

The Monomyth or the Hero's Journey in William Faulkner's Screenplays: *The Last Slaver* and *Drums Along the Mohawk*

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Abstract—Numerous critical works have dealt with the fiction of William Faulkner. However, little research has been done about his significant work for the screen. Most studies that have dealt with Faulkner's screenplays focus on comparing between the fiction and the screenplays detecting especially how cinematic elements have found their way into the author's works of literature. Hence, this article explores two of Faulkner's 1930s screenplays, looking at the narrative structures of the scripts, seeking to find out to what extent they are consistent with the structure of the monomyth, the concept introduced by Joseph Campbell. Moreover, the study depicts the main stages of the monomyth, or the hero's journey, as it traces the main protagonist's path from the start of his quest till he reaches the end of his adventure and goes through the main trials he has to experience. By applying Campbell's theory of the mythological hero's journey and referring to Carl Jung's ideas on the process of individuation, the study exhibits the psychological development of the main protagonists through the different phases of the monomyth and presents their final transformation and full growth as a result of the tests they have undertaken throughout the journey.

Index Terms—William Faulkner, Joseph Campbell, monomyth, screenplay

I. INTRODUCTION

William Faulkner's literary career has been so successful that it has overshadowed his work in the film industry. "His screenwriting career, sustained over four accumulative years between 1932 and 1955, was thought to have distracted him from his real work, or at best, merely subsidized it" (Gleeson-White, 2015, p. 194). From the 1930s to the 1950s, Faulkner wrote for different big studios like Twentieth Century Fox, Warner Brothers, and Colombia Pictures. Perhaps not surprisingly, most of the screenplays Faulkner has written deal with themes related to the South and slavery as well as history. His assignment to several film projects for Twentieth Century Fox makes him a "professional Southerner"; an ambassador of the Southern culture to the North (Gleeson-White, 2017, p. 20).

Film art, unlike other types of art, is a totally different world where the rules are unlike any other. Once in Hollywood, Faulkner has no longer the freedom to write as he pleases especially when it comes to structure and plot. Unlike his complex fiction, Faulkner's screenplays embody a very simple, linear plot. "A Hollywood screenplay is generally written to order. It is by its nature formulaic and collaborative, focusing on externals such as plot and action, and at the end of the day, it has to make way for the proper work, that is film" (Gleeson-White, 2017, p. 16) or as further explained by Korte and Schneider (2000):

Screenwriting is a blend of dramatic, narrative and film-conscious writing. The generic affinity of the film script to the dramatic text is apparent not only in the English word 'screenplay'. It is also immediately obvious when one looks at a typical film script page with its division into dialogue text and non-dialogue directions or scene text. (p. 98)

Thus, rarely does a Faulkner screenplay offer this playful experience that one may get from the dizzying twists and fragmented plots found in his novels, as explained by Solomon (2017): "we are confronted with a mostly recognizable formula, a combination of scene text that provides the setting and direction for the narrative, and a set of character names that precede lines of spoken dialogue" (p. 18), making it a perfect commercial screenplay ready to be shot. But this does not in any way makes his screenplays of little value. In fact, after more than twenty years spent in the movie industry writing for different studios, it is no surprise that many screenwriting techniques found their way into Faulkner's literary works mainly montage among others, making his works as one may call it 'cinematic.' Though his work for the cinema is underestimated, it is nonetheless an important aspect of the writer's canon that is worth studying, particularly in the present time where genre boundaries are not as strict as before.

It is no secret that drama in ancient times has been written to be performed, yet nowadays it is studied as pure literature, as are the works of Shakespeare, Marlow, or Virgil, for example. Countless critical works are published in the area, but when it comes to screenwriting and screenplays, the number of works related to the subject is very limited and

little importance is given to this area of research even when prominent figures of literature like William Faulkner are part of this cinematic experience. Most critics saw in the integration of well-known writers into Hollywood in the first half of the twentieth century as a waste of their talent, since cinema is undervalued and is in no way equal to art; literature in particular. The screenplay is seen as inferior to the novel or the play and is therefore rarely considered as a text or not at all. Though his scripts are not as imposing as his fiction, Faulkner is not far from doing what his prior occupation attests, which is writing prose, and therefore, there is no doubt that his screenplays are, after all, pieces of literature that deserve to be read and examined as much as any other literary genre. In explaining the importance of the screenplay in relation to the original text, Boozer (2008) states: "The composition of the screenplay illuminates the evolution of ideas that will determine the film production's relationship to its source text" (p. 1). Therefore, it is important to study Faulkner from this perspective by going deep into two of his cinematic canon, or let's say scripts, to get a better understanding of Faulkner the screenwriter, and screenwriting as a field.

