring country. It turns out that an initial dispute has prompted the enemy to think of colonizing remote villages, including Dayrat al-Hashima. Of course, Al-Moaidy opposes this decision, but after the normalization of relations between the two hostile countries, Mutlaq and the leaders of Dayrat al-Hashima are accused of treason and espionage by Balada forces. The latter demand their surrender, but

Mutlaq refuses to give up. This resistance leads to his direct clash with Balada forces on the day of Dakat al-Midfae[1]. Finally, defending their personal interests, Mutlaq and his sons are killed in the castle, and only his eldest son Tarash survives. Afterward, Balada prohibits commemorating the Dakat al-Midfae event and the death of Mutlaq and his sons.

4. Campbel's model of the hero's journey

The American mythologist Joseph Campbell, following the views of Carl Gustav Jung, explored the journey of the archetypal hero in different cultures and provided a model for it in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. His model has many applications in analyzing literary texts (Campbell 2004: 28). First distinguishes myth from non-myth according to certain criteria, and then proceeds to categorize myths (Segal 1999: 135-148). Drawing on his comparative analysis of the myths of different nations, Campbell proposed the concept of monomyth (i.e., one myth). Subsequently, some scholars in this field, following his example, have presented similar models in the area of screenwriting. Some of the prominent figures in this regard include William Indick, John Truby, and Keith J. Cunningham. A major screenwriter inspired by Campbell's model is Christopher Vogler, whose twelve-step model of the hero's journey is of special importance. Volger's student Voytilla, in *Myth and the Movies*, examined fifty films based on this model.

The myth of the hero is the most common and well-known myth in the world. It differs greatly in details [across cultures] but all its versions have a similar structure (Henderson 1968: 101). Accordingly, the hero takes a risky journey to elevate his character in order to finally achieve individuation by cultivating integrity in his psyche; often such an effort is aimed at self-discovery and excellence over the course of the journey. The stages of the hero's journey have been addressed in different theories, such as those advanced by Campbell or Pearson.

According to Campbell, the hero's journey consists of three main stages: departure, initiation, and return. Each of these stages includes steps that appear in different stories according to the author's purpose. In the following, the three stages of Campbell's theory of hero's journey are described.

4.1 Departure

1. Call to adventure, 2. Refusal of the call, 3. Supernatural aid, 4. Crossing of the first threshold, 5. Belly of the whale.

4.2 Initiation

1. Road of trials, 2. Meeting with the goddess, 3. Woman as the temptress, 4. Atonement with the father, 5. Apotheosis, 6. The ultimate boon.

4.3 Return

1. Refusal of the return, 2. Magic flight, 3. Rescue from without, 4. Crossing of the return threshold, 5. Master of two worlds, 6. Freedom to live (Campbell 2004: 45-46).

Meanwhile, it is worth noting is that the hero's journey is a flexible and adaptable model and can be realized in a wide variety of ways. In other words, depending on the needs of each story, these stages can be deleted, repeated, or replaced (Voytilla 2013: 9). In fact, each narrator adapts the mythical pattern to his or her own cultural purpose or requirement, which is why the hero could assume "a thousand faces" (Vogler 2011: 16). Campbell calls these differences "local masks" on the faces of archetypes (Campbell 1988: 111). It could be argued that the same is true of *Al-Sirah al-Mutlaqiyeh*. As the author's do not focus on Mutlaq's birth and childhood, this staged is not addressed.
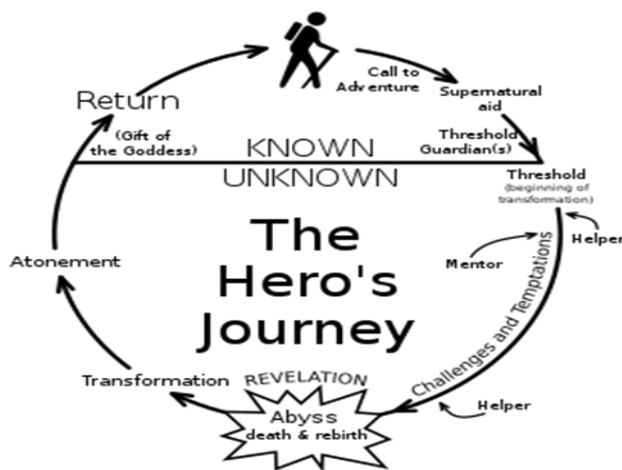

Figure 1: Campbell's Model of the Hero's Journey

5. Campbell's model in *Al-Sirah al-Mutlaqiyeh*

Analyzing *Al-Sirah al-Mutlaqiyeh* through Campbell's model reveals the two unsuccessful journeys of the hero, and a modification in the proposed stages of these journeys.

