



“Mythic Echoes And Indigenous Narratives: Tracing The Monomyth In Easterine Kire’s Son Of The Thundercloud”

Santanu kumar samal , UGC NET
P.G 2nd year, Department of English
Berhampur University, Odisha

As a customary story with strong cultural roots, myth frequently explains the cosmos, human experience, and societal values. A universal narrative structure that chronicles a hero's transformational journey through phases like Departure, Initiation, and Return is outlined by Joseph Campbell's notion of the Monomyth, also known as the Hero's Journey. This study examines how *Son of the Thundercloud* by Easterine Kire incorporates unique aspects of indigenous spirituality and Naga culture while reflecting the Monomyth framework. The plot of Kire's book is on Pele, a grieving man who sets out on a life-changing adventure filled with spiritual awakenings, symbolic difficulties, and interactions with supernatural creatures. This study aims to address the following research question: How does Kire's book use Naga cultural elements while adhering to Campbell's Monomyth structure? In order to do this, the study examines significant points in Pele's journey through the Monomyth, from his reluctant departure to his eventual acceptance of life's cyclical cycle. It does this by showing how Kire uses conventional mythic patterns to illustrate themes of death, rebirth, and hope. The paper uses Campbell's Monomyth framework to show how *Son of the Thundercloud* modifies common narrative structures to represent oral traditions and indigenous knowledge systems. By doing this, the book not only reinforces cultural identification but also shows how myth is still relevant today for examining spiritual awakening and human perseverance.

Keywords; Monomyth, Naga folklore , Easterine Kire, Oral tradition , Indigenous knowledge

Introduction

Myth, being a product of culture, has been a long-standing vehicle for the passing down of ancestral wisdom, the explanation of nature, and the codification of societal values. In most indigenous cultures, particularly those in Northeast India, myths are not merely stories but oral narratives that actively construct and change communal identity. As a narrative genre deeply embedded in cultural awareness, myth tends to mirror the communal spiritual, philosophical, and existential worldview of a people. It is in this light that the writings of Easterine Kire, particularly her novel *Son of the Thundercloud*, are a powerful literary intervention that attempts to reclaim and reinterpret indigenous identity in the language of myth and folklore.

Joseph Campbell's Monomyth theory, more often referred to as the Hero's Journey, is an entire model for mythological narrative analysis. Presented in his seminal work, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949), Campbell's model is an allegorical chart of individual transformation, spiritual, moral, and existential levels included, describing a cycle of narrative with three principal stages: Departure, Initiation, and Return. Campbell's pattern, which exists throughout the world and across the centuries, is an allegorical chart of individual transformation, including spiritual, moral, and existential levels. Campbell's hypothesis has

frequently been applied to Western literature and classical epic narrative, but its application to non-Western texts and indigenous narratives is new territory with enormous potential.

Easterine Kire's *Son of the Thundercloud* tells the tale of Pele, a bereaved vagabond who wanders a barren, post-apocalyptic world seeking meaning, redemption, and hope. His journey is interrupted by supernatural occurrences, ancient myths, and life-changing revelations that mirror the phases of the Monomyth. What makes Kire's novel stand out, however, is its embedding in the Naga oral tradition, an indigenous body of knowledge that is interested in collective memory, spiritual cosmology, and a cyclical conception of birth and death. The novel does not simply imitate Campbell's schema but indigenizes it, filling it with cultural motifs, mythic prototypes, and symbolic imagery characteristic of Naga cosmology.