Two screenplays are at the heart of this study. Both take place in two main historical periods of the history of the United States. It is a well-known fact that historical themes are very common in Faulkner's fiction as well as slavery and racism. The first screenplay is entitled *The Last Slaver* (1936). It is an adaptation of George S. King's *The Last Slaver* (1933), which is "a fictional account of the *Wanderer*, the last American slave ship to make the voyage between West Africa and Cuba in 1858, long after the 1807 Act Prohibiting Importation of Slaves" (Gleeson-White, 2017, p. 221). Jim Lovett and his crew risk their heads as they work illegally in the slave trade on the only slave ship still working in the business. After its last voyage to Africa and landing in Virginia with a new shipment of slaves, Lovett meets and marries Nancy Marlowe. This makes him decide to stop the slave trade and think of starting a new life in Jamaica. He therefore, asks his right-hand man Jack Thompson to get rid of the crew and recruit new men who have nothing to do with the trade. After spending two months on land, Lovett returns to the ship with Nancy only to find the old crew still working on the ship and a mutiny is about to start. The ship is hijacked and is taken to Africa.

The second screenplay is *Drums Along the Mohawk* (1937) which is based on Walter D. Edmonds's novel of the same title (1936). The script takes place during the War of Independence. Recently married, Gilbert and Lana Martin embark on a frontier life and settle on a farm in the Mohawk Valley in New York, which is populated by Indians. The War of Independence is raging, and its procession of horror does not take long to strike the young couple. The British Royalists (the Tories), represented by Caldwell, make use of the Cherokee Indians to set the Valley on fire and drive out the American settlers from the land. The Martins' farm is the first to be burnt. Dispossessed, the couple take refuge in Fort Schuyler, in the nearby neighbourhood where they find work on the farm of Mrs. McKlennar, a wealthy widow. After a period of peace, the colonists learn of the imminent attack by the Indians, whereupon a militia is set up. The Indian attack is repelled, yet more than half of the militia is killed, and their leader, General Herkimer, dies as a result of his injuries. Gilbert is wounded in the battle and is brought back to the farm to recover. Meanwhile, Lana gives birth to a son. After years of wars, destruction, and reconstruction, the Continental army and the farmers finally defeat the Tories, and the Valley is declared safe, prompting the emergence of the United States of America, independent from the British crown.

This article, therefore, seeks to explore the quest narrative in both screenplays. They have been selected because they seem to embody a hero's journey within their lines. The protagonists go on a journey either willingly or are forced into it and find themselves in the midst of trials and obstacles they have to experience and overcome throughout their quest. This kind of linear plot is not common with Faulkner, who is acquainted with complex, non-linear plots and modernist experimentation, which goes opposite the cinema of the time; that is, Faulkner's screenplays are "seldom recognizably 'Faulknerian' in the popular understanding of what constitute the author's usual style and storytelling approach" (Bartunek, 2017, p. 99). In fact, Hollywood directors adopted a myth-based framework, which Joseph Campbell later called the monomyth, to write their screenplays. Campbell's structure of the monomyth has been widely used in film making and screenwriting throughout most of the twentieth century. Although the monomyth structure was first coined in Campbell's book, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, in 1949, it is undeniably used in the beginnings of cinema and the early decades of the twentieth century by screenwriters and directors. Thus, it can be considered the ultimate guide for writing narratives.

