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Magallanes: Building a Hero

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Abstract

Introduction. The world of yesterday, as with that of today, needs references. Building heroes, figures elevated to the status of extraordinary beings, responds to that human need to know that there have been others who achieved great things before them. **Methodology**. In this paper, a qualitative method based on an established model, i.e. that of the hero's journey, was employed, along with an *ad hoc* tool with a number of supplementary variables relating to the morphological and functional attributes of the hero. **Results**. Two literary works were reviewed with an eye to detecting the principal mechanisms used to convert Magellan into the hero of the first circumnavigation of the globe. **Discussion and conclusions**. In light of the above considerations, Magellan was lionised from the moment that he embarked on his adventure. Antonio Pigafetta, the chronicler accompanying him, was responsible for making him into a hero in his writings, due to the admiration that he felt for him, while paving the way for others who would follow in the navigator's footsteps.

Keywords

Hero; myth; Magellan; circumnavigation of the globe.

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1. Introduction

Magellan has always been regarded as the great hero of the first circumnavigation of the globe. The writings of Pigafetta, the chronicler of the feat on Magellan's and Elcano's voyage between 1519 and 1522 and one of its survivors, elevated a person who, paradoxically, was essentially human to the status of demigod. The scant literature that has come down to us from that period has gradually converted the adventurer whose 'circumnavigation forever altered the Western world's ideas about cosmology—the study of the universe and our place in it—as well as geography' (Bergreen, 2003, pp. 2-3) into a living legend. In short, this accomplishment demonstrated that the Earth was after all round and that Magellan was a 'hacedor de lo imposible', [1] as Núñez de la Fuente (2017, p. 26) calls him, comparing him with the Greek heroes and even placing him above them:

Acaso puedes intuir siquiera qué odas y cantos habrían compuesto poetas tan insignes como Homero y Hesíodo exaltando a Tebas, Troya e Ítaca, si hubiesen sido cualesquiera de ellas el escenario elegido, en lugar de Sevilla, para convertirse en el alfa y el omega de tan extraordinaria proeza [2] (Núñez de la Fuente, 2017, p. 29).

Works such as those written by Zweig (2011 [1931]), Núñez de la Fuente (2017), Castillo Ceballos (2013) and Pigafetta himself (1874), among many others, extol Magellan as the hero of one of the greatest odysseys in the history of mankind.

This paper thus intends to review the literary sources to identify the principal mechanisms used to convert Magellan into the hero of the first circumnavigation of the globe, on the basis of the writings of Campbell (2004), Vogler (2007), Bauzá (2009), Durand (2005), Kerényi (2009) and Jung (2002), drawing parallels between the navigator's psychological, ethical and intellectual character traits, in addition to the archetypes fleshing out his personality, and the model of the classical hero's journey.

The chief aim here is to determine whether or not an efficient use has been made of the different mechanisms involved in converting Magellan into a hero. To this end, Campbell's monomyth or hero's journey has been employed to gauge the extent to which the literature selected for analysis here adapts to this model. The intention is to ascertain whether there are any synergies between the real character and the adventures of the mythological heroes or, on the contrary, this baseline model has been disregarded. Likewise, at attempt is made to verify whether Magellan is attributed the values associated with the mythical heroes of antiquity in these works.

According to Kerényi (1951),

mythology, an immemorial and traditional body of material contained in tales about gods and god-like beings, heroic battles and journeys to the Underworld [...] tales already well known but not unamenable to further reshaping (p. 3).

Thanks to scientific advances, myth was relegated to the status of mere fantasy during the nineteenth century (Eliade, 1999). However, it regained its rightful place in the following century: scientism was unable to offer answers to all of the universe's dilemmas. Twentieth-century scholars began to integrate qualitative, as well as quantitative, aspects into their scientific approaches (Lévi-Strauss, 1987).

The functions and characteristics of myth make it ideal for the vital moment experienced by the contemporary individual. Having lost confidence in reason and having assumed their incapacity to understand everything around them, human beings look for references to which to cling in order to assuage their doubts and fill their existential vacuums. Thus, they create key figures not only in different social spheres, such as cinema, literature and the arts, but also in others, such as sports and video games, whose raison d'être is the story (Segal, 2004, p. 4).

Understood as 'una realidad cultural compleja, abordable e interpretable desde perspectivas múltiples'[3] (Eliade, 1983, p. 12), myth contains many 'voices' (Durand, 1993), namely, it is a collective product (Cencillo, 1998). It has its roots not now in logic and reason, but in the irrational, in the intuitive part of human beings. It also performs essential functions and stems from fundamental needs:

- Understanding the environment. Myth is the first form of relationship between human beings and their surroundings (Huici, 1998).
- The quest for meaning. It is a dynamic discourse that resolves the inexpressible part of a dilemma (Durand, 1993). It plots the existential constants of humanity, its distinguishing features or its ultimate reference system (Kolakowski, 1990).
- A model of human behaviour. It serves as a 'sistema de referentes orientativos de la praxis humana' [4] (Cencillo, 1998, p. 23). Featuring supernatural beings—gods and heroes related to them—it establishes a series of precedents for significant human endeavours (Rosales, 1996).

Since antiquity, human beings have employed myths as a way of giving meaning to their life experiences. In primordial times, it was believed that the beings featuring in mythical tales were none other than embodiments of human aspirations. Of a quasi-supernatural nature, these figures aroused people's admiration. The most outstanding civilisations in history have glorified heroes and kings; through legends and other poetical accounts, the origins of these human beings were interwoven with fantastic elements (Rank, 1981, p. 9). That is why there is a belief that those heroes might have been real people somehow transformed into supernatural beings and, subsequently, into paradigmatic examples.

1.1. The hero's attributes

The Diccionario de la Real Academia Española (DRAE) defines the term 'hero/heroine' as follows:

From the lat. heros, $-\bar{o}is$, and this from the gr. ἥρως $h\dot{\bar{e}}r\bar{o}s$; the f. form, from the gr. ἡρωΐνη $h\bar{e}r\bar{o}in\bar{e}$.

