Mythological/Archetypal Theory
Question:

What do the following stories have in common?
A LONG TIME AGO IN A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY....
THE MATRIX

Trinity

Neo
There are worlds beyond our own - the compass will show the way.

THE GOLDEN COMPASS

12.7.07

www.goldencompassmovie.com
THE WIZARD OF OZ

GARLAND
MORGAN
RAY BOLGER
BERT LAHR
JACK HALEY

GAIETY!
GLORY!
GLAMOUR!

GOLDWYN-MAYER'S TECHNICOLOR TRIUMPH!

BILLIE BURKE
MARGARET HAMILTON
CHARLEY GRAPEWIN
AND THE MUNCHKINS
One journey has ended. A new journey is about to begin.

SMALLVILLE

THURSDAYS 8/7c
Jesus Christ
Moses
The Buddah
Answer:

They are the same story.

(According to Archetypal Theory)
MonoMyth = 1 Story

- “A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man.”
How did the idea of the MonoMyth come about?

- Myths are repeated throughout history in cultures. For Example:
  - Every culture has a creation story
  - A life after death belief
  - A reason for human failings
- This begs the question- why?
Archetypal Analysis (Myth Theory)

- Freud's protégé Carl Jung broke away from his doctrine of the "individual unconscious" and proposed a "collective unconscious".
  - The collective unconscious is a set of shared "memories".
  - Analogy: Birds have an in-born knowledge from a million years of evolution, likewise Humans have the same shared knowledge of life that is sub-conscious (like instincts).
  - Likewise in literature, because we share cultural memories, we see symbols, characters, and situations that recur generation after generation in literature. These are called archetypes.

- Authors may (unconsciously) invoke various ancestral memories (archetypes) that readers (unconsciously) respond to emotionally.
THERE ARE FOUR STORY TYPES

- **Romance**, which places an innocent protagonist in an unreal world.
- **Tragedy**, which portrays a loss of innocence that leads to a catastrophe.
- **Satire | Irony**, which depicts a confused, flawed situation that irony reveals and satire seeks to change.
- **Comedy**, which transforms ironic confusion into rebirth and renewal.
These four story types themselves are archetypal.

While there are an infinite number of stories, there are a finite number of story types.

The four story types named above encompass all of the stories that have been, are, and will ever be told.

Analogy to DNA
Why Study Archetypes?

- Human experience follows a pattern of birth, growth, death, and rebirth.
- Human beings are born into this world in a state of innocence. Over time, this world of innocence is transformed into a world of experience.
- When you begin to understand that these common stages through which you pass are reflected in the literature that you read, one of the purposes for reading that literature begins to make more sense.
- Reading literature allows you to anticipate and better understand the life passages that you will experience.
Archetypal Criticism

When using Archetypal criticism to discuss literature, there are three basic categories:

- **archetypal characters** (i.e. rebel, outcast, tyrant, saint, side-kick, wise old man, etc.)
- **archetypal symbols** (i.e. light/dark, water/desert, spring/winter, day/night, birth/death/re-birth, etc.)
- **archetypal situations** (i.e. the quest/journey, the fall, the initiation, the divine marriage, etc.)
Three main points to study

Archetypal characters
Archetypal symbols
Archetypal situations
Archetypal Characters

- The HERO
- The LONER or OUTCAST
- The MAIDEN
- The TEMPTRESS
- The MOTHER
- OTHER
Archetypal Character: HERO

- Larger than life
- Search for self-identity results in self-destruction
- Death of him/her leads toward some ideal
- Modern superheroes (Superman)
Archetypal Character: LONER or OUTCAST

- Character separated from society
- Impaired physically, emotionally, physiologically
  - Ex. – Jesus goes into the desert to discern his destiny
  - Buddha leaves society to come to terms with his philosophy
  - Victor Frankenstein runs away when he realizes he created a monster
- Heroes can be loners or outcasts too- Wolverine!
Archetypal Character: MAIDEN/VIRGIN