Mythical and supernatural heroes are at the heart of the monomythical quest, as we may find them in folktales, legends, or medieval romances. Science-fiction works also epitomize a hero's journey, as it can be seen in the 1970s *Star Wars* Saga, for example. Palumbo (2004) refers to Alfred Bester's *The Stars My Destination* (1956) as being the first science-fiction novel "to use the monomyth so extensively as its underlying plot structure" (p. 334). Gully Foyle, the anti-hero, is depicted as holding most of the characteristics of the monomythic hero, since he undergoes almost all the trials in the adventure's three stages, in addition to his multiple death-and-rebirth experiences.

Far from mythical and supernatural heroes, modern heroes are those who encounter non-supernatural but more common mishaps, such as going into war or fleeing a difficult situation or danger in order to reach a safe haven. Philips (1975) examines Conrad's *The Secret Sharer*, Lawrence's *The Horse Dealer's Daughter*, and Yeats's *Sailing to Byzantium* through the critical system of the monomyth. The main characters stand at the threshold of adventure and are seen to undergo an individual spiritual transformation throughout the whole works.

Raj and Kumar's *The Hero at a Thousand Faces: Kurt Vonnegut's Slaughterhouse Five as Anti-Monomyth* (2020) attempts a close reading of Vonnegut's work using Campbell's narrative model structure. The article extracts the hidden

quest narrative from its non-linear structure following the stages of the monomyth. Thus, the book portrays Billy's journey toward healing and self-discovery. However, "The Vonnegutian hero, a passionate individual, senses that the call for adventure is false (war, religious fanaticism, unethical scientific pursuit, political corruption, etc.), feels the futility of his quest, devotes himself to mend the wrongs either or not committed by him, often descends into insanity and ends up a changed person" (Raj & Kumar, 2020, p. 3). This makes him, according to Raj and Kumar (2020), a flawed hero unlike the eulogized Campbell's heroes, and therefore *Slaughterhouse Five* can be looked at as a monomyth mockery or an anti-monomyth (p. 13).

Moreover, Lang and Trimble (1988) discuss American Monomyth in their article entitled, *Whatever Happened to the Man of Tomorrow? An Examination of the American Monomyth and the Comic Book Superhero*. In this case, the American monomyth, unlike the classical one, "secularizes Judeo-Christian ideals by combining the selfless individual who sacrifices himself for others and the zealous crusader who destroys evil" (Lang & Trimble, 1988, p. 158). The hero here is represented by figures like Superman and Batman.

Interestingly enough and from critic Hamblin's perspective (2004), although Faulkner had "little direct involvement with the theories of Freud, Jung, or any other mythic or archetypal critics except Eliot, he clearly identified with the basic principles of the mythic approach" (p. 5); that is, he is in a way familiar with the structure of the monomyth or the mythic approach as he employs it in his fiction. This is clearly seen through his invention of the mythical world of Yoknapatawpha and his depiction of the rise and fall of such families as the Compsons, Sutpen, and the McCaslin. Moreover, Hamblin (2004) refers to Faulkner's use of the initiation motif and how the concepts of innocence and experience are opposed in his fiction. This opposition is mainly presented in the person of Quentin, as "childhood innocence gives way to the beginnings of mature perception and understanding. Quentin's initiation thus serves to bridge the opposing worlds of innocence and awareness and, further, to foreshadow the impending fate of the other children" (p. 9-10).

Thus, two main theories will be of use in this work. Besides Campbell's myth-based framework on which the study is mainly based, Carl Jung's individuation process will be referred to. Since the main protagonists experience a transition from a stage of innocence and inexperience to a stage of growth and maturity, Jung's theory will definitely add to the understanding of the characters' development and persona.

II. DISCUSSION

Stages of the Monomyth

While analyzing the myths of various world cultures, Campbell came to the conclusion that these stories shared similarities and identified a story-line structure which he believed to be universal for hero-myths. This story-line structure, which he calls the monomyth or the story of the hero's journey, "supplies the single pattern that undergirds all mythic structures" (Hamblin, 2004, p. 4). Thus "the mythic writer or critic is primarily concerned with two principal aspects of life and literature: universality and repetition. The two characteristics are mutually dependent: the same are universally true, and one knows that they are true because they are repeated in all times and places" (Hamblin, 2004, p. 5). Therefore, the monomyth goes through three main stages: separation, initiation, and return. Each stage with its own sub-stages.