- 1. m. and f. A person who performs a very self-sacrificing action for a noble cause.
- 2. m. and f. An illustrious person famous for his/her deeds or virtues.
- 3. m. and f. In a poem or account, a leading character who acts bravely and daringly.
- 4. m. and f. The main character of a fictional work.
- 5. m. and f. A person for whom others feel special admiration.
- 6. m. In ancient mythology, a man born of a god or goddess and a human being, for which reason he was considered to be more of a man and less of a god: e.g. Hercules, Achilles, Aeneas, etc.

Heroes are a reference system for understanding a specific culture (Bauzá, 1998, p. 3). 'Desde el momento en que el mito se desenvuelve en un tiempo histórico, sin dejar de ser mito, conlleva también en su discurso elementos que pertenecen a la sociedad y a la historia'[5] (Bauzá, 1998, p. 109). As a result, myth is a powerful tool for social research.

Although it is impossible to find an explanation for the origin and nature of heroes, since they are always 'entre lo divino y lo humano, el orden y el desorden, lo civilizado y lo salvaje' [6] (Bauzá, 1998, p. 37).

At some time towards the end of the Renaissance, the figure of the hero underwent a change, shifting from the supernatural to focus more on the mundane. Notwithstanding this, it still possesses common elements formed by the sum of its different versions (Lévi-Strauss, 1977). Moreover, human beings have an inherent need to create idols to 'worship', which would explain the longevity of ancient heroes and the relentless advent of contemporary ones.

Four basic attributes common to heroes have been identified: transgression, ethics, tragic, untimely death and exemplary action.

Transgression is perhaps one of the elements that best define the hero. It is that tendency towards the forbidden, towards going beyond the known or the established limits. This coincides with the anarchist posture of the hero who can regard himself as 'at once rebel and renovator—he is a revolutionary' (Rank, 2004, p. 91). All his actions are aimed at establishing or introducing new values (Bauzá, 1998, p. 149). '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' (Campbell, 2004, p. 28).

Nonetheless, that transgression always serves the common good, for which reason the defence of ethical values is also judged to be essential in the hero building process. In the words of Campbell (1991), 'a hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself' (p. 179). In this connection, we are not so much interested in the hero of the transcendental as in the here-and-now hero, to wit, of a specific historical juncture. That ethical motive was also held in very high esteem in the ancient world.

Too much transgression and the hero will meet an untimely and often tragic end. This is partly due to the fact that heroes do not usually weigh up the consequences of their actions (Bauzá, 1998, p. 5). It is an involuntary death, the product of a mistake that the hero has made; however, 'la grandeza del héroe radica en que al combatir arriesga su vida' [7] (Bauzá, 1998, p. 31), after which fame awaits him. Heroes tend to meet violent ends: torn asunder, burned at the stake, committing suicide, cut down in battle, etc. This tragic end is closely associated with suffering, a distinguishing trait of heroes which allows mere mortals to identify with and be moved by them; as a matter of fact, 'el dolor, la duda, el exilio existencial son las notas más humanas del héroe clásico' [8] (Bauzá, 1998, p. 130). That pain serves as a purification rite for the hero who confronts the denouement with determination and courage. Thanks to their actions, heroes become role models par excellence for mere mortals. They are examples that should be followed. Sometimes, as Bauzá (1998) notes, they help to spark the latent heroism in others, while lessons can be learnt from them for tackling any life circumstance. From a psychoanalytic perspective, the path of the hero's journey is a simile of life itself, that which is marked by a succession of stumbling blocks and which is ultimately interrupted by death. The hero's honourable commitment is an ethical example for the multitude. 'The composite hero of the monomyth is a personage of exceptional gifts. Frequently he is honored by his society, frequently unrecognized or disdained' (Campbell, 2004, p. 35).

The figure of the hero, as with that of any myth, involves a truth of a symbolic character, over and above its socio-historical roots, insofar as it answers the burning questions of humanity: Where do we come from? Where are we heading? Why are we here? The contributions of Kerényi (2009), Cassirer (1993) and Durand (1979), more focused on highlighting the cognitive and symbolic value of myths, are along these lines. And it is in this context that the constant creation of myths and the resemanticising of ancient ones, in accordance with new forms of life and thinking, can thus be understood (Bauzá, 1998).

1.2. The hero's journey

The second pillar on which the hero building process rests is the journey itself during which he displays all the aforementioned attributes. The most well-known source describing the different stages of the hero's journey is Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (2004), published for the first time in 1949. Following in the footsteps of the studies performed by Propp (2001) on the different functions present in tales, and the contributions of Jung (2002) as regards the collective unconscious and how it appears in behavioural patterns which he called archetypes, Campbell established a series of requirements that the archetypal hero has to meet on the different stages of his journey to be deemed as such.

After Campbell, in 1992 Vogler published *The Writer's Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers*, an indepth analysis of *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* aimed at storytellers and, primarily, film script writers, a field in which he is an expert and has pursued his career.

The hero's journey is described below on the basis of the aforementioned sources.

1.2.1. The ordinary world: departure

This first stage takes place in the world in which the hero normally moves. He realises that something is changing, 'A blunder—apparently the merest chance—reveals an unsuspected world, and the individual is drawn into a relationship with forces that are not rightly understood' (Campbell, 2004, p. 46). This stage is, in turn, divided into five sub-stages which will be discussed below.

Firstly, the hero receives or perceives the call to adventure (Campbell, 2004, p. 41; Vogler, 2007, p. 99). He is entrusted with some or other mission or realises that his intervention is necessary so as to remedy a situation. Campbell (2004) notes that this call is usually delivered by a herald or messenger who, as a rule, behaves in an ambiguous, malevolent fashion. However, it can also be 'a stirring within the hero' (Vogler, 2007, p. 100). This first stage '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, p. 53).

Campbell (2004, p. 54) and Vogler (2007, p. 107) identify a second sub-stage which they both call 'refusal of the call', in which the hero turns down the mission. For Campbell (2004), it is a fleeting moment since the adventure will start sooner or later. However, Vogler (2007) also considers the figure of the determined or keen hero who accepts or even actively seeks adventure.