- Persephone or Hestia
- Represents purity, innocence, and, in all likelihood, naivete
Archetypal Character: EARTH MOTHER/GODDESS

- Mother Nature/Mother Earth
- Nurturing, life-giving aspect of femininity
- “Wise Old Woman”
- Example: Demeter or Hera
Archetypal Character: TEMPTRESS

- Aphrodite
- She uses his desire (intentionally or unintentionally) to achieve his destruction
- Ex. Eve, Juliet, Lady Macbeth
Archetypal Character: Other

- The Scapegoat
- The Trickster
- The Wise Old Man
- The Side-Kick
- The Spirit or Intellect
- The Rebel
- The Saint
- Etc.
ARCHETYPAL SYMBOLS

- COLORS
- NUMBERS
- WATER
- GARDENS
- GEOMETRIC SHAPES
- CELESTIAL BODIES
- YIN and YANG
Archetypal Symbols: COLORS

- **Red** = blood, passion, violence
- **Gold** = greatness, value, wealth
- **Green** = fertility, luxury, growth
- **Blue** (the color of the sky) = God-like holiness, peace, serenity
- **White** = purity
Archetypal Symbols: NUMBERS

- 3 = Christian trinity, Female
- 4 = The Seasons, ancient elements (earth, water, fire, air), Male
- 7 = Combination of Female & Male
- 12 = months of the solar year
Archetypal Symbols: WATER

- Source of life and sustenance
- Cleansing or purification
- Baptism
Archetypal Symbols: GARDENS

- Natural abundance
- Easy, beautiful life
- New birth, hope
- Eden, the original Paradise from which humankind was expelled
Archetypal Symbols: GEOMETRIC SHAPES

- Triangle = the trinity
- Circle = perfection and eternity, wholeness, union
Archetypal Symbols: CELESTIAL BODIES

- Sun (masculine) = the giver and destroyer of life
- Moon (feminine) = the passage of time, controls the course of human events
Archetypal Symbols: YIN and YANG

- Any scheme that suggests that each of a pair of opposites partakes of the other’s nature
- Without balance, the world would erupt into chaos
ARCHETYPAL SITUATIONS

RENEWAL OF LIFE
INITIATION
The FALL
REDEMPTIVE SACRIFICE
The QUEST or Hero’s Journey
Archetypal Situations: RENEWAL OF LIFE

- Death and rebirth
- Resurrection as seen in the cycle of the seasons
- Phases of the day, sleeping and waking
- Ex. “Sleeping Beauty”
Archetypal Situations: INITIATION

- Coming of age
- Rites of passage
- Ex. First hunt, weddings, teenage angst films
Archetypal Situations: The FALL

- Any event that marks a loss of innocence
- A change from a paradise-like view of life to a tainted one
  - Ex. Gatsby’s realization that he will never have Daisy in “The Great Gatsby”
Archetypal Situations: REDEMPTIVE SACRIFICE

- Any voluntary loss
- Especially loss of life that results in another’s gaining or regaining a desired state
Archetypal Situations: The QUEST or “Hero’s Journey”

- Hero’s endeavor to establish his/her identity or fulfill his/her destiny

- 5 Basic Parts:
  - Quester
  - A place to go
  - A STATED reason to go there
  - Trials en route
  - A REAL reason to go there
Departure

- The Call to Adventure
- Refusal of the Call
- Supernatural Aid
- The Crossing of the First Threshold
- The Belly of the Whale - the moment of change, the low point
Initiation

- The Road of Trials
- The Meeting with the Goddess
- Woman as the Temptress
- Atonement with the Father - struggle against what controls you
- Apotheosis - rest and peace before return
- The Ultimate Boon - achievement of quest
Return

- Refusal of the Return
- The Magic Flight
- Rescue from Without
- The Crossing of the Return Threshold - reintegrate w/ society
- Master of the Two Worlds
- Freedom to Live
The Hero's Journey

