Myths and Heroes

General Definition

Myths and heroes

universality – tale – origins – legend – protagonist – narrative – belief – symbol – fame – dream – quest – imagination

Myth (n.) [mɪθ]: a traditional story concerning the early history of a people or explaining a natural or social phenomenon, and typically involving supernatural beings or events.

Hero (n.) ['hɪərəʊ]: in mythology and folklore, a person of superhuman qualities who is admired for his/her courage or outstanding achievements.

Overview

Myths originally aimed at explaining the origins of humanity and narrating the foundations of a given community. These narratives thus deliver a universal message about the human condition and also give elements as to the collective identity of a social group. The way each civilisation or nation deals with, reinvents, updates these myths and conveys their messages through art, shows how they interpret human experience and find an artistic expression for it. A whole range of new myths, with new heroes who can either be real or imaginary characters and somehow caught people's imaginations have also been created over the ages. The rags-to-riches stories of famous American businessmen have thus given birth to a national myth: the American Dream. Pop culture and counter culture also keep producing their own heroes who, in turn, give birth to other mythical stories, which illustrate the aspirations (superheroes, superstars, icons...) of our communities (Door 1). And when science is faced with the unexplained, when it cannot answer some of the interrogations (the origins of the universe, extraterrestrial life...) of our times, new narratives keep being created (Door 8).

Your Definition :

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Quote(s) about this notion

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