Following this, the encounter with the mentor is that decisive moment at which the hero finds a protector who provides him with the wherewithal to accomplish his adventure. As Campbell (2004) comments, 'Not infrequently, the supernatural helper is masculine in form' (p. 66). In short, heroes normally discover some source of wisdom before setting out on their adventures (Vogler, 2007).

The next stage is crucial since it involves stepping into the unknown, beyond the hero's usual bounds. It is the crossing of the first threshold (Campbell, 2004, p. 71; Vogler, 2007, p. 153), literally or metaphorically a frontier separating the ordinary world from the unknown. Once having traversed this threshold, a new realm awaits the hero.

The belly of the whale is the last sub-stage of the departure, a metaphor that Campbell (2004) employs to designate 'a transit into a sphere of rebirth' (p. 83). The hero is swallowed up by the unknown. Vogler, for his part, ignores this sub-stage considering it to be tautological.

1.2.2. The extraordinary world: initiation

In this stage, the hero is put to the test. Ergo, it is where most of the action takes places, leads to the hero's profound transformation and, in the words of Campbell (2004), 'is a favorite phase of the myth-adventure' (p. 89). Vogler (2007, p. 135) prefers to call it 'Tests, allies and enemies' because he believes that it is here where the hero not only finds aid elements but also encounters enemies.

The second sub-stage is the approach to the innermost cave (Vogler, 2007, p. 143), in which the hero makes good progress, acquiring new knowledge and preparing himself for the most important battle: that in which he may possibly encounter defeat and even death.

Campbell does not include this sub-stage as such, but instead speaks of 'the meeting with the goddess' (2004), which he metaphorically defines as a 'mystical marriage [...] of the triumphant hero-soul with the Queen Goddess of the World' (p. 100), once all hurdles have been overcome.

On his journey, the hero comes across many obstacles, some of which are intended to drive him off his path in order to prevent him from achieving his objective. It is the sub-stage that Campbell (2004, pp. 111-114) describes as 'Woman as the Temptress'.

This is followed by 'Atonement with the Father' (Campbell, 2004, pp. 116-137). After quarrelling with the father, both become reconciled, the father treating the hero as an equal, thus allowing him to re-embark on his adventure.

The penultimate stage of initiation is apotheosis, on which both authors again coincide. While Vogler calls it (2007, p. 155) 'The ordeal', for Campbell (2004) it is a 'release potential within us all, and which anyone can attain—through herohood' (p. 139). It is a sort of divine state which the hero attains after completing his journey. For Vogler (2007), this is the most significant moment of the hero's journey, which he defines in no uncertain terms: 'Heroes must die so that they can be reborn' (p. 155). In the last stage of initiation, the hero must accomplish the mission that he was entrusted with at the beginning of his journey and for which he has endured so many hardships. Campbell calls it 'The Ultimate Boon', while for Vogler it is 'Reward', the moment at which the hero must pit himself against superior forces before returning to his own world. He is then rewarded with the elixir of life.

1.1.3. The road back

This is the final stage of the hero's journey that brings the cycle of transformation to a close and which Vogler calls, 'The Road Back' (Vogler, 2007, p. 186). The hero has the task of returning to his people with the mysteries of wisdom. For his part, Campbell divides the return into different sub-stages; the first is 'Refusal of the Return' (p. 179), in which the hero refuses to accept the responsibility of disseminating his achievements for the good of the community from which he has come and to which

he returns renewed. Scepticism or inability to adapt to the environment may be one of the causes behind this behaviour.

Subsequently, there is a sub-stage that Campbell calls, 'The Magic Flight', which has two possible outcomes. If the trophy has been obtained with the help of the gods, it is smother thanks to the support of his patrons. However, if it has been forcibly seized from its guardians, it becomes a 'lively, often comical, pursuit. This flight may be complicated by marvels of magical obstruction and evasion' (2004, p. 182). In short, it is a last-ditch attempt at preventing the hero from reaching his ultimate goal. In the next sub-stage, in which 'The hero may have to be brought back from his supernatural adventure by assistance from without. That is to say, the world may have to come and get him' (Campbell, 2004, p. 192), is called 'Rescue from Without', for the hero does not want to remain in the extraordinary world.

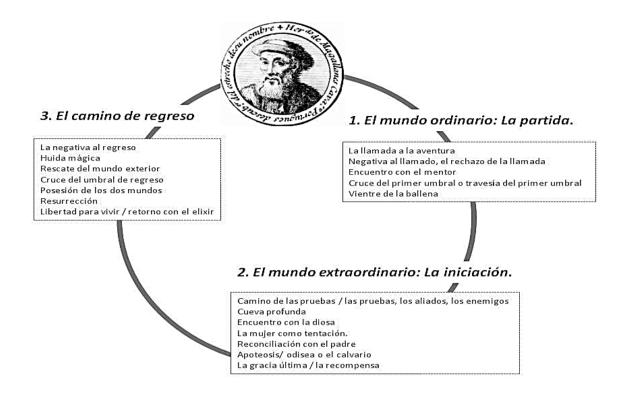
Here, the hero encounters the frontier separating the supernatural world from his point of departure, i.e. 'The Crossing of the Return Threshold' (p. 201). It is a delicate moment insofar as he must survive the 'impact of the world' (p. 209), namely, it will not be easy to combine the two worlds—ordinary and extraordinary—and describe his exploits once he has returned.

How teach again, however, what has been taught correctly and incorrectly learned a thousand thousand times, throughout the millenniums of mankind's prudent folly? That is the hero's ultimate difficult task. How render back into light-world language the speech-defying pronouncements of the dark? (Campbell, 2004, p. 202).

Campbell (2004) calls the following sub-stage 'Master of the Two Worlds' (p. 212), inasmuch as the hero is free to pass from one side to the other, from one world to another. It is this mastery that will allow him to enjoy a new status when he returns to everyday life. Vogler (2007), who describes this moment as one of the 'trickiest and most challenging' (p. 197), calls it 'The Resurrection', since there is always a chance that the hero has already died before reaching this point. Nonetheless, all 'are Resurrected in the sense that they usually live on in the memory of the survivors, those for whom they gave their lives. The audience survives, and remembers the lessons a tragic hero can teach us' (Vogler, 2007, p. 201).