5.1 First journey
5.1.1 Departure

"This first stage of the mythological journey—which we have designated the "call to adventure" —signifies that destiny has summoned the hero and transferred his spiritual center of gravity from within the pale of his society to a zone unknown" (Campbell 2004: 53). In *Al-Sirah al-Mutlaqiyeh*, the call for adventure is manifested internally in Mutlaq through his desire to rule over people and make his name and reputation immortal. As an anti-hero in Al-Sirah al-Mutlaqiyeh, Mutlaq has a cognitive problem when he fails to differentiate between "self" and "ego", leading him to view egoism as a criterion of superiority and immortality. This is reflected in Al-Sayyid Noor's words when he explains the meaning of immortality to Mutlaq: "But your immortality lies in […] having a good reputation, not in submission to greed, which causes discord among people" (Al-Rikabi 2009: 79). Mutlaq has not

received the call to adventure from a good source; rather it is the source of evil that has prompted him to action. Hence, by choosing the wrong path, he turns into an anti-hero.

The hero's exceptional qualities make him outstanding and evoke a sense of dignity and greatness in his soul (Zaif 1997: 9). The term protagonist, originally Greek, refers to the main character of a story who is opposed to a rival called antagonist. Initially, these terms were used in ancient Greek theater for, respectively, the main actor and his opponent (Baldick 2001:112). Of course, antagonistic forces may be considerably internal and include the negative thoughts and beliefs of the protagonist himself. Heroism, at its root, is defined by acts of courage and valor in the face of uncertainty and risks (Mydin and Alosman 2022: 191). From the psychological point of view, the hero is equivalent to "self", and the archetype of the hero represents the quest for identity and integrity (Vogler 2011: 59). The hero's psychological changes can be examined from this angle. "The changes that the protagonist experiences during the course of the story lead to new social and psychological states" (Hashem Abdul and Abbas Kazem 2019: 901). The possibility of change has provided multiple form of heroism.

Vogler proposes two types of heroes. One behaves like a conventional hero, but is deeply skeptical and emotionally wounded and despised by society. The second type is related to a tragic hero; he may not be admirable and has flaws that prevent him from conquering his inner demons (Vogler 1999: 41-42). The anti-hero is not a completely negative character (villain) who is usually pitted against the protagonist in a novel or a play. Rather, he is the main character of the story, but lacks the noble characteristics of a central character or the traditional heroes of romance and epic (Baldick 2001: 112). It should be noted that anti-hero is different from the problematic hero. The anti-hero surrenders to his/her own perception of reality while the problematic hero never betrays in spite of having positive and negative personal traits (Hajali 2022: 284).

In ancient Arabic literature, the hero is observable in the epic poems of Jahili poets, where the poet focused on the heroic deeds of himself or his tribe and felt proud of them. Examples of such creation of the hero are observable in the poems of Antarah ibn Shaddad and Al-Shanfra. Nevertheless, nowadays Arabic literature is witnessing a different kind of hero, i.e., anti-hero. "Antiheroes", Nuruddin maintains, "appear in neutral, negative, defeated, ridiculous forms in literary texts" (2010 255). Primary examples include, among others, Hassanin in Naguib Mahfouz's *The Beginning and the End*, Reza Shavash in Bashir Mufti's *Dumiya Al-Anar*, and the young man in Bahaa Taher's *Al-Khotuba*. Likewise, in Abdel Khaliq al-Rikabi's oeuvre the anti-hero can be observed in characters like Nadeem in *Ma-lam Tamsassoh al-Nar* and Mutlaq in *Seventh Day of Creation*, who is not expected to achieve his goals. When opposed to Al-Sayyid Noor, Mutlaq resembles an antagonist who is not capable of achieving self-discovery. According to what has been discussed, heroes and anti-heroes are in major cases male in terms of gender. Female characters have a meager presence as mythological heroes in Arabic stories. In contemporary literature, also, the characterization of female heroes capable of performing heroic actions similar to those of male characters is rare among writers.