This research argues that *Son of Thundercloud* follows and reinterprets the Monomyth pattern in attempting to capture indigenous viewpoints. By using Pele's journey through Campbell's Hero's Journey as a theoretical template, mythic analysis demonstrates Kire's use of motifs of mortality, renewal, and determination within an individual Naga context. Myth is not merely decorative or symbolic in use within the narrative; instead, it is crucial to the structural integrity and philosophical depth of the novel. In doing so, Kire's work demonstrates the ongoing relevance and malleability of myth as a tool of narrative, with its potential to bridge the spiritual and the political, the individual and the communal, the historical and the modern. In mapping Pele's growth, this study will look at significant points of the Monomyth, including his reluctant departure from a state of despair, the struggle and learning of initiation, and his eventual return to a world rich in meaning. Along the way, the study will be interested in how Kire weaves those classic Naga elements into a greater mythic context. This methodological approach highlights the flexibility of the Monomyth while acknowledging the worth of indigenous knowledge systems to contemporary literature. In this ever more fractured world of historical trauma and cultural displacement, *Son of the Thundercloud* illustrates the ways in which mythology can function as both vessels of old knowledge and light of new rebirth.

Understanding the Monomyth Framework

Joseph Campbell's Monomyth theory, or the Hero's Journey, is one of the most influential models in comparative mythology and literary theory. Presented in his book, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Campbell's theory proposes that mythic stories from all cultures follow a fundamental pattern that outlines the hero's path through a set of discrete but interrelated phases. Based on the laws of Jungian psychology, anthropological studies, and classical sources, Campbell outlines the Hero's Journey as a narrative model that explains a psychological and spiritual growth. The model consists of three major stages: Departure (or Separation), Initiation, and Return. These three stages are divided into several sub-stages that explain the hero's path from the mundane to the extraordinary and back home, enlightened and changed.

At the Departure stage, the hero receives the call to adventure, often initiated by a sense of loss, dissatisfaction, or disturbance in the hero's normal world. The hero can try to resist this call, resisting the urge to leave the comfort of the known for the unknown. Eventually, a supernatural mentor or guide will come and encourage the hero to cross the threshold and leave the normal world. This is the stage where the hero's journey into the liminal world begins. The liminal world is a world of its own laws, where the possibility of transformation can happen. The Initiation stage is a critical stage of the hero's journey, and during it, the hero undergoes many tests, challenges, and internal struggles. Death and rebirth experiences are part of this stage, as they represent the psychological acceptance of the hero's mortality and limitations. During this process of transformation, the hero usually encounters divine or mystical beings, ritual tests, and is imparted sacred wisdom or a profound gift. The peak of the Initiation is the hero's symbolic or real transformation, leading to a revelation that changes his or her relationship with themselves, others, and the world in general. Finally, the Return stage is the hero's return to the normal world, but now with newfound knowledge or skills. But this return is often challenging; the hero may be faced with resistance, misunderstanding, or unwillingness on the part of others. Finally, the successful completion of this cycle of tales restores balance, healing of emotional wounds, and sharing of gained wisdom with the greater society. Campbell refers to the final gift as the "elixir," which the hero brings back as a symbol of his personal enlightenment, symbolically relevant to the society at large.

Monomyth should not be seen as an inflexible formula but as a flexible archetype with meaning in various mythological traditions, such as ancient Greek epics, Buddhist sutras, Native American legends, and African oral narratives. Campbell's model is popular because of its profound psychological insight and spiritual significance. The Hero's Journey is not only about external adventures but also about inner adventures in terms of individuation, recovery, and spiritual enlightenment. This narrative schema enables readers and spectators to relate to their own struggles through the mythic process of the hero. Nonetheless, Campbell's theoretical model has been criticized, particularly by postcolonial and feminist theory scholars, who argue that the Monomyth is prone to appropriating Western male mythopoeic myth. Its emphasis on individualism, sequential unfolding, and sole heroism may be incommensurate with the collective, cyclical, and relational myths found in most indigenous cultures. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o and Linda Tuhiwai Smith have been among those scholars who have pointed out that indigenous narratives are more likely to subvert Western mythological theory's universalizing propensity, and instead emphasize stories that are rooted in specific cultural, spiritual, and ecological settings.

In this regard, Easterine Kire's *Son of the Thundercloud* is a powerful case in point. The novel uses the general principles of the Hero's Journey, but it does so within a vision richly informed by the conventions of Naga oral tradition, indigenous cosmology, and spiritual philosophy. The hero's journey of the protagonist Pele follows Campbell's stages of his departure due to loss, initiation through mystical episodes, and eventual return full of redemptive mission. But the novel also works against and reconfigures the Monomyth by situating it within a cultural context of cyclical time, communal healing, and ancestral wisdom.