Since the hero has now accomplished his mission, he has won the 'Freedom to Live', according to Campbell (2004, p. 221), or the right to 'Return with the Elixir', as Vogler (2007, p. 215) dubs it.

Figure 1. The stages of the hero's journey



Source: own elaboration on the basis of the works of Campbell (2004) and Vogler (2007).

'The hero is the conscious vehicle of the terrible, wonderful Law' (Campbell, 2004, p. 222) and, in this sense, he is open to any suggestions: he may decide to rest or be required yet again to embark on a similar odyssey. If the traveller does not have anything to offer, he will not become a hero, viz. he must be able to demonstrate to a community that he has been in a specific place and can therefore be regarded as a role model for others, and that it is indeed possible to overcome death. Thus, he assumes the role of leader and servant and, by doing so, is led out of his isolation once and for all. The hero's journey can be graphically depicted as follows

Campbell (2004) summarises all the stages in the following way:

The mythological hero, setting forth from his common-day hut or castle, is lured, carried away, or else voluntarily proceeds, to the threshold of adventure. There he encounters a shadow presence that guards the passage. The hero may defeat or conciliate this power and go alive into the kingdom of the dark (brother-battle, dragon battle; offering, charm), or be slain by the opponent and descend in death (dismemberment, crucifixion). Beyond the threshold, then, the hero journeys through a world of unfamiliar yet strangely intimate forces, some of which severely threaten him (tests), some of which give magical aid (helpers). When he arrives at the nadir of the mythological round, he undergoes a supreme ordeal and gains his reward. The triumph may be represented as the hero's sexual union with the goddess-mother of the world (sacred marriage), his recognition by the father-creator (father atonement), his own divinization (apotheosis), or again—if the powers have remained unfriendly to him—his theft of the boon he came to gain (bride-theft, fire-theft); intrinsically it is an expansion of consciousness and therewith of being (illumination, transfiguration, freedom). The final work is that of the return.

If the powers have blessed the hero, he now sets forth under their protection (emissary); if not, he flees and is pursued (transformation flight, obstacle flight). At the return threshold the transcendental powers must remain behind; the hero re-emerges from the kingdom of dread (return, resurrection). The boon that he brings restores the world (elixir) (pp. 227-228).

Some stories can isolate or enhance one or several elements as the motif of the test or flight, while others can unite a group of independent circles in one. Different characteristics can even unite or a sole element can be multiplied.

2. Methodology

2.1. Methodological strategies

A qualitative method based on an established model, of which there are countless versions, was selected: the hero's journey. This model, which describes how a journey is embarked on, is in turn a model for a story's correct functioning. Originally described by Campbell, before being elaborated on by Vogler, for this study an *ad hoc* tool, which bears in mind the main milestones of the hero's journey based on the contributions of these two authors, was designed. To ensure the highest degree of scientific rigour and to achieve the objective of unravelling the elements involved in the hero building process, a number of variables, which, hinging primarily on the contributions of Jung (2002), Bauzá (2009) and Kerenyi (2009), flesh out the hero's morphological and functional attributes were added. In this way, the figure of the hero can be studied in a more complete and intricate fashion.

2.2. Population and sample

Two literary sources chosen were *The first voyage round the world, by Magellan* (Pigafetta, 1874 [1536]) and *Magellan* (Zweig, 2011 [1931]).

On 10 August 1519, a fleet formed by the ships the *Trinidad*, the flagship of Magellan—a noble Portuguese navigator who had been granted a royal patent to explore parts of the unknown world and to claim them for the Spanish crown (Bergreen, 2003) —the *Concepción*, the *San Antonio*, the *Victoria* and the *Santiago* (Mollá, 2017) started out from Las Mulas Quay. One month and 10 days later, after having provisioned the ships, the expedition set sail from Sanlucar de Barrameda with 234 men on board.

In January 1520, the expedition reached the estuary of the River Plate, where Magellan confirmed that it was not the long-awaited passage to the Spice Islands. Bad weather obliged the ships to remain in San Julian Bay initially for two months, a period of inactivity that was then prolonged for another five. In April, the first mutinies broke out and, despite the fact that Magellan managed to quell them, a large number of men were condemned to death, including the ship's captains Luis de Mendoza and Gaspar de Quesada. Shortly afterwards, a ship was lost on a voyage of exploration, another captained by Estévao Gomes deserted and returned to Spain and, in November 1520, what was left of the expedition finally sailed through what would later be known as the Strait of Magellan.

The following months were replete with hardships, including hunger and scurvy until, at the end of April 1521, Magellan died on Mactan Island (Mollá, 2017) in tragic circumstances. The expedition promptly lost another ship for the lack of crewmembers and another in a poor state of repair had to remain in Tidore to be refitted. Consequently, the *Victoria*, captained by Juan Sebastian Elcano, was the only ship to depart from Tidore on 21 December 1521, thus commencing a five-month voyage across the Indian Ocean.

It was not until May 1522 that the remaining crewmembers, now much weakened by scurvy and fatigue, sailed around the Cape of Good Hope. After a tortuous three-year voyage, the *Victoria* finally limped back into Sanlucar de Barrameda on 6 September of that same year, with only 18 men on board. It thus became the first expedition to circumnavigate the globe, to do something that no one had achieved before (Bergreen, 2003) and to demonstrate to humanity that the Earth was, after all, one world: it had made a dream as ancient as human imagination itself come true. 'A story that changed the course of history and the way we look at the world' (Bergreen, 2003, p. 2). It became the most important sea voyage of all times.

This feat had an exceptional witness: Antonio Pigafetta, a young scholar of Venetian extraction who accompanied Magellan from the start and survived to tell the tale on returning to Sanlucar de Barrameda. Bergreen (2003) describes Pigafetta's chronicle as 'uno de los documentos más importantes de la Era de los Descubrimientos' [9] (p. 444). However, Pigafetta was also a partisan writer who turned a blind eye to the drastic measures that Magellan had taken to quell the frequent mutinies breaking out in the months running up to his death. His account entitled, *The first voyage round the world, by Magellan*, which was first published posthumously in Italian in 1536, under the title of *Relazioni in torno al primo viaggio di circumnavigazione*. *Notizia del Mondo Novo con le figure dei paesi scoperti*, is the first object of study.