Even today, "women are presented as inferior to men. They can't rival male heroes both in terms of quality and quantity" (Qorbani and Mikaili 2023:105). Writers should pay special attention to this problem.

Refusal of the call

Declining the call [to adventure] is an essential step that expresses the dangers facing the hero. Although an enthusiastic or adventurous hero may not enter the stage of refusal, his allies or the threshold's guards' express fears and dangers (Voytilla 2013: 11). In the second story, evil temptations trigger Mutlaq to travel to Balada. The evil motives of Mutlaq are exposed by Al-Sayyid Noor, who tells Mutlaq, "The devil has tempted you (Al-Rikabi 2009: 80). Since evil temptations often work through ornate [but hollow] promises, it is expected that people will succumb to them.

Helper

Before starting the journey, the hero needs someone to guide him and teach him how to go through the dangerous stages of the journey. In general, those who respond positively to the call are confronted with a supportive creature (usually appearing in the guise of an ugly old woman or man) who provides them with a spell against the demonic forces (Campbell 2004: 75). The character of sage is a symbol of wisdom and universal knowledge (Schedel 2009: 10); in Jung's words, he is a symbolic manifestation of the ideal psyche with a richer quality and provides a force that the "self" lacks (Jung 2007: 164).

The sage is an emblem of unconscious spirituality (Mozafari 2019: 590). In fact, the wise old man appears when only deep auspicious thoughts and reflections can get the hero out of his predicament. Because the hero himself cannot independently accomplish it for internal and external reasons, the necessary knowledge to compensate for this shortcoming is personified as a sagacious old man who rushes to his help (Guerin, Lieber, Morgan and Willingham 2005: 188). In *The Seventh Day of Creation*, Mutlaq makes a mistake at the beginning of the path and prefers evil over goodness and truth; thereafter, Al-Sayyid Noor enters the scene as a wise old man and warns him of the consequences of this wrong choice. By choosing the evil, Mutlaq takes on the role of an anti-hero in the story, which highlights the role of Al-Sayyid Noor as a helper in making Mutlaq understand the results of his wrong action. It involves a dialogue between Al-Sayyid Noor (representing goodness) and Mutlaq (representing evil), whereby the principle of opposites is illustrated.

To justify his decision, Mutlaq thinks his giving some gifts to Balada [inhabitants] has been an effective measure: "Had it not been for the gifts that I used to bring to the officials here, they would not have allowed [me] to cultivate this land" (Al-Rikabi 2009: 83). He points to the impact of growing imported seeds on the livelihood of the villagers: "The result will be much better than living as a shepherd and hunter, which would provide us with only a piece of bread" (Ibid.).

Al-Sayyid Noor, on the other hand, considers these seeds as the starting point for the colonization of Dayrat al-Hashima by Balada: "Do you think they [Balada people] do all these things for free?" (Ibid.).

Crossing of the first threshold

Crossing the threshold means that the hero eventually commits himself to going on the journey. He is now ready to cross the gateway that separates the ordinary world from the special world (Voytilla 2013: 12). The threshold in *Al-Sirah al-Mutlaqiyeh* is symbolically introduced to the reader as a place, when Mutlaq crosses the desert between Dayrat al-Hashima and Balada. The archetype of desert is a symbol of death and suggests a barren state or spiritual dearth (Payendeh 2019: 325). In *Al-Sirah al-Mutlaqiyeh*, Mutlaq's passage through this desert stands for the victory of ignorance over awareness, and is considered the opposite of moving toward self-discovery.

Belly of the whale

The heroes who go on the journey will pass through unknown places such as desert, forest, sea, darkness, etc. (which are unknown areas of the unconscious); indeed, they are swallowed by the unknown and appear to die, a state which Campbell refers to as the belly of the whale (Campbell 2004: 83). The whale represents the power of life that has been captured in the unconscious (Campbell 1998: 222). Having crossed the desert, which is a symbol of destruction, Mutlaq is absorbed by Balada. Due to the gifts he brings to Balada, Mutlaq is enslaved by evil, bonds with this inauspicious source, and becomes part of it. This connection with the source of evil is the beginning of misery and misfortune for Dayrat al-Hashima. Al-Sayyid Noor had thus warned, "Misfortunes will strike this land, which has experienced nothing but safety and peace" (Al-Rikabi 2009: 83).