ACT ONE: SEPARATION

Meeting the Mentor/Supernatural Aid/Meeting the White Spirit

Road of Trials/Tests:
- Whale's Belly
- Enemies
- Allies
- Obstacles

ACT THREE: UNIFICATION

World Dancer/Wrap-up:
- Master of Two Worlds
- Incorporation

Resurrection

Showdown/Catharsis/Climax

SECOND THRESHOLD

Crossing the Second Threshold:
New Rules/Midpoint/Reversal (p. 200)

Elixir Theft/Ultimate Boon/Reward

ASCENT: Magic Flight

Refusal of the Return/Apotheosis/Realm of the Wild Woman or Man

Death of Dreams/Black Moment/Dark Night of the Soul (Realization)

Crossing the Third Threshold:
Sacrifice (Action)/Plot Point #2 (p. 300)

Rescue from Without

ORDINARY WORLD

FOURTH THRESHOLD

Ordinary World and Call to Adventure/Hook/Bargain without Knowing or Refusal of the Call

Crossing the Fourth Threshold:
Freedom to Live (p. 400)

ACT TWO: SUPREME ORDEAL

Ordeal
- Dismemberment
- Wandering
- HARROWING OF THE SOUL

Heiros Gamos (Sacred Marriage)/Meeting the Shadow Self
- Wild Bride & Bridegroom
- Meeting the Goddess/God
- At-One-Ment with Father/Mother
- Finding Love in the Underworld

Approach to the Inmost Cave

DESCENT: The Abyss

THE HERO’S JOURNEY

START!
THE LAND OF PERFECT DAY

THE CALL TO ADVENTURE
THE HERO RECEIVES A SIGNAL THAT HE HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO LIMP TO A NEW LIFE. HE HAS BEEN SUMMONED TO A LAND WHERE HE WILL BE GOING TO EXAMINE THE NEXT STAGE OF EXISTENCE!

DUDE!
NEO TISHA MORPHS

Dude!!!

CROSSING OF THE RETURN THRESHOLD
THE HERO HAS BEEN CAPTURED BY THE GUARDIAN TO THE WAY BACK TO THE WAY. THE HERO MUST OVERCOME THE BARRIERS TO THE WAY BACK TO THE WAY. THE HERO MUST OVERCOME THE BARRIERS TO THE WAY BACK TO THE WAY.

ATONEMENT WITH THE FATHER
USING THE HOPE DERIVED FROM THE GODDESS, THE HERO OVERCOMES THE BARRIERS TO THE WAY BACK TO THE WAY.

LUKE, I AM YOUR FATHER.
I’M GAY.
I’M NEVER MIND.

THE ULTIMATE BOOZ
SHOCKED!!! HAVING PASSED THE INITIATION, THE HERO HAS UNLOCKED THE SECRETS OF THE GODS! Roll Again!

REFUSAL OF THE RETURN
THE HERO WANTS TO RISK THE SUPERIOR BARRIER OF THE GODS! FOREVER! GO BACK TO "ULTIMATE BOOZ!"

NORMAL IS FOR INNOCENTS!
SIGHT!

THE ROAD OF TRIUMPH
THE HERO HAS A MAJORITY OF THE GODS' SECRETS AND HAS BEEN CHALLENGED TO A HUNGER GAME, WHERE THE HERO MUST OVERCOME THE BARRIERS TO THE WAY BACK TO THE WAY.

THE BELL OF THE WHALE
THE HERO IS SWALLOWED BY THE WHALE, LOST AS WELL AS DEAD!

WE'RE SAVED!
Your Task

- Write a Story that Closely Follows the Hero’s Journey/MonoMyth. It Must:
  - Have the 5 basic elements (more for higher scores & it will help you think of ideas).
  - Your Protagonist must show HUBRIS
  - It must start “In Media Res” (in the middle of the action- with flashbacks.
  - Incorporate at least one EPIC SIMILE