Pigafetta was an Italian traveller who was born around 1490 and died in his hometown of Vicenza in 1534. In 1519 or thereabouts, he travelled to Spain where he served Charles V, furthering the enterprise initiated by the Catholic Monarchs in the Atlantic. Shortly afterwards, he made the acquaintance of Magellan who enrolled him for his voyage around the world. He was the person tasked with producing a written account of Magellan's feat and his legacy became the most important source on the first circumnavigation of the globe. In spite of the fact that he noted down daily occurrences, his writings also include plenty of imaginative details, including very valuable ethnographic data and noteworthy details of the navigation *per se*.

Enrolled as Antonio Lombardo and assigned to the *Trinidad* captained by Magellan, Pigafetta managed to win him over and act as his translator. On returning to Spain, he presented his work to Charles I during an interview held in Valladolid. And, according to his own account, he gave the Grand Master Philippe Villiers de l'Isle-Adam the last copy before retiring to Italy. Although the original has since been lost, it was a private diary that was later transformed into a travel book typical of the Renaissance, when this genre was highly influenced by works such as those of Marco Polo and Amerigo Vespucci. It is a reflection of its time, clearly embodying the values of the Christian faith, one of the basic pillars of the Age of Discovery.

The second book analysed here is *Magellan*, by the Vienna-born (1881) author Stefan Zweig, first published in 1938. On 8 August 1936, Zweig boarded the RMS Alcantara in Southampton on board which he sailed to Brazil and Argentina, calling at Vigo and Lisbon on the way, before returning to the English port on the RMS Almanzora, on 6 October. As can be seen in the book's introduction, after having enjoyed calm conditions and the comforts of the ocean liner —notwithstanding the restraints of everyday life on board ship— during the first week of the voyage, Zweig then started to burn with impatience to arrive at his destination, a frame of mind that made the rest of his trip unbearable. During that interval, he pondered on the extraordinary conditions of his voyage e—amenities, food, fair weather, communication with the shore, etc.— contrasting them with those of the first voyages in which audacious navigators discovered new seas. Internally reliving those first crossings of the conquerors of the seas, he was greatly ashamed of his impatience, a feeling that would haunt him for the rest of the voyage. That was when he started to show interest in learning more about those anonymous heroes, his quest beginning in the ship's own library, where he consulted different accounts

of the first voyages in unexplored oceans. 'As I studied them, it seemed to me that the deed worthiest of admiration was that of the man who made the most wonderful of all voyages of discovery—Ferdinand Magellan, who started from Seville with five little ships to circumnavigate the globe' (Zweig, 2011, p. 10).

On returning home, Zweig read and researched and was amazed at how little heed had hitherto been paid to that heroic exploit. As on other occasions, he discovered that the best way to underscore that fact was to give it literary form, since he frequently wrote biographies. In 1938, he published a book on Magellan originally entitled, *Magellan - Der Mann Und Seine Tat*; later on, it was published in English as *Conqueror of the Seas: The Story of Magellan* (1940) and in Spanish as *Magallanes. El hombre y su gesta* (1957). Zweig's book depicts a tenacious, intrepid man, an adventurer and navigator. But it also paints a picture of an age and how the world was seen from Europe at the time.

2.3. Data gathering tools

The data gathering tool is based on the division of the hero's journey into the different stages proposed by Campbell in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (2004) and Vogler (2007) in *The Writer's Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers*, accompanied by the writings of Jung (2002), Bauzá (2009) and Kerenyi (2009) which complete the hero's morphological and functional attributes.

3. Results

The results of a comparative analysis of both works, which will serve as a basis for the following discussion, are shown below.

| ANALYTICAL TOOLS: BUILDING A HERO | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------|------------------------------------|-------|-----------------|--|--|--|
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| THE HERO'S ATTRIBUTES | | | | | | | |
| | Pigafetta | | Zweig | | | | |
| | YE | (pp.)* | YE | (pp.) | | | |
| | S/ | | S/ | | | | |
| | NO | | NO | | | | |
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4. Discussion

The first step in building a hero has to do with the morphological and functional attributes that he must possess, the principal one being transgression, namely, the desire to break with the ordinary world. Magellan intended to go beyond the known limits and, to that end, there was a fundamental character, Faleiro, who studied the navigator's scheme and, as Zweig indicates (pp. 77-78), [9]

[...] provided it with a scientific foundation. With precise calculations and with tables of figures, he was able to confirm what Magellan had reached by intuition. [...] They mutually pledged themselves to keep the details secret until achievement had crowned their efforts; they also decided, in case of need, without the aid of their country and perhaps against their country, to do a deed that was to benefit, not one land alone, but all mankind.

Notwithstanding the fact that he had been forsaken by the King of Portugal, by his homeland, Magellan always felt strong (Zweig, p. 74): 'His native country had left him in the lurch; his ties with office and duty had been severed. So much the better; now he was free. As so often when a man seems to be at the mercy of the winds, he is in reality being blown back upon his own self'. For, as Zweig himself notes (p. 207), 'Magellan, however, was more interested in his imperishable deed than in his mortal life. One who wished to act heroically, must act unreasonably.'

As regards ethical values, Magellan is portrayed from the start, above all in Zweig's book, as a shadowy and reserved character. Many subsequent works have underscored the temperamental nature of the navigator's personality, which earned him the hostility of all of his ship's captains. In his writings, however, Pigafetta goes out of his way to play down this dark side in favour of a much more mellifluous account of Magellan's character traits, where importance is given to attributes such as his courage and determination to carry forward his exploit, even in the most desperate situations, and the mercy that he showed at times, for instance, when reacting to the betrayal of the captains of the four other ships (p. 56). His ethical values are also reflected in the wording of his will, where 'Only now, when he has devoted careful attention to a future life and has thought of the "good works which, at the Last Judgement, can speak on behalf of the most sinful", does Magellan turn to the needs of his family' (Zweig, p. 144). Particularly noteworthy is his faith in Christian values and devotion to the King of

Spain, something that would lead him to demonstrate an evangelising zeal in all the lands through which he passed (Pigafetta, pp. 64, 81, 88, 92-96, 116 and 199) (Zweig, pp. 158 and 234).