5.1.2 Initiation

Initiation (the rite of passage) is accompanied by severe trials that the hero should overcome. Many archetypes narrate the hero's physical and mental growth and development: the hero undergoes difficult tests to pass childlike innocence and enter the adult world (Payendeh 2019: 328). This stage is associated with grueling tests for the heroes who have chosen the right path. Passing these tests will help the hero achieve self-discovery. Given that Mutlaq's antagonistic tendencies have led him astray as an anti-hero, the tests of this stage are given to correct his chosen path.

Mutlaq's failure to attend to the consequences of planting imported seeds will bring disaster to Dayrat al-Hashima. Trials and calamities begin with a great storm that destroys all crops, but it does not change Mutlaq's behavior. Conversely, it makes him more determined to associate more with Balada people: "But Mutlaq began as if he were condemned to a fate that he was unable to defeat, and soon he returned to his old way of life" (Al-Rikabi 2009:91).

Opposition between Al-Sayyid Noor and Mutlaq resurfaces over the reconstruction of the castle of Dayrat al-Hashima. Al-Sayyid Noor considers it a starting point for foreign interference in the affairs of the village and warns Mutlaq

of its outcomes ("Beware of doing this!") (Al-Rikabi 2009: 92). This time, too, Mutlaq attempts to justify his decision: "My intention is to protect my family from another flood" (Ibid.). But in reality, he has prepared the castle for foreign guests, and describes it as reasonable: "I have agreed with the officials to build the castle, because my hut is not worthy of receiving them when they come to me as guests" (Al-Rikabi 2009: 93).

Al-Sayyid Noor, however, does not approve of the reconstruction of the castle: "The castle will be disastrous for us" (Al-Rikabi 2009: 93). Eventually, noticing the ineffectiveness of his words and actions, the helper leaves the scene: "I'll leave you the day you put the first bricks to build your castle!" (Al-Rikabi 2009: 94).

The dispute between Mutlaq and Al-Sayyid Noor regarding the reconstruction of the castle is intensified; this encounter serves as part of the author's scheme for establishing a binary opposition and driving the narrative forward (Fordham 1995 :16).

 Al-Sayyid Noor's desertion [of the village] heralds a new phase of disasters. This time the plague afflicts the villagers, and as Al-Sayyid Noor had warned, its origin goes back to Balada. Indeed, Mutlaq carries the disease upon his return from Balada. The infectious disease takes a heavy toll on the village, and once again the evil character of Balada is demonstrated: "At first it was rumored that something serious had happened in Balada" (Al-Rikabi 2009: 103). Many people died in Dayrat al-Hashima [because of the plague]: "The dead had multiplied such that their families could hardly get shrouds... and death became a common thing" (Al-Rikabi 2009: 111).

Atonement with the father
Calamities occur sometimes to uplift the spiritual life of an individual and sometimes to remove the veil of ignorance and cleanse his/her sins. Mutlaq's personal life changes after the plague. He realizes his wrong doing and takes refuge in Al-Sayyid Noor and repents: "So Mutlaq swore that he would begin his repentance by severing his relationship with the officials of Balada and staying in this spot [Dayrat al-Hashima] to help orphans and widows by providing them with the stored goods and grains (Al-Rikabi 2009: 208).

Atonement with the father is in reality Mutlaq's reconciliation with his true self. After overcoming the calamities, he wakes up and reconciles with his true self.

Meeting with the goddess
Once all the obstacles are surmounted, there comes the time for the mystical marriage of the victorious hero with "the queen of the world" (Campbell 2004: 100). Campbell explains, "The mystical marriage with the queen goddess of the world represents the hero's total mastery of life; for the woman is life, the hero its knower and master" (Ibid 111). Jung believes the lady for whom the gentleman undertakes heroic deeds is the embodiment of his feminine element (Jung 2007: 283). In fact, the hero symbolizes one's personal conscious that must struggle with the demonic

forces within the unconscious in order to know the feminine element of his psyche (Atoni 2011: 247).

Woman as the temptress
After repentance, Mutlaq tries to make up for his mistakes. He declares the proof of his repentance thus: "I would have no peace until I atoned for that sin of mine, and I started that by marrying a widow who had no breadwinner in this world but me" (Al-Rikabi 2009: 207).