A. Separation/ Departure

In terms of the monomyth, in *The Last Slaver* (1936), Jim Lovett is not ready for trouble. After returning from his voyage from Africa and spending two months in Norfolk, Virginia, he is about to experience a new adventure as he finds himself unwillingly going back to Africa. It is until almost the middle of the tale that his adventure starts. The refusal of the call is embodied in his unwillingness to surrender to the demands of his crew, who want to pursue the lucrative slave trade. Lovett's first step toward maturation comes when he finally decides to discharge the crew and recruit new members that have nothing to do with the slave trade:

LOVETT:

Thompson, I want you to get rid of the crew – discharge 'em all – give 'em a bonus of half a share each and tell 'em goodbye.

(Faulkner, 1936/2017, 137. 60)¹

His marriage to Nancy proves to be a turning point in his life as he decides to change his profession and start a new life on a farm in Jamaica. At this point, the stage of the goddess comes before the start of the adventure, as Nancy brings change and growth to Jim and, therefore, is seen as the goddess who is the reason for his transformative and transcendent love: "The ultimate adventure, when all the barriers and ogres have been overcome, is commonly represented as a mystical marriage of the triumphant hero-soul with the Queen Goddess of the world... at the utter most edge of the earth... or within the darkness of the deepest chamber of the heart" (Campbell 1949/2004, p. 100). It is important to look at this aspect from this perspective. There is an exception here. Though this sub-stage comes in the initiation stage, meeting the goddess comes before starting the adventure, as Nancy brings an important change to the state of mind of Lovett, in addition to being the trigger for the upcoming events.

¹ Scene 137 Page 60

After surrendering to the demands of his crew and becoming a hostage in his own ship, Lovett's journey towards the unknown begins, and he is about to experience a bunch of trials along the way. Once the first threshold is crossed, Lovett braves death or the approximation of death: "The Crossing of the first threshold is a form of self-annihilation instead of passing outward, beyond the confines of the visible world, the hero goes inward, to be born again" (Campbell 1949/2004, p. 84).

On the other hand, unlike Lovett, Gilbert and Lana Martin, in *Drums Along the Mohawk* (1937), stand at the threshold of adventure. The screenplay opens with the Martins' wedding in Albany, far from the political conflicts of the Revolution, and their preparations for the start of their frontier life. They are about to separate from the civil world, which we are told nothing about, and to which they have been accustomed all their lives till this very moment, before departing to the world of adventures. The reader learns about the newlyweds' next step through the conversation between Lana's parents at the beginning of the text, after the bride has gone hurrying upstairs:

THE WOMAN

Let her laugh while she can. She may not feel like laughing
this time next year, up there in the wilderness.

THE MAN

Nonesense, woman! The wilderness is safe. None of the Six Nations can make war on us unless the others agree. And the Reverend Kirkland to keep the Oneidas quiet and Sir John Johnson giving his parole not to excite the Mohawks and Senecas – this war will be settled back among the cities. It will never reach this valley. It is the city people's war, not ours. All we want is to cultivate the land.

(Faulkner, 1937/2017, p. 2)

According to Gleeson-White (2017) "this speech provides the narrative with its political context. Perhaps more significantly, it also introduces one of the most important concerns of Faulkner's treatment: the conflict between the frontiersmen – the Mohawk Valley farmers – and the Continental Congress. The latter is here invoked by reference to the city" (521n12). Thus, the separation is emphasized in the above passage as the couple is about to leave the comfort of their civilized society for the constraints and hardships of the wilderness. The woman's words predict trouble in the wilderness and the mischiefs they will meet throughout their frontier journey. While Gilbert is already accustomed to the frontier life, it is a new step for Lana, who has never left her luxurious home in the city. This step is a first one for them as a couple.