In *Son of the Thundercloud*, the journey of the hero is not an individual movement toward mastery or knowledge, but a social process of remembering, rebirth, and renewal. In this instance, the Monomyth is a vehicle for cultural rebirth, a doorway between mythic past and emerging future. Through analysis of the form of the Hero's Journey in Kire's story, this thesis seeks to explore the ways the Monomyth can be recontextualized and reimagined to depict other visions that respect interconnectedness, sacred ecology, and spiritual continuity. In the next section, this study will examine the cultural and narrative significance of Naga oral traditions and folklore as the framework in which Kire builds her mythic narrative. Knowledge and understanding of these traditional systems of knowledge are at the center of understanding how *Son of the Thundercloud* both pays homage to and remakes the Hero's Journey into a narrative that is culturally specific and spirituality grounded.

Naga Folklore and Oral Tradition in *Son of the Thundercloud*

Indigenous oral traditions provide rich information about a people's worldview, history, and spirituality. For the case of the Naga people of Northeast India, folklore and oral tradition are at the heart of cultural identity formation, as carriers of inherited wisdom and storehouses of collective memory. These narratives are living embodiments of cultural knowledge, transmitted from generation to generation through performance in song, chant, and spoken narrative. Easterine Kire, a woman of the Angami Naga people herself, is deeply invested in this oral tradition in shaping the mythopoetic world of *Son of the Thundercloud*, creating a narrative that is deeply grounded in heritage even as it richly invents.

Naga mythology, like that of most indigenous cultures, is negotiated through the process of symbols, archetypes, and repeated motifs. It will often include stories of creation, tribal migrations, supernatural beings, nature spirits, and sacred landscapes. Oral transmission of these stories means that their transmission is both social and performative, with an in-built flexibility. In *Son of the Thundercloud* Kire employs this flexibility in order to interweave the story of a woman who bore a divine child after being visited by a thundercloud, a mythic story with overtones of miraculous conception, divine intervention, and cosmic rebirth. While this story is reminiscent of universal mythic patterns, it is firmly Naga in imagery, expression, and spiritual resonance.

The story is located in a post-apocalyptic yet ageless environment, where myth and reality become intertwined. The setting is the most accurate representation of indigenous time as cyclical. The past is not a mere memory but a living force, present in dreams, visions, and the actions of ancestral beings. This is exemplified in Pele's travel, which is not merely defined by physical movement but also by spiritual encounters and mythological understanding. His travel ends in Rhaliekhü, a village that represents the dying

flames of hope and ancestral prophecy. The significance of the village, as well as the people he meets most notably the old woman and the child Rhal is deeply embedded in Naga cosmological beliefs and mythology.

One of the most evocative aspects of Naga oral tradition that Kire brings into the narrative is the sacred geography. Mountains, rivers, forests, and even wind are charged with meaning and spirit. Pele's passage through these geographies is more of a spiritual journey than a physical one. The geography is an interlocutor, providing omens, counsel, and trials. The novel's reverence for nature is an expression of indigenous ecological knowledge, that man is part of a greater, web-like pattern of life. This holistic vision calls into question anthropocentric perspectives and is consistent with the animist worldview embedded in Naga culture, wherein every creature harbors a spirit and each action has spiritual repercussions. The function of the oral narrator in Naga society is that of custodian of culture and mediator of the spirit. In *Son of the Thundercloud*, the narrative itself is an extension of this practice. The writing is lyrical, rhythmic, and full of echoes of oral cadence. Kire's novel imitates the voice of the oral narrator, and the reader is an eavesdropper on a shared act of memory. The narrative does not proceed in a linear fashion but rather loops, revisits motifs, and requires repetition in imitation of oral story forms.