On the subject of untimely, tragic death, this was undoubtedly the case with Magellan. On 27 April, when he had already discovered the long-awaited passage and shortly before the expedition set sail for Spain, Magellan was killed by a group of natives in the Battle of Mactan. Pigafetta (p. 102) stresses that 'he turned round towards us to see if we were all in safety, as though his obstinate fight had no other object than to give an opportunity for the retreat of his men'. Zweig (pp. 252-254) also offers an account of the one-sided battle in which Magellan perished. Nonetheless, it is remarkable that neither of them delves into his bearing during the battle, as other authors have indeed done much later on. In his historical novel, Mollá (2017) describes the moment at which Magellan died and remarks on his great courage. For example, sensing that he was on death's door, he summoned Santander and ordered him to the return to the boats in order that the survivors might save their lives:

- [...] hincó la rodilla en tierra, se apoyó en su espada y con el agua a la altura de la herida en el muslo pareció ponerse en paz con Dios, aunque aún tuvo tiempo de levantar la cabeza con energía para volver a dirigirse a Juan.
- Id con Dios, Santander. Regresad a España y contad que morí defendiendo a mi rey. Os habéis portado como un buen soldado [10] (p. 232).

Zweigtells us how Magellan was slain 'when hard upon the completion of his imperishable deed' (p. 254), thus implying that for the captain-general it was untimely. 'Though death could deprive him of life, it could not rob him of victory, and his mortal lot seems of little importance after so immortal a deed' (idem.).

The last variable in this section has to do with the fact that heroes are paradigmatic characters, that is, they serve as role models for the community. Zweig directly quotes Pigafetta (p. 102) to describe the general feeling after Magellan's death: 'Then the Indians [...] ran him through—our mirror, our light, our comforter, our true guide' [11] (p. 254). In both cases, emphasis is placed on the role that he had played as the group's lodestar.

Concerning the hero's journey, the data contained in the table, albeit inconsistent at times in both books, basically speak for themselves. Moving on to the ordinary world, from where the hero departs, the call to adventure sub-stage is reflected more broadly in Zweig's book in which the idea of Magellan sailing around the world is linked to the epistolary relationship that he maintained with the Portuguese captain Francisco Serrano who had deserted on a far-flung island of the Moluccas (pp. 60-62),

[...] the epicurean choice of his friend exerted a decisive influence on Magellan's life, and therewith upon the history of maritime discovery. [...] after Serrão's death there was found among his papers a letter from Magellan wherein the latter promised to come to Ternate as soon as possible, 'if not by Portugal, by another way'. Thanks to the lures of Serrão, an idea and a mystery gained power over a man, and this idea determined the man's destiny (pp. 61-62).

Pigafetta starts by offering an autobiographical account of how he ended up embarking with Magellan, but says nothing about the captain-general's inducement to circumnavigate the globe. Nonetheless, in the middle of the book (p. 127), he literally claims, 'Francisco Serrano was a great friend and a relation of our unfortunate captain-general, and he it was who induced him to undertake that voyage.'

With respect to the refusal of the call, both books refer to it but as something beyond Magellan's control, thus more consistent with the definition proposed by Vogler who considers this as being an external obstacle in the hero's way. Zweig describes this circumstance in the following terms (p. 73):

'When, a rejected beggar, he left the palace, Magellan knew that he must wait, must hesitate, no longer', in relation to the King of Portugal's refusal to back his enterprise. It would also be turned by the Casa de Contratación, or India House, in Seville (p. 95).

Likewise, Pigafetta mentions these developments a long time after Magellan's death (p. 127): '[...] D. Manuel, King of Portugal, refused to increase his pension by a single testoon per month, an increase which he thought he had well deserved'.

In reference to the meeting with the mentor, Pigafetta dedicates just a few words to the support of the King of Spain, much more receptive than his Portuguese counterpart (pp. 127-128): '[...] he came to Spain and made the proposal to his Sacred Majesty to come here by way of the west, and he obtained all that he asked for'. For his part, Zweig goes into more detail, adding Juan de Aranda (pp. 93-99) and Cristopher de Haro (p. 97) to the King of Spain as his mentors. Regarding the latter, he remarks (p. 105), 'On 22nd March 1518, King Charles [...] subscribed with the formal "Yo el Rey" the capitulación, the binding agreement with Magellan and Ruy Faleiro.'

The last stage of this period is the crossing of the first threshold, which has been identified here with the start of the journey or the passage from the ordinary to the extraordinary world. Both authors agree on the moment: that day when the five ships that Magellan had mustered for the voyage of discovery finally set sail. And both of them pinpoint Seville as the starting point of the passage downriver to Sanlucar.

Lastly, they both mention a specific date on which the expedition finally put to sea. In the case of Pigafetta (p. 40), he says that at last on 'Tuesday, the 20th September of the said year, we set sail from St. Lucar, making the course of the south-west otherwise named Labeiche; and on the twenty-sixth of the said month we arrived at an island of Gran Canaria'. While Zweig notes (p. 145),

In the grey morning, on Tuesday, 20th September 1519 (a day to be momentous in history), the anchors were heaved, the sails filled, salutes were fired at the departing land. The longest voyage of discovery, the boldest adventure in the records of our race, had begun.

As to the extraordinary world, i.e. the stage of initiation, it is the voyage *per se*, an aspect on which both authors perhaps elaborate most. And with respect to the road of trials, for Pigafetta this is a fairly short period prior to the apotheosis. His description of this part of the voyage (pp. 40-57) includes exotic animal and tribes. Specifically, there is talk of sharks (p. 41), tribes in which the men have finger-length stones hanging from holes in their lips (p. 45), evangelisation (pp. 64, 81, 88, 92-96, 116 and 199), cannibals, (pp. 44, 49, 122, 149 and 188), encounters with sundry giants (pp. 48 and 50-54) and sea wolves (p. 49) and Magellan's captains plotting treason (p. 56).