The crossing of the first threshold for Gilbert and his wife is when they first settle on their farm in Deerfield, in the Mohawk Valley. While clearing the land for the sake of farming, Gil is visited by an Oneida Indian, Blue Back, who comes to warn him of an eventual attack by a group of Senecas: "Gilbert enters, stoops, is about to pick up the jug, pauses. He lifts something from the ground beside it. It is a tomahawk, crudely and hurriedly cut from wood, the blade stained to represent blood. To the handle is tied a crude imitation of Caldwell's eye-patch. Gilbert drops the tomahawk, springs up" (Faulkner, 1937/2017, p. 42). Blue Back plays the role of the helper, or the amulet, or in Jung's words, the mentor archetype who provides assistance and protection to the protagonist or hero. He plays this role throughout the journey. For instance, he takes Lana's peacock feather, a gift from her mother, in order to preserve it after the Martins left their home in Deerfield hurriedly, leaving it behind (Faulkner, 1937/2017, p. 45).

B. Initiation

Here comes the stage of trials and tests where the hero is tested at every level: "Once having traversed the threshold, the hero moves in a dream landscape of curiously fluid, ambiguous forms, where he must survive a succession of trials" (Campbell, 1949/2004, p. 89). It is these ordeals that provide the hero with experience and growth in order to survive in this new world of hardships. In her book, *A Way of Individuation*, Jacobi (1965) distinguishes between two main phases of the individuation process: the first and the second half of life. To move from the first phase to the second, needless to say that the individual goes through a "change of life" during which he experiences psychological disturbances and upheavals (p. 23). And as Jung puts it: "at the stroke of noon the descent begins. And the descent means the reversal of all the ideals and values that were cherished in the morning" (as cited in. Jacobi, 1965, p. 21). This is to say that the world of the hero is turned upside down and he has to learn and be brave in order to get back to his home. However, the person he becomes at the end of the ordeal is not the same as the one who has crossed the threshold of adventure.

After being forced into the realm of adventure, Lovett is tested in his relationship with Nancy. Indeed, once they are both taken hostages, Jim has to confess his own reality to his wife, as she has had no idea about her husband's real job:

LOVETT

(dully)

I went into it when I was a boy. All it meant to me then was excitement. Boys have no sense. Then it was just my life – like farming is somebody else's life. I never thought any more of it than that – and then I was older, before I knew it, and I met you. That told me what I – what I was, and what I was doing.

(she puts her face in her hands)

I knew then I was dirty ... filthy ... I was ashamed. But I loved you so much – I love you more than life itself – that I thought I could

escape from it, so you'd never know – and that's what I tried to do.

But it was too late ... Are you listening?

(Faulkner, 1936/2017, 187. 94)

In this passage, Lovett explains to Nancy how his two-month stay in Virginia has led him to his self-discovery and self-realization through his meeting with her, as she has brought stability and growth to his life. Nancy represents the anima, which, according to Jung, is “the contrasexual part of a man's psyche, the image of the opposite sex that he carries in both his personal and his collective unconscious” (Guerin et al., 2005, p. 206). In this case, there is a self-conscious individuation process as Jim is aware of his past and undertakes an inner awakening, a step towards self-realization since he understands the wrongs he is doing to himself, to society, and to the slaves. However, this is met with disgust on her part, leading them to be separated throughout the rest of the journey. Lovett's past constitutes the shadow; the dark side of his personality and psyche.

A succession of trials follows, one of them being the storm that hits the ship. In the meantime, Lovett is in a state of depression and pessimism. “He is seated on his bunk grinning ironically. There's a week's growth of beard on his face and a bottle in front of him. As the ship lists, the bottle topples. He catches it dexterously” (Faulkner, 1936/2017, 202. 99). When the seamen could not control the ship anymore, Thompson sends for Lovett, but he refuses as he has lost all hope for survival since Nancy has turned him down. Once the ship is controlled and the storm is gone, and the ship safely arrives to the coast of Africa, Lovett faces a new challenge when he is left to deal with the unpaid Danelo, the slave dealer, while Thompson and the rest of the crew flee on board of the ship. Danelo tries to kill him, but finally Jim convinces him of Thompson's betrayal. Hence, Danelo helps him get into the ship, where he tricks Thompson into believing that he is back into the slave trade. At this point, the ship that is supposed to take the road back to America is in fact diverted onto another track by Duncan, a US navy officer impersonating a slaver. The slave ship, therefore, is led towards St. Helena, a British Island in the Atlantic. When Jim realizes the reality of Duncan and where they are heading, he entrusts him with Nancy and helps them escape to the shore. An ambush starts in the ship with Thompson and Lefty firing at Lovett, leading to the latter being shot in the leg. At one point, the exchange of fire hits a lantern, which drops, starting a fire. As the ship is burning and panic takes over the crew, Lovett descends into the hatch to free the slaves entrapped there.