In addition, Kire's use of indigenous knowledge is not merely thematic; it is also epistemological. The narrative is a symbolic, relational, and spiritual way of understanding the world. For instance, Rhalie's miraculous birth is not explained by scientific rationality but rather is accepted as spiritual reality. This epistemological stance validates indigenous ways of knowing, where truth lies more in metaphorical and experiential terms than in purely empirical terms. The supernatural aspects of the narrative are not fantasy; they are rather manifestations of a reality made sensible by mythic consciousness. The integration of the Thundercloud legend, the core of the narrative, is both cultural preservation and creativity. Though Kire reworks the tale for literary ends, she remains faithful to its spiritual intent. The tale of the woman who bore a divine child following the Thundercloud visit is a myth that signifies hope and resurrection, reminiscent of the themes found in most Naga tales of divine intervention in adversity. It is the sign that even in the midst of destruction, life can be restored through divine favor and human resolve. Kire also dismisses the exoticization of indigenous narratives by referencing their profound philosophical insight and moral subtlety. The characters are not stereotypes; they are complex human beings who grapple with questions of sorrow, doubt, love, and meaning in life. Pele's path revolves not around defeating external foes, but around healing internal wounds, and regaining faith in a shattered world. The novel, therefore, moves beyond simplistic oppositions of myth versus realism, providing instead a narrative approach that is mythoreal—based in myth but also true to real emotional and spiritual struggle.

By integrating the Monomyth into the rich cultural heritage of Naga oral tradition and folklore, Kire reverses the dominant Western literary models. Rather than rejecting the Hero's Journey, she reconfigures it, redefining its boundaries to fit an indigenous worldview in which the hero's journey is not egotistical, but one of communal significance. Consistent with this, Pele's transformation is not staged as a triumph of egomania, but as a reaffirmation of the sacred interconnectedness of life. In short, the incorporation of Naga folklore and oral traditions in *Son of the Thundercloud* provides the cultural basis on which the Monomyth is founded. This is a precursor to a more reinterpreted Hero's Journey in terms of ancestral knowledge, environmental consciousness, and spiritual regeneration. Cultural anchoring in this manner deepens the narrative, taking it beyond myth adaptation to an important expression of indigenous storytelling that testifies to the resilience and vitality of Naga identity.

Pele's Journey as a Monomyth

Departure: The Call to Adventure and Crossing the Threshold

Pele's adventure in *Son of the Thundercloud* starts in the world of loss, barrenness, and existential disorientation. He is a man who bears deep personal tragedy, the loss of his wife and children and the desolation of a world where civilization has apparently fallen apart. This physical and emotional destruction serves as his Call to Adventure, in accordance with Campbell's theory that the hero is frequently called to quest by a break in the natural order of things. Pele's abandonment of home is not the result of outside pressure but of an inner urge, a hunger for meaning in a shattered world. In this respect, his first steps are both literal and symbolic: he moves away from the remains of the life he left behind to find something unspecified but essential for survival not just bodily, but spiritually.

Campbell's Refusal of the Call is introduced subtly through the passivity of Pele at the beginning of the novel. While he embarks on the journey, he lacks direction, driven by despair rather than will. It is only when he meets the old ladies in an abandoned village which he had believed to be that of the weavers - an archetypal character that is similar to Campbell's "Supernatural Aid" that his journey becomes clear. She identifies him not as a simple vagabond but as a figure of prophetic importance. Her words, framed in oracular language and dreamlike perception, become the inspiration that drives Pele into his calling as a chosen one. Her entrance turns his rambling questing into a quest, making her both guide and symbolic mother figure in the manner of the mythic helper. The Crossing of the First Threshold is when Pele crosses into the mystic space of Rhaliekhü, a village poised between myth and decay. This is a moment that reflects Campbell's claim that the hero must abandon the known and enter a world where alternative rules apply. The village, its eerie silence, spiritual vibration, and the child Rhalie of divine birth is the boundary space where reality intersects with myth. Time is nonlinear in this environment, and things happen with a dream-like coherence. By embracing his part in the evolving prophecy of the child, Pele metaphorically crosses the threshold into the divine world of the hero's transformation.