Zweig also offers an account of this stage of the journey (pp. 147-168) in which he describes all of the difficulties that Magellan had to overcome before reaching his goal. For example, the navigator received a letter from his father-in-law warning him about a conspiracy against him: 'Barbosa warned his son-in-law that he had learnt of the existence of a privy pact among the Spanish captains, who intended to mutiny during the voyage' (p. 147), which is exactly what happened. In these and other books on the subject, there are often references to the bad blood between some of the expedition members and Magellan, which might have led to different insurrections, such as the mutiny of the *San Antonio* and the subsequent trial of the mutineers (pp. 184-185): 'Magellan resolved to have only one victim, and he chose Gaspar Quesada, the man who had used arms and stabbed Juan de Lorriaga, *maestre* on board the *San Antonio*' (p. 185). Mention is also made of Juan de Cartagena and a priest

who were also found guilty (p. 186) and marooned on the beach of San Julian with provisions to tide them over for a while.

Following the rebels' trial in the Port of San Julian, the winter season prevented the fleet from continuing on its voyage for five months. While stranded there, they encountered giants with huge feet (patagão), who called their land Patagonia (p. 192), and suffered many hardships (pp. 194-195).

In Zweig's work there are also references to capes that had nothing to do with the passage to the Moluccas, such as when the estuary of the River Plate was mistaken for the route to the Spice Islands (pp. 159-160). He writes, 'None of the captains and none of the crew must discover how fearful was the blow he [Magellan] had sustained, how deadly the disappointment' (p. 161), before continuing:

False had been his information, false were Faleiro's calculations, false his own contention, false were the promises he had made to King Charles and the Privy Council. If a strait really existed—and for the first time the man who had been so confident had to admit that there was an 'if'—it must lie much farther to the south (idem.).

Subsequently, after having been sent ahead to do some southerly scouting, the Santiago was wrecked in a storm. So when the expedition finally set sail from the Bay of San Julian, the results of the first year of the voyage had been frankly disastrous: the loss of one ship and three captains, and its goal still far from being achieved: 'These must have been the gloomiest days in Magellan's life, perhaps the only ones in which he, whose faith was usually not to be shaken, secretly despaired' (Zweig, p. 195). With regard to detours along the way, the sub-stage just before that of apotheosis, Pigafetta (p. 57) focuses on the discovery of the Cape of the Eleven Thousand Virgins and the difficulties encountered when attempting to navigate the strait, while underscoring the captain-general's bravery. He also describes the reencounter with the two ships believed to have been lost and Estebao Gomes' mounting hatred towards Magellan at the time. Zweig coincides with this account: the same cape, where the fleet divided in October 1520 to explore the area. He tells us how, after a nerve-wracking wait lasting days, both ships returned with the news that the strait led to a great expanse of saltwater that could not be a river (p. 209). Days before this, Magellan had held the first meeting with his captains to listen to their views, Gomes being the only one in favour of returning to Spain. However, Magellan ordered them to continue to conceal the fact that they were running short of provisions from their crews and to press ahead (pp. 206-207). When describing the apotheosis, that crucial moment at which the hero achieves his wish, both books coincide in quite a few aspects. While the San Antonio and the Concepción explored the southern stretch of the channel, a boat was sent to reconnoitre its western reaches. After three days, the outlet to the 'Mar del Sur, the great unknown sea' (Zweig, p. 209) was discovered.

Commenting on this development, Pigafetta (p. 60) claims, 'At the joy that the captain-general had at this he began to cry, and he gave the name of Cape of Desire to the cape, as a thing that had been much desired for a long time.' Zweig also remarks on Magellan's tears of joy (pp. 209-210): 'This was Magellan's supreme minute [...]. All his expectations had been fulfilled. [...] His life was justified by its fruit [...]. His eyes filled with tears, which, scalding hot, ran down his weather-beaten face and dropped into his black beard'.

That crucial moment is followed by the last sub-stage of the extraordinary world: the ultimate boon or reward. Although there is no mention of Magellan's ultimate reward in Pigafetta's book, in the last pages of his work Zweig reflects on the heroic nature of that accomplishment:

But never in history does temporal utility decide the moral value of an achievement. He only can permanently increase the wealth of mankind who increases man's knowledge of himself

and intensifies his creative impulses. In this sense, what Magellan did excelled the deeds of his contemporaries. Perhaps the most valid of his titles to renown is this, that he did not (like most leaders) sacrifice the lives of myriads on behalf of an idea, but mainly his own. Ever memorable, therefore, will be the heroic self-sacrifice of the Pioneer of the Pacific, and the splendid venture of these five poor little lonely ships that set forth on their voyage to play their part in the hallowed war of mankind against the unknown, and of which only one got back victorious after having circumnavigated the world. Nor will he ever be forgotten, the man who conceived this boldest of thoughts [...] (p. 296).

The last stage of the journey—i.e. the return—begins at this point. Whereas Pigafetta does not allude to the first sub-stage, to wit, refusal of the return, Zweig does indeed mention this dilemma for the hero after losing two ships, recuperating one of them and believing that the other had deserted (p. 210). Accordingly, Magellan had to make an urgent decision: 'To launch forth into the unknown South Seas, which a week ago, when the prospects were far more favourable, had seemed unduly venturesome, would now, after the flight of the *San Antonio*, be practically suicidal' (p. 212). He decided to forge ahead, an episode that Zweig recounts in a fairly literary manner: 'Then (on 28th November 1520) it was up anchor and away, flags flying. With a salvo of artillery, three lonely little ships respectfully greeted the unfamiliar seas, as a man chivalrously greets a great adversary who has challenged him to a life-or-death struggle' (p. 216).

The magic flight is that complex sub-stage of the return characterised by a series of impediments designed to prevent the hero from doing so. Here, Magellan meets his death. Pigafetta (p. 102) tells us how the captain-general succumbed at the hands of a number of natives, who had refused to acknowledge the authority of the King of Spain, at the Battle of Mactan on 27 April 1521: '[...] the Indians threw themselves upon him, and ran him through with lances and scimetars, and all the other arms which they had'. Zweig stresses the way in which this fact does not detract in any way from Magellan's feat: 'In this insensate way (like his successor James Cooke, one of the greatest navigators in history), when hard upon the completion of his imperishable deed, Magellan was slain in a petty skirmish with a horde of naked islanders' (p. 254).