The mythical face of woman is associated with complexity and contradiction. The ideal mother, its ancient form, has a dual personality in Jung's analytical psychology. The negative aspect of the ideal mother could be related to secret objects or the world of the dead (Jung 1989: 27; Jung, Read, Fordham, Adler and Hull 1956: 170-171). There is another reason for this duality, which goes back to the existence of animus in the female psyche. The negative aspect of this masculine psyche, which is equivalent to self-awareness, has been manifested in modern times in the form of evil and deadly characters such as Lilith, the gravedigger, and the witch, while it's positive and creative part occurs in the form of goddesses such as Hestia, Daena, Demeter, and Anahita (Taraghi 2007: 15-16). This duality is also evident in the character Razqiyah, whose positive characteristics are expressed as follows: "It did not take long when a woman named Razqiyah became the target of envy by the women, she was famous not only for her extraordinary beauty, but also for her awareness of all female issues" (Al-Rakabi 2009: 94-95). However, she also shows some negative attributes: "She usually went around the houses with an uncovered face, was not shy when talking to men, left her charms everywhere, and aroused men's desire" (Al-Rikabi 2009: 94-95).

According to Jung, real opposites are never disproportionate, because then they could not be united (Jung 1995: 159). The presence of negative attributes in Mutlaq and Razqiyah has made them suited to one another and has created an attraction between them in the direction of unity.

Apotheosis
Apotheosis is one of the major themes of the myth of the hero (Leeming 2000: 84). At the end of the journey, after passing various tests and overcoming all difficulties and barriers, the hero proves that he has stepped beyond the human sphere and has become a demigod (Warner 2008: 18). After the plague, a famine struck the village, and Mutlaq acted as the savior of his people by handling the problems brought to Dayrat al-Hashima: "He would visit homes and huts, help the needy, take care of the sick, [and] accompany the dead to their final resting place. He had abandoned his old ambitions for wealth, influence, and fame" (Al-Rikabi 2009: 211).

Ultimate boon
Having made positive changes in his conduct, Mutlaq became well-known for his virtuous actions ("Mutlaq got famous everywhere. So everyone [...] came to see him" (Al-Rikabi 2009: 102). He also gained considerable power: "He became the undisputed head of the region" (Ibid.), and therefore people choose him as their

leader: "So the people all gathered around him, and they considered him their head; Mutlaq perceived their desire that he should be their leader" (Al-Rakabi 2009: 213).

5.1.3 Return
At this stage, the hero realizes that he has to pass the special world and return to the ordinary world, but still has to undergo some trials (Vogler 2011: 32). Before returning to the ordinary world, the hero should be cleansed so that the change in his character can be shown through his behavior or appearance (Vogler 2011: 263). The main purpose of this stage is that the hero has to share with other people his skills as well as the lessons he has received in his mythical journey (Pearson 2011: 145). The real hero returns with an elixir to share it with others or to terminate the predicament of his homeland. The elixir is the result of the hero's journey, and it may be treasure, a magic potion, love, knowledge, or just the experience of surviving the special world (Voytilla 2013: 14). It may also be the experience of love, freedom, wisdom, or just a worthy story to tell (Vogler 2011: 33-34). If the hero does not bring anything from his journey, he has to repeat the adventure (Ibid.).

5.2 The second journey
At the end of the first journey, Mutlaq succeeds in moderating the antagonistic forces within himself. He demonstrates this change in character by compensating for his mistakes, but he fails to achieve the main goal of the journey, which was to realize his national identify; consequently, the steps of Campbell's model are repeated for him. The departure is now accompanied with a second invitation from Balada ("But the power with which Mutlaq cut off his relationship did not forget him" (Al-Rikabi 2009: 218). Mutlaq does not accept Balada's invitation and, as a result, is threatened: "We will come back to visit you after a week, so you should have prepared both some of what you owe, as well as a number of the youth of your village, or else ..." (Al-Rikabi 2009: 222).

As predicted by Al-Sayyid Noor, the central government [of Balada] presented its demands in return for the seeds donated through its envoys to Dayrat al-Hashima. However, Mutlaq ignored Balada's requests and tried to stand up to Balada forces, which necessitated acquiring as much weapons as possible.

The story of how a hero acquires weapon is one of the recurring themes of epics around the world, and it can be described as the motif of the magic weapon (Sarkarati 1999: 363). In the context of Al-Rikabi's novel, the weapon was only in the possession of Ziab Al-Moaidy, who was known for rubbing people's property. In the meantime, Tarash, Mutlaq's son, falls in love with the daughter of Ziab Al-Moaidy, and thanks to their marriage, Mutlaq and his family acquire weapons: "Mutlaq was swiftly supported by his armed children thanks to the weapons of Ziab and his men" (Al-Rikabi 2009: 342).