Initiation: Trials, Revelation, and Transformation

The Initiation stage in Campbell's process is characterized by trials, spiritual experiences, and internal change. For Pele, this starts with his choice to stay in Rhaliekhü and assume the responsibility of guardian and caretaker to the wondrous child Rhalie. This act marks the hero's initial conscious encounter with his fate. It is not a test of physical strength but of commitment, trust, and psychological stamina. Kire's account diverges here from the action-scrutinized trials of the Monomyth; Pele's trials are psychological and spiritual, tuned to the themes of trust, rebirth, and belief in the intangible. The Road of Trials, in Pele's life, is the deepening relationship with the child, his efforts to comprehend the prophecy, and his battles with fear and doubt. His journey is lit by visions, dreams, and storytelling each meeting providing pieces of knowledge and meaning. The environment around him answers to his renewal: nature starts to flourish, rains come back to the earth, and life returns. These changes in the environment are a mirror of the internal transformation of the hero, affirming traditional indigenous concepts of balance between human consciousness and nature.

The defining moment of Apotheosis, the peak moment of metamorphosis, comes when Pele accepts his place within the mythological narrative, sees the child not just as a representation of hope but as a sacred entity that will bring equilibrium. This insight places him in harmony with the divine powers at work, echoing Campbell's concept of the hero entering a state of increased comprehension. Kire illustrates this apotheosis with understated spiritual light rather than showy spectacle. Pele's metamorphosis is internal, with the steady faith that he belongs to something more than himself. The Ultimate Boon, the gift or epiphany the hero receives is symbolized by the renewal of life and hope in an empty world. Rhalie's survival, rainfall's return, and the rekindling of human relationships are symbolic boons. Pele is the vehicle through whom divine promise is realized. His quest completes the prophecy not by conquest but by nurturing, sacrifice, and devotion. This transition from heroic mastery to sacred stewardship represents an important indigenization of the Monomyth. The boon is not treasure or a weapon, but the potential for regeneration and the re-establishment of harmony between humanity and the sacred.

Return: Restoration and the Cycle of Renewal

The Return stage in the Hero's Journey involves returning the boon to the mundane world and confronting the difficulties of reintegration. In *Son of the Thundercloud*, the usual world is no longer in its previous form. The return, then, is not literal homecoming but rather a spiritual re-linking with sense, people, and ancestral continuity. The return of Pele is performed through his function in leading Rhalie, whose birth represents the possibility of the rebirth of the world itself. The book suggests that in this sacred child, there will be a new cycle of life, following the same indigenous intuition in cyclical time and religious regeneration. Refusal of the Return, so called in Campbell, is the reluctance of the hero to go back into a declinatory world. Pele does not resist his fate, but the story shows a sad consciousness that his mission will not be crowned with personal gain. His is a journey of service, not victory. He shoulders the weight of his office without the expectation that he will live to see the full blossoming of the new era he has helped bring about. This acceptance is the final mark of his complete transformation and maturation as a mythic hero.

The Crossing of the Return Threshold is one of subtlety but depth. Through staying with Rhalie and assuming the role of guardian and spiritual father, Pele ensures hope's continuity and the passing on of wisdom. The cycle of Naga myth is revealed here; the hero does not rise or vanish but continues within the fold, as part of the continued flow of life. This subverts Campbell's Western-centred stress on the hero's disjunction and reconnection, offering instead a picture of ongoing situatedness within the social texture. The Master of Two Worlds phase in Pele's odyssey is expressed by his being able to move both through the sacred and through the human. He retains the memory of loss and the vision of rebirth, containing within himself the contradiction of sorrow and grace. His character serves as the transition between the past and the future, the lost and the promised. The novel closes not on closure but on continuity on an open-ended declaration of life's ability to renew itself through belief, myth, and communal ties.