Slaves and whites swim toward the shore while Thompson, paralyzed by the last bullet shot by Lovett, is seated to the ground unable to move. At this level, Jim rises to the status of godhood as he defeats his shadow, represented in the person of Thompson, his rival, who is now severely injured and therefore attains his own apotheosis: “this godlike being is a pattern of the divine state to which the human hero attains who has gone beyond the last terrors of ignorance” (Campbell, 1949/2004, p. 139). He thus transforms into a better person as he acts in a heroic way by saving the slaves, though he does not surrender to the British officers. In Jungian terms, the confrontation with one's shadow is the first step towards individuation (Phillips, 1975, p. 6). In his analysis of fairytales, Jung depicts the hunter as the hero's shadow (Jung, 2004, p. 146) and, therefore, in this screenplay, Thompson is the shadow as he represents the dark side of slavery and everything Lovett comes to hate about himself. The same goes with Gilbert and Lana, whose shadow is represented in the person of Caldwell and the Loyalists, the enemy, who keep threatening the safety of the Valley.

In *Drums Along the Mohawk*, trouble keeps following the young couple. Like Lovett, Gil is rejected by Lana. At this point, the couple are living and working at Mrs. McKlennar's farm in Fort Schuyler. After the attack in Deerfield, Lana, who is pregnant, loses her child during the invasion, which brings her to a state of depression to the point where she denies her own husband. The loss of their home instills hopelessness in the couple. During a conversation with Dr. Petrie, Gilbert, on the brink of despair, explodes in front of him as he confides his fears and loss of hope in the life in the wilderness:

GILBERT

I guess this country don't even want white men in it.

Not even dead ones.

(*he indicates the grave*)

I can't even set a headstone over my son's body, or I'd show them murdering devils right where to dig. And even if I can hide the real grave from them, I can't hide it from the wolves.

DR. PETRIE:

This is a hard country to earn a home in. Maybe any country is hard to earn a home in.

(Faulkner, 1937/2017, p. 54)

Lana is incapable of adapting to the frontier life, especially with the loss of her son. Her rejection of her husband is a kind of rejection of the wilderness, of the settlement, of the fighting itself. There is a kind of failure of individuation as Lana is not able at this level to move forward:

DR. PETRIE

Women are strange creatures, Gil. The frontier is no place for them. Yet it can't exist without--- them. Else there would be no reason for us to make it livable. But the life we have to lead to push the wilderness back outrages them. The fighting, the shedding of blood which men like – all men like. But this outrages them because of the waste. They know how hard it is to create life. They can't bear to see it wasted – for glory, or principles, or

material gain either. Remember, she has lost her first child, had the devil and all of a shaking up. You'll have to give her time [...]

(Faulkner, 1937/2017, p. 61)

On the McKlennar's farm, the couple try to adjust to their new home. However, multiple battles and mischiefs are about to hit the colony. Gilbert, who has joined the militiamen and other farmers in a march to drive away the enemy, is severely wounded during the battle and half of the militiamen are injured. Add to this, a severe famine hits the colony, especially during the winters. With the decree enacted by the Continental Congress which stipulates that all the farmers, including Mrs. McKlennar, must surrender "all corn, wheat and other grain" (Faulkner, 1937/2017, p. 121) to the Continental army, made things worse. This leads Gilbert and his friend, Adam Helmer, to steal the wheat from the authorities and give it back to Mrs. McKlennar. However, when the Tories attack the settlement again and burn the houses, Gil is arrested and put in jail. In this critical moment, Lana, pregnant, leaves for Fox's Mill, where her parents live, to get away from trouble. Her failure to adapt to the frontier is demonstrated in her running away and leaving her frontier life behind. Gil is jailed again for desertion; after his release, he goes after Lana who at this time has given birth to her child a few months after finding out that her parents died in a mutiny and their house burned down.