After they are so equipped, the idea of an armed confrontation with Balada gains momentum; eventually, Dayrat al-Hashima and Balada engage in a battle on the day of Dakat al-Midfae. This incident leads to the death of Mutlaq and all his sons, except Taresh.

6. Conclusion

As noted, depending on the writer's choice and the requirements of a given narrative, some components of Campbell's model of the journey of the hero might be absent. The archetypal analysis of the second story of *The Seventh Day of Creation* (*Al-Sirah al-Mutlaqiyeh*) based on Campbell's model showed that the hero, Mutlaq, could not successfully pass all the stages of his quest for self-discovery. He missed both opportunities to realize his national identity and remained in the historical unconscious of his people as a symbol of anti-hero, a head of state who prefers individual and ethnic interests to national interests.

If the principle of opposites in analytic psychology is assumed to be necessary for perfection, it could be asserted that Al-Rikabi has inserted it in his novel by adding *Al-Sirah al-Zatiyeh* to *Al-Sirah al-Mutlaqiyeh*. Through infusing the structure of his narrative by this principle, the novelist has been able to create a driving force for the story. The history of a nation cannot be changed and historians only narrate it, but what distinguishes the accounts of literary writers is that they imaginatively mix and recreate these historical events and present us with an ideal representation. Thus, by deploying the self as a hero in the first story and positing that success and victory are tied to self-discovery, Abdel Khaliq al-Rikabi points to a bipolar space that leads toward perfection. Furthermore, considering *Al-Sirah al-Mutlaqiyeh* as the collective unconscious of a nation and *Al-Sirah al-Zatiyeh* as the personal conscious, we may conclude that [Al-Rikabi suggests] the ground for social progress and prosperity is laid by creating a balance between the collective conscious and unconscious of a nation.

Figure 2: Structure of *the Seventh Day of Creation* Based on the Principle of Opposites

Abdollah Hosseini (PhD) Associate Professor – Corresponding Author
Department of Arabic language and literature,
Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran
ORCID Number: 0000-0002-3960-0690
dr.abd.hoseini@khu.ac.ir

Zahra Izadi: PhD Candidate
Department of Arabic language and literature,
Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran
ORCID Number: 0000-0003-3194-7371
Email: izadiii.79@gmail.com

Endnote
1. The incident of Dakat al-Midfae refers to the day when al-Mutlaq and his sons and allies clashed with Balada forces and all of them were killed. (Al-Rikabi 1986:7-14).

References

Ahmad, Abdul Elah Ahmad. (1998). 'Artistic awareness in contemporary Iraqi novels and the cultural heritage in the narrative of *The Seven Days of Creation* by Abd al-Khaliq al-Rikabi'. *Fosoul*, 16(4):112-129.

Al-Rikabi, Abd al-Khaliq. (1986). *Al-Rawouq*. Baghdad: Dar Al-Shawoun Al-Thaqafiya Al-Ammah.

Al-Rikabi, Abd al-Khaliq. (2009).*The Seven Days of Creation*. Lebanon: Arab Foundation for Studies and Publishing.

Al-Rikabi, Abd al-Khaliq. (2016). *Atras Al-Kalam*. Tehran: Ney Publications.

Atoni, Behrooz. (2011). 'The unveiling of the hero in mythical epics'. *Literary Research,* 16: 81-105 [in Persian].

Campbell, Joseph (1988). *Historical Atlas of World Mythology*. Vol. 2. New York: Alfred van der Marck Editions.

Campbell, Joseph. (1998).*The Power of Myth*. New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.

Campbell, Joseph. (2004). *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. Princeton University Press.

Campbell, Joseph. (2011). *The Masks of God: Primitive Mythology*. London: Souvenir Press.

Feist, Jess and Gregory J. Feist. (2009). *Personality Theories*. New York: McGraw-Hill Education.

Fordham, Frida. (1995). *An Introduction to Jungian Psychology*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Frazer, James. (2017). *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*. New Jersey: Start Publishing LLC.

Guerin, Wilfred, Earl Lieber, Lee Morgan and John R. Willingham. (2005). *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature*. New York: Oxford University Press.