Lastly, the Freedom to Live, the final phase of the Monomyth, is seen through the restoration of the land and the laughter of the child. These scenes depict a future free from fear, a world in which the cycle of death and rebirth may continue in harmony. Pele, despite being characterized by suffering, has attained spiritual freedom through acceptance of his position within this cycle. He is no longer an isolated mourner but a guardian of life's sacred mystery. In Pele's odyssey, Easterine Kire reconfigures the Hero's Journey into a native story of determination, spirituality, and harmony with nature. The novel testifies that myth is not a tale of adventure but an earnest articulation of communal wisdom, human resilience, and cosmological rebirth.

Rethinking the Monomyth: Indigenizing Campbell's Framework

Whereas Joseph Campbell's monomyth is an intriguing framework for reading heroic stories transnationally, its Western-based derivation warrants scrutiny when used to interpret indigenous literature such as Easterine Kire's *Son of the Thundercloud*. Campbell's formulation, while influenced by world mythologies, is rooted in Greco-Roman, Christian, and psychoanalytic traditions, and commonly highlights individualism, conquest, and linear movement. By contrast, indigenous narrative particularly in Naga cultures prioritizes universal memory, spiritual continuity, ecological balance, and cyclical perceptions of time. Kire's novel therefore reflects and reimagines the Hero's Journey and incorporates it into an indigenous epistemology.

One of Kire's main means of indigenizing the Monomyth is through her prioritization of spiritual interconnectedness over heroic individuality. Pele is no single savior of the sort found in most Western stories; his path is richly entwined in ancestral remembrance, communal foretelling, and relational morality. The boy whom he brings up, Rhalie, is no mere destination or goal in a story but a sacred person bearing godly promise. The hero here does not find completion in conquering enemies or asserting individual honor. Rather, fulfillment is based on involvement in rituals, narrative, and duty that binds the individual to others and the metaphysical realm. Also, Kire subverts Campbell's Monomyth's linear temporality. The novel's form mirrors cyclical time, a shared feature of indigenous cultures, wherein beginnings and endings are intertwined. The past in the form of oral traditions, prophecy, and dreams constantly influences the present, and the future is not seen as virgin land but rather as return or rebirth. This is amply demonstrated in the repeated theme of rain and fertility, representing rebirth and the return of life after death. Pele's path is not one of ignorance to enlightenment, as Campbell so often implies, but one of despair to religious rebirth, a re-establishment of balance, not a climb towards transcendence.

Orality is an important part of the structure of the story, a reflection of the oral culture of the Nagas. Stories are not closed and fixed but are retold, reformed, and reinterpreted over generations. This stands in contrast to Campbell's use of texts and the universal archetypes. In *Son of the Thundercloud*, narratives are dialogic and participatory. The old woman's retelling of myth, the boy's miraculous birth, and even the nameless travelers' narratives are all included in a shared narrative mosaic that defies single authorship or interpretation. By doing so, Kire positions indigenous knowledge systems as committed to storytelling as epistemology and ontology. The concept of the sacred feminine is another place where Kire's story diverges from Campbell's model. In the Monomyth, the "Woman as Temptress" phase typically is a manifestation of patriarchal fear of female power and distraction. Kire overturns this figure by depicting women as keepers of wisdom and prophecy. The old woman in the village is not an obstacle or seductress but a seer, mentor, and sacred keeper. Her understanding and wisdom lead the hero to his fate. Furthermore, the virgin mother who bears Rhalie is a figure resonant with indigenous and Christian tropes while actively recovering feminine power. The womb is made into something other than a place of seduction, but rather the source of cosmic rebirth.

The geography of Kire's story also operates as a character, rather than a context. The sterile earth, the restoration of the rain, and the renewed vegetation represent the Earth's role in the spiritual quest. This profound ecological awareness is at the heart of most indigenous cultures and is noticeably absent from Campbell's articulation, which pushes toward anthropocentrism. Pele's heroism is closely connected to restoring the land; his spiritual awakening overlaps with ecological rebirth. Thus, the Monomyth is extended to encompass ecological renewal as a vital component of the hero's triumph. Further, Kire substitutes Campbell's theme of "Atonement with the Father" with communion with spirit-beings and ancestors. The divine power in *Son of the Thundercloud* is not a paternal figure to be appeased, but a web of spiritual presence gods, nature spirits, and ancestral voices who are active in the process of unfolding fate. This is a vision of the world in which divinity is not hierarchical but dispersed, situated in land, memory, and community. The hero does not "vanquish" the divine but harmonizes with it through humility, compassion, and connection.

