

# PHRA SRI AN (MAITREYA) AS A HERO: A STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF *PHRA SRI AN* MYTHS IN THAI SOCIETY

Aphilak Kasempholkoon<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

*This article aims to study “Phra Sri An” myths in Thai society as hero myths using the ideas relating to heroes of Joseph Campbell and other scholars, especially the idea of the stages of heroes of Christopher Vogler, whose ideas were developed from Campbell’s. This study shows that Phra Sri An’s character in Thai society is both that of a universal hero, in having the call for adventure, enduring tests and going pass the parameter of the profane to the sacred world; and a particular type of Thai hero, passing to, not only Tusita heaven, but also to Phra Sri An’s world, as well as in the absence of the stage of “refusal the call” according to Vogler’s stages of the hero’s journey since this concept in Buddhism states that the person who will be the future Buddha must have firm determination and strong faith. All of the stages of progress to becoming a hero express the long cycle of Phra Sri An’s journey, emphasizing the idea of the Buddhas as heroes having to overcome obstacles, gathering good deeds and finding “sacred things,” those being the four noble truths, in order to achieve enlightenment, leading Buddhists to have more faith in the Buddhas.*

---

<sup>1</sup> Lecturer, Department of Thai, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Mahidol University

## Introduction

The belief in “Phra Sri An” or “Phra Sri Araya Mettrai” (Maitreya), the Future Buddha, is one of the most significant and expansive Buddhist beliefs in Asia, especially in Southeast Asia. This belief has brought about several versions of related myths, as well as art works, that concretely express the image of Phra Sri An through the creator’s imagination. Through the variation of the *Phra Sri An* myths in Thai society and culture, many versions of *Phra Sri An* myths have been created.<sup>2</sup> Among the variation of these stories, the heroic character of Phra Sri An has often been demonstrated.

The heroic character of Phra Sri An has always been regarded as the evil suppresser and the “founder” of a better situation, such as the reformation of religion, politics and society. Phra Sri An is also considered as the Buddha-to-be who will mediate for Buddhists and lead them to nirvana, the ultimate goal of Buddhism, because the *Phra Sri An* myths recount that whoever lives in his era when Phra Sri An is the Buddha and listens to his sermons will become easily enlightened. That is why Phra Sri An is often considered to be a universal saviour. Thus, it is interesting to use the universal idea of a hero to study *Phra Sri An* myths from two aspects:

---

<sup>2</sup> *Phra Sri An* myths in this article refer to the stories of Phra Sri An, which are his biography, those about his era and all the related-to-*Phra Sri An* people in Thai society. The myths about the heroes who come to the earth to overcome evil or chaos are counted as well.

- 1) The idea of “the religious founder as a hero” by Joseph Campbell
- 2) The stages of a hero’s journey as illustrated by Christopher Vogler.

*Phra Sri An* myths, full texts and the added stories in other texts gathered from both literary (published and non-published) and oral versions found in northern, northeastern, central and the southern parts of Thailand, have been used as data for this article. The literary materials are in the form of Thai long books (*samut thai*), foreign books, palm-leaves and archives; while the oral versions were collected from existing research and by additional interviews.

Joseph Campbell’s idea of the hero’s journey is used as the methodological framework for this article. His significant work is *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1956), in which he discusses “the journey of the hero.” Other scholars in this school of thought are used as well, especially Christopher Vogler’s model of the stages of the hero’s journey developed from Campbell’s ideas. This conceptual framework will be applied to the analysis of various versions of the *Phra Sri An* myths. It is hoped that this article can be used as a way of studying the perception and the thought of Thai people through the Thai folk narratives of *Phra Sri An*.

### **Campbell’s concept of the religious founder as the hero**

All Buddhist texts of every sect of Buddhism agree that Gautama Buddha’s body was that of an ordinary man, even though they narrate his special characteristics, such as his thirty-two types of extraordinary characteristics

(*Mahapurissalakkhana*) or his eighty types of detailed extraordinary characteristics (*Anubayanjana*) which are emphasized in Thai Buddhist literature, such as *Phra Pathom Sobhodikatha* (Supreme Patriarch H.R.H.) (Prince Paramanujitajinorasa 2008: 37–41). Notwithstanding these extraordinary characteristics, the Lord Buddha’s physical body was that of a human. According to this perspective, the Lord Buddha was no different from any ordinary man. (Rawin 1999: 20) His status as a religious founder, however, has made him distinguishable from ordinary people. The reason for this distinction can be considered by winding the clock back to his previous lives as a Bodhisattva.

Canonical text authors never intended to write the religious founder’s life as his “biography” because they considered that their Lord was an extraordinary being. Only a small number of ambiguous facts about their Lord who lived his life in the very distant past are included as data in the writings; where as other extraordinary characteristics of their Lord as the “genius man” have been typically invented by the authors. This invention has had to be consistent with the taste of faithful believers in the authors’ societies. These texts were later transmitted as the heritage to the younger generation in those societies. (Anant Lualertvorakul 2003: 10–11) In addition, the founder of the religion, the “genius man,” was also considered a hero.

Joseph Campbell gives the definition of “the hero,” interestingly corresponding to the “genius-man” and the status of the Lord Buddha, stating that “a hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself,” (Campbell 1991: 151) and heroes are also people who have taken ‘a journey’ by “taking off on a

serious of adventure beyond the ordinary, either to recover what has been lost or to discover some life-giving elixir” (Joseph Campbell 1991: 151).