 Hajali , Leili. (2022). **'**Representations of the problematic hero in the Algerian short story'. *Journal of Faslo el-khitab*, 11(2): 281-292.

Hasanpour, Hiva, Azadeh Eslami and Mohammad hasan Hasanzadeniri. (2020). 'The analysis of the twin myths in Serdar Ozkan's The Missing Rose'. *Research in Contemporary World Literature*, 25(2): 414-428 [in Persian].

Hashem Abdul, Nabras and Faid Abbas Kazem. (2019). 'The psychological transformations of the character of the hero in the expressive theatrical text'. *Basic Education College Magazine for Educational and Humanities Sciences*, 42: 898-919.

Henderson, Joseph L. (1968). 'Ancient myth and modern man'. In C. G. Jung (ed.), *Man and His Symbols*, 120-124. New York: Dell.

Hosseini, Abdollah, Soghra Falahati and Zahra Izadi. (2021). 'Individuation in *The Seventh Day of Creation*: A Jungian analysis'. *International Journal of Arabic-English Studies*, 21(2): 119-216.

Jung, Carl Gustav. (1989). *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*. London: Routledge.

Jung, Carl Gustav. (1995).*On the Nature of the Psyche*. London: Ark Paperbacks.

Jung, Carl Gustav. (2007). *Man and His Symbols*. London: Pan Books.

Jung, Carl Gustav, Herbert Read, Michael Fordham, Gerhard Adler and Richard Francis Carrington Hull. (1956).*The Collected Works of C. G. Jung: Symbols of Transformation*. London: Routledge.

Karim Ati, Hassan. (2012).*The Effect of Time on the Seven Days of Creation.* Beirut: The Arab Foundation for Studies and Publication.

Leeming, David Adams. (2000). *Mythology: The Voyage of the Hero*. 2nd ed. New York: Harper Collins.

Mozaffari, Soolmaz. (2019). 'Archetypal heroic journey in Bahram Sadeghi's *Malakut'*. *Research in Contemporary World Literature*, 24(2): 583-610 [in Persian].

Mydin, Raihanah and M. Ikbal M. Alosman. (2022). 'Post-Heroic portrayal of war in Kevin Powers' The Yellow Birds'. *Jordan Journal of Modern Languages and Literatures*, 14(1): 189-202.

Nuruddin, Blaz. (2010). 'Heroes and anti-heroes'. *Articles Scientifiques* Et Publications (ASJP).

Payendeh, Hossein. (2019). *Literary Theory and Criticism*. Tehran: Samt.

Pearson, C, (2011)*, Inner Hero*, Tehran, Peykan [In Persian].

Qorbani Madavani, Zahra and Masoumeh Mikaili. (2023). 'Female heroism in the Blue-Collar Girl'. *Studies in Arabic Narratology*, 4(7): 99-119.

Sarkarati, Bahman. (1999). *Hunted Shadows*. Tehran: Qatreh [in Persian].

Schedel, Andre. (2009). *Introduction to One Thousand and One Nights.* Tehran: Markaz [in Persian].

Schultz, Duane P and Sydney Ellen Schultz. (2015). *Theories of Personality*. New York: Princeton.

Segal, Robert A. (1999). *Theorizing about Myth.* Amherst: University of Massachusetts.

Shahab Ahmad, Sami. (2016). *The Narration of the Seven Days of the Creation.* Oman: Dar Al-Hamed for Publishing and Distribution.

Taraghi, Goli. (2007). *The Great Lady of the Universe*. Tehran: Niloufar [in Persian].

Vogler, Christopher. (1999). *The Writer's Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers*. London: MacMillan.

Vogler, Christopher. (2011). *The Writer's Journey Mythic Structure for Storytellers and Screenwriters*. California: Michael Wiese Productions.

Voytilla, Stewart. (2013). *Myth and the Movies: Discovering the Myth Structure of 50 Unforgettable Films*. California: Michael Wiese Productions.

Warner, Rex. (2008 [1970]). *Encyclopedia of World Mythology*. London: Peerage Books.

Wen-chin, Ouyang. (N.D). 'Abd al –Khaliq –al-Rikabi'. *School of oriental and African studies* University of London.

Zaif, Shawqi. (1997). *Al-Batal in Arabic Poetry*. Cairo: Dar Al-Ma'arif.