Kire's story also resists Campbell's emphasis on closure and fixity. The novel closes not with a firm victory, but with an open-ended promise. The child's destiny is suggested, not secured. Pele's job is done, but the world is still vulnerable. This openness respects the uncertainty of life, recognizing that healing and change are continuous processes. These endings appeal to the indigenous philosophies of continuity, wherein the hero's role is not to finish the story but to guarantee its transition into new stories and generations.

Through all of these means, Kire's adaptation of the Hero's Journey is a decolonial rethinking of myth. She does not abandon Campbell's structure completely but employs it as a receptacle to hold indigenous knowledge, moral values, and cultural memory. The Monomyth is a point of convergence between universal narrative structures and localized, earthed modes of knowledge. By transposing Pele's path onto the Hero's Journey and overlaying it with Naga cultural imagery, Kire proves that myth is neither universal nor unchanging, but rather dynamic and flexible a living genre that shifts with its people.

Therefore, *Son of the Thundercloud* presents a critique and re-visioning of Campbell's model. It challenges readers to redefine what it is to be a hero not as a lonely conqueror, but as an empathetic guide, a caretaker of life, and a keeper of memory. Kire's work not only asserts the continued pertinence of myth, but demands that it is capable of showing varied cultural truths and indigenous imaginations.

Conclusion

Son of the Thundercloud by Easterine Kire illustrates the way in which indigenous narrative can reflect and also translate universal mythic structures. Joining Joseph Campbell's Monomyth, the novel subscribes to a wide narrative tradition in which the spiritual change of the hero is a journey through Departure, Initiation, and Return. But Kire's writing does not merely imitate this form; instead, it redirects it in terms of the lived experiences and spiritual convictions of the Naga. Pele's quest, while conventionally heroic in its development, moves beyond personal bravery and revolves around communal healing, ancestral wisdom, ecological rebirth, and sacred continuity.

This research has shown how the novel uses the Monomyth as an elastic template, while deeply investing it in native symbols, oral stories, and spiritual cosmologies. The quest of the hero is not one of conquest or self-mastery but of reconnection with land, with spirit, and with a collective past that promises something for the future. Through its depiction of myth as a dynamic and adaptive narrative form, Kire asserts its validity in postcolonial and indigenous nations. Her reinterpretation of the Hero's Journey transcends Euro-American stereotypes, placing emphasis on virtues like empathy, interdependence, and cyclical time.

Son of the Thundercloud is therefore both a mythic narrative and a political gesture of cultural reclaiming. It reimagines the epic journey in native knowledge systems and presents an intense contemplation on bereavement, rebirth, and hope. By doing so, it reiterates the importance of indigenous storytelling not as nostalgia or romanticized history, but as a well of knowledge that continues to shape resilient futures. Kire's novel is an invitation to rethink myth not as a frozen archetype but as a fluid cultural dynamic, one that can be remoulded to celebrate varied cosmologies and perpetuate spiritual endurance in the contemporary world.

References

Campbell, Joseph. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. New World Library, 2008.

Kire, Easterine. *Son of the Thundercloud*. Speaking Tiger, 2016.

Mishra, Binod. "Myth and Indigenous Sensibility in North-East Indian English Fiction." *Indian Literature*, vol. 62, no. 2, 2018, pp. 161–169.

Nongkynrih, Kynpham Sing. "Orality and Indigenous Literary Practices." *Muse India*, Issue 75, 2017. www.museindia.com.

Said, Edward. *Culture and Imperialism*. Vintage Books, 1993.

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. 2nd ed., Zed Books, 2012.

Vizenor, Gerald. *Manifest Manners: Narratives on Postindian Survivance*. U of Nebraska P, 1999.