As a frontier man, most of Gilbert's ordeals and trials in the wild can be considered as shared experiences with the other frontier men who, to protect their farm, engage in multiple battles against the Tories and the Indians, and keep building and rebuilding after every destruction. If we refer to Jung's understanding of the individuation process, this is one of the multiple types of transformative experience; that is, "the identification of an individual with a number of people who, as a group, have a collective experience of transformation" (Jung, 2004, p. 68). On the other hand, for Lana, who has been accustomed to the comforts of the city and the safety of a home, it has taken her a long time, years, to finally experience a transformative stage: "the less mature a person is when he reaches the change of life, the more powerfully the upheaval will affect him, provided of course that the change sets in at all and he does not remain stuck in an infantile or pubescent state; this can lead to a smouldering, chronic neurosis" (Jacobi, 1965, p. 23). It is only when she discovers that her parents have died in a mutiny and Gilbert is imprisoned for a second time, that she shifts from the state of a vulnerable, dependent, 'childlike' woman to a fully independent, frontier woman who grows wheat and crops by herself and is able to pay the taxes owed to Congress to get back their land in Deerfield. Moreover, Gilbert's complete apotheosis comes almost at the end of the work, when the Valley experiences a complete siege by five hundred enemies and with Lana and Mrs. McKlennar kidnapped and taken captives by Indians under the Tory General Butler's command. A disillusioned Gilbert, who has just escaped from prison, goes to their rescue by joining the march led by Lieutenant Willet, whose objective is to get rid of the Tory forces in the area as well as Butler. During an exchange of fires between the Patriots and the Highlanders, Gilbert sneaks into the woods where the women are held captive in the presence of a Tory official. He is "floundering and struggling along, alone. He is wild, frenzied, and determined" (Faulkner, 1937/2017, p. 223). His determination brings him to where Lana and Mrs. McKlennar are. Add to this, his heroic altercation with the Indians allows the intervention of Willet and his regiment, which enables freeing the women and the complete elimination of the Tories' menace in the Mohawk Valley.

C. Return

The return phase takes a different turn for both protagonists. At this point, the hero is supposed to leave the world of wonders and go back to the world of the ordinary, being fully grown and experienced with the full knowledge as the reward he has acquired from his quest.

When the hero-quest has been accomplished, through penetration to the source, or through the grace of some male or female, human or animal, personification, the adventurer still must return with his life-transmuting trophy. The full round, norm of the monomyth, requires that the hero shall now begin the labor of bringing the runes of wisdom, the Golden Fleece, or his sleeping princess, back into the kingdom of humanity, where the boon may redound to the renewing of the community, the nation, the planet, or the ten thousand worlds. (Campbell, 1949/2004, p. 179)

The fate of both Lovett and the Martins differs drastically as they experience a different sort of ending. Lovett will never make it home. The burning of his ship leads to his and Thompson's deaths. Encircled by both the British navy and the fire that threatens the ship, Lovett has no hope of survival. He has to choose either jail or death. Eventually, he picks the latter, and the ship explodes, leading to the deaths of both Lovett and Thompson. Therefore, there is a failure to return, and the protagonist succumbs to death. Interestingly enough, in Faulkner's fiction, at the end of many of his works, the protagonist most of the time experiences death and/or is unable to return to his previous life: "Consistent with the ironic pattern of the mythical method, however, Faulkner usually excludes from his "monomyth" of initiation any type of heroic return or triumph.... In Faulkner's world, the Fall is seldom fortunate" (Hamblin, 2004, p. 10). From the first pages of the screenplay, this couple of friends turned enemies, are predestined for death. In one of their interactions, Lovett reminds Thompson of the risk of their being hanged if ever they get caught: "You'll be hanged alright – and me too – sooner or later" (Faulkner, 1936/2017, 71. 26), to which Thompson responds in the last pages of the screenplay: "I always said I wasn't gonna hang – but I certainly wasn't looking to fry!" (Faulkner, 1936/2017, 331. 145).