At that moment, the two ships parted, with the flagship the *Trinidad*, now in a very poor state of repair, re-crossing 'the Pacific in order to reach overseas Spain at Panama, while the *Victoria*, taking advantage of the favourable winds, should sail westward across the Indian Ocean [...]' (Zweig, p. 271).

The crossing of the return threshold took place when the *Victoria*, captained by Elcano, who curiously enough is not mentioned in Pigafetta's book, made it back to Sanlúcar on 6 September 1522, three years after the expedition's departure. 'The greatest cruise in the history of the world, the first circumnavigation of the globe, was over,' comments Zweig (p. 280). While Pigafetta (p. 162) adds, 'we were reduced to only eighteen, and these for the most part sick. Of the others, some died of hunger, some had run away at the island of Timor, and some had been condemned to death for their crimes.' 'Next morning the *Victoria* sailed upriver to Seville' (Zweig, p. 281).

In the case of Magellan, the resurrection is a rather complex process since, after the expedition's return, there did not seem to be much desire to preserve the memory of his exploit. Zweig (p. 289) observes, 'We gather that this thrusting of Magellan into the background was most annoying to the loyal Pigafetta,' despite the fact that 'Meanwhile the news of the fortunate return of the eighteen spread like wildfire across Europe, rousing immeasurable astonishment and admiration' (p. 284). For he describes Magellan, a shady character, in the following terms: '[...] small, obscure, inconspicuous and silent as he was, he was utterly devoid of the arts which would have enabled him to woo the favour of the

mighty [...]. He did not know how to smile, how to make himself amiable, how to be obliging or how to advocate his ideas eloquently. Taciturn and reserved, always enwrapped in a cloud of loneliness, this perpetual solitary was environed with rime, ungraciousness and mistrust. Half unconsciously his comrades were aware that in the silent depths of his being there lurked a strange and obscure ambition, which made his aims incomprehensible to them' (pp. 69-70).

The Portuguese navigator would ultimately win glory but, at the time, 'No more was accorded to him than the doing of the deed; he was denied its golden shadow, triumph and temporal frame' (Zweig, p. 292). In point of fact, it was one of the tasks of Pigafetta who claims, 'It is a certain proof that he knew by his genius, and his intrepidity, without any one having given him the example, how to attempt the circuit of the globe, which he had almost completed' (p. 102).

The return with the elixir, the moment at which the hero shares his discovery with the community and ultimately emerges from his isolation to become fixed in the collective memory forever, was something that was fostered by Magellan's followers, the first of whom was Pigafetta (p. 162): 'Then, leaving Seville, I went to Valladolid, where I presented to his Sacred Majesty Don Carlos, neither gold nor silver, but things much more precious in the eyes of so great a Sovereign. I presented to him, among other things, a book written by my hand of all the things that had occurred day by day in our voyage'. By promptly offering an account of the exploit, he thus used his writings as a vehicle through which to convert Magellan into a hero. Zweig also showers praise on the man: 'At length the cosmography of the Hellenes and the Romans had been transcended, in defiance of the veto of the Church and foolish fables concerning the men of the Antipodes who must walk upon their heads. Established once and for all had been the circumference of the earth, the measure of the cosmos. [...] The world was a restricted region which man had conquered. [...] Under the flag of Spain, Columbus began the work of modern discovery, and under the same flag Magellan completed it' (pp. 284-285).

5. Conclusions

Magellan continues to be a controversial figure. Some authors believe that he was a tyrant, others a traitor and yet others a visionary, but for many more he was a hero (Bergreen, 2003). This study has analysed how he was converted into a hero in terms of both his morphological and functional attributes and those pertaining to the journey itself. Both books contain sufficient elements extolling Magellan—putting aside the dark side of his character, of which little or nothing is said—to convert him into the global hero of today.

With his book, Pigafetta initiated a hero building process typical of the Renaissance: an anonymous person who, thanks to his defiance of the rules for a cause linked to the progress of humanity, sacrifices his life for something much greater than himself, thus becoming a paradigm. Magellan is a here-and-now hero who has become part of the collective imaginary in the same way as his classical counterparts.

Both books are, in turn, mirrors of their time and poles apart. Pigafetta's work is an eyewitness account and, nonetheless, closer to the ancient myths that place the accent on actions and their symbolic value. Zweig's work draws from secondary sources and is both well-documented and profound, typical of the twentieth century, in which the language and his view of Magellan extol a feat that is doubtless worthy of praise because it brought about a radical change in the worldview prevailing at the time.

6. Notes

1 '[...] realiser of the impossible' [our translation].

- 2 'You can perhaps even imagine what odes and cantos poets as famous as Homer and Hesiod would have composed extoling Thebes, Troy and Ithaca if any one of them had been chosen, instead of Seville, to become the alpha and omega of such an extraordinary feat' [our translation].
- 3'[...] a complex cultural process approachable and interpretable from multiple perspectives' [our translation].
- 4 '[...] reference system guiding human praxis' [our translation].
- 5 'From the moment at which myth unfolds in an historical time, without ceasing to be myth, its discourse also contains elements that belong to a society or history' [our translation].
- 6 '... between the divine and the human, order and disorder, the civilised and the savage' [our translation].
- 7 '[...] the greatness of the hero lies in the fact that by entering into combat he is putting his life at risk' [our translation].
- 8 '[...] pain, doubt, existential exile are the most human traits of the classical hero' [our translation].
- 9 'one of the most important documents of the Age of Discovery' [our translation]
- 10 [...] he knelt on the ground, leant on his sword and with the water lapping at his wounded thigh, he seemed to find peace with God, although he still had time to lift his head energetically to address Juan once more, 'God speed, Santander. Return to Spain and tell them there that I died defending my king. You have borne yourself like a good soldier.'
- 11 In his translation (1874), Lord Stanley of Alderley offers a slightly different rendering of Pigafetta's description: '[...] they deprived of life our mirror, light, comfort, and true guide'.

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