In addition, Campbell says, regarding the hero’s characteristics in oriental culture and the universal concept of the founders of religions as heroes, that the Lord Buddha was a type of hero, like Jesus Christ, since both of them were saviours and their close disciples, such as Ananda and Saint Peter, had similar characteristics and performed similar roles. (Kingkeo 2008: 279–280) Moreover, he says that anybody who creates new things, such as a new era, a new religion, a new city, or a new culture, has to abandon “old things” and set off searching for the original idea that contains the potential power to create “new things” (Kingkeo 2008: 281). He also discusses the universal concept of the religious leader’s journey to search for the “new things” as the hero’s adventure, comparing the Lord Buddha with Jesus Christ, and writing:

The founders of all religions have gone on a quest like that. The Buddha went into solitude and then sat beneath the Bo tree, the tree of immortal knowledge, where he received the illumination that has enlightened all of Asia for twenty-five hundred years.

After baptism by John the Baptist, Jesus went into the desert for forty days; and it was out of that desert that he came with his message. Moses went to the top of mountain and came down with the tablets of the law.

Then you have the ones who founded a new city; almost all the old Greek cities were founded by heroes who went off on quest and had a surprising adventure, out of which each then founded a city. (Campbell 1991: 167)

Phra Sri An, the future Buddha, could be considered as a religious hero and also a saviour, according to this universal concept. ‘Saviour’ is a religious term, meaning the person who comes to rescue people from a difficult situation. A savior can rescue humans from world devastation and lead them to live happily in the ‘new world,’ or the ideal world.

According to Buddhist belief, Phra Sri An is also a saviour, because his teaching will gracefully help free humans from the endless rebirths of *samsara* and he will also bring about the ideal world after the world has deteriorated. He is the “future Buddha” for whom devout Buddhists are waiting.

### **The structure of Phra Sri An’s life as the hero’s journey**

According to *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* by Joseph Campbell, all hero myths share the same structure of a hero’s life; the hero has to cross from being an ordinary man to being a supernatural wonder. (Campbell 1956: 44) The hero’s journey can be separated into three main stages. Firstly, the “departure” stage in which the hero transforms himself from an ordinary man to being a hero; secondly, the “initiation” stage during which the hero’s adventure is to purify his soul. Lastly, the “return” stage when the hero returns to the profane world in his sacred state (Campbell 1956: IX–X). Accordingly,

the structure of Phra Sri An's life as the hero's journey can be applied by this concept and studied. However, because of the Buddhist concept that the performance of meritorious acts in order to obtain enlightenment can only be attained through one's many lives, the study of Phra Sri An's life structure has to take all of his lives into consideration.

In my previous research (Aphilak Kasempholkoon 2009a: 27–43), I have categorized stories related to Phra Sri An into eight groups, i.e., The Life History of Phra Sri An,<sup>3</sup> The Stories of Phra Malai,<sup>4</sup> The Stories of the White Crow,<sup>5</sup> The

---

<sup>3</sup> This group is composed of myths narrating the history of Phra Sri An himself and the relationship between the Buddhas of the past and present and Phra Sri An, the Buddha of the future. Some examples of the names of the stories are *The Five Buddhas* and *Anagatavamsa*, *Metteyyasutra* and *Metteyyavamsa*.

<sup>4</sup> This group is composed of stories about the dialogues in heaven between Phra Malai, a senior monk, and Phra Sri An. The story, which is based on *Maleyyadevattheravatthu* Scripture, describes the absolute beauty and peace of the world that will exist during Phra Sri An's time. The examples of stories are the *Phra Malai* in various versions, and *Malai Muen – Malai Saen (Phra Malai of Northeastern Vessantara Jataka)*.

<sup>5</sup> This refers to the stories showing the brotherly relationship among the five Buddhas. The stories that tell how, in the past, a white crow laid five eggs on a stormy day. Unfortunately, the eggs were swept away to five different places. Later each of the eggs was adopted by a hen, a tortoise, a serpent, a cow and a lioness. As time passed, they grew up as humans. One day all of them came across one another and learned that they were brothers. They all decided to be ordained as monks and eventually they became the Five Buddhas.

Stories of Phra Sri An's Previous Karma,<sup>6</sup> The Stories of The Venerable Monks,<sup>7</sup> The Stories of The Gautama Buddha and Phra Sri An on the Lotus Scheme<sup>8</sup>, The Stories of Phra Sri An as Phaya Dharmmikaraja<sup>9</sup> and The Stories of Phra Sri An's Prophecy.<sup>10</sup>

All of these eight groups of stories relate to Phra Sri An and I have put them into chronological and sequential order thus formulating the complete structure of Phra Sri An's life. Having analyzed the structure of Phra Sri An's life,<sup>11</sup> I have

---

<sup>6</sup> This refers to the stories describing the previous life of Phra Sri An, the prophecy of the past Buddhas and the grounds for his rebirth.

<sup>7</sup> These group are stories recording the lives of highly revered monks. The plot of the stories is similar to that of Phra Sri An or implies that they would be Phra Sri An in the future.

<sup>8</sup> This group is the myths that narrate the contest between the Buddhas of the present and of the future. The story tells of Phra Sri An, the future Buddha, and Gautama Buddha, the Buddha of the present, making an agreement about who was going to be the next Buddha; the one for whom the lotus bloomed first would go first. Gautama however schemed of a way to make his flower bloom first, thus becoming the Buddha before Phra Sri An.

<sup>9</sup> This group is the collection of myths narrating Phra Sri An's or his celestial delegate's temporary visit to protect the world and maintain the religion for its total duration of 5,000 years. These stories are mostly didactic.

<sup>10</sup> This group of stories concerns the prophecies about Phra Sri An's incarnation, as well as omens and his instructions to the worldly people.

<sup>11</sup> Regarding the structure of Phra Sri An's life, a great number of *Phra Sri An* myths narrating his births from the past to the future were collected and rewritten as a complete version of Phra Sri