Campbell conceives of the monomyth as being highly social, since the hero comes back home to redeem his society (Phillips, 1975, p. 13). For Phillips (1975), this is not always plausible. In his application of the hero's journey to Yeats's poem, *Sailing to Byzantium*, he explains that the hero might act as an individual out of the closed system of the

monomyth and therefore, he is only concerned with his own relationship to the infinite rather than society (1975, p. 13). In surrendering to death, Lovett can be considered a tragic hero who, despite his efforts to come clean and get rid of his evil past as a slaver, in the end, he is alienated from his society that is unable to understand him.

Unlike Lovett's tragic end, Gilbert and Lana's fate takes a different turn. As the last battle is fought and won and the captives are freed, and with the last words of Colonel Bellinger: "All right boys let's go home" (Faulkner, 1937/2017, p. 229) and with Lana's words, "goodbye to this forever, Gil" (Faulkner, 1937/2017, p. 229), the couple are on the actual crossing of the return threshold. The reader is not aware of how the couple returns to Deerfield, instead he is propelled to the Martins' farm three years later, where both Gilbert and Lana have a stable life while taking care of their farm as well as growing their family as they have two more sons. In a conversation with Blue Back, who returns the peacock feather to its owner, Gilbert says: "I'm fine now. I'm doing now what a man told me seven years ago to do. A good man. You knew him. Honikol Herkimer" (Faulkner, 1937/2017, p. 236). By this, he means farming and raising children.

In the final scene, Lana is rejoicing at the prospect of being finally home with her family with no threat around:

The dirty old beast! No I don't mean that. Poor old man. He has lost everything now. Even the land his ancestors lived on. While we have so much. We have this place and we're still young and strong to work it. We've got the children and each other. Nobody can take those things away from us anymore. Nobody!
(Faulkner 1937/2017, p. 238)

"Dirty beast" here refers to Blue Back. This passage is controversial and portrays well how the American Revolution was won, and how the Indian communities paid the price and lost their lands for the benefit and greed of the white, European settlers. As far as Lana is acknowledging this, at the same time, after so many years living under the threat of being killed and without a permanent home, the Martins can now enjoy farming the land and living in peace among their peers. Hence, Gilbert returns triumphant to the land of the common people after several years of unbearable predicaments and wars; a return to normalcy and stability with no more fighting or constant threats.

III. CONCLUSION

Eventually, the monomyth works clearly with both screenplays, though *The Last Slaver* fails to make its protagonist return to the world of the common people. At the end of the journey, both Lovett and the Martins become masters of two worlds as they have transformed into accomplished figures. According to Campbell (1949), "the battlefield is symbolic of the field of life, where every creature lives on the death of another" (p. 221); that is, out of the ordeals and fights, a winner comes into being while the rival has to die to make the world a better place for the hero and his company. In mythological terms, the hero descends into darkness to discover his true self, sometimes with the help of a mentor, and comes back into the light as a new version of himself with the new knowledge he has acquired (Phillips, 1975, p. 6). In winning the war, the Martins have secured a safe haven for the next generations of frontier men and women who will follow in their pioneer ancestors' footsteps, extending the borders of the freshly independent United States of America till they reach the West Coast. Lovett, in turning his back to his crew and leaving the boat to burn to dust, puts an end to the unlawful slave trade forever.

Most of the time, Faulkner's characters in his fiction fail to experience a better change and therefore succumb to a bitter end, he nevertheless gives his characters in his screenplays a chance to prosper and redeem themselves. Moreover, and through a rigorous analysis of both screenplays, we come to the conclusion that "the mechanized linearity of film," as Michael R. Mauritzen calls it, plays a role in shaping the monomyth and the linearity of Faulkner's screenplays and clearly demonstrates the restrictions imposed on screenwriters, Faulkner and modernist writers in particular, in the movie industry. For Mauritzen (2013), this linearity has led a frustrated Faulkner to revolt through writing complex, non-linear narratives "that resisted both filmic adaptation and mass consumer audiences" (p. 123). Therefore, *The Last Slaver* and *Drums Along the Mohawk* are perfect examples of typical, monomythic texts that characterize the cinema and popular culture of the time which go opposite to the modernist tradition of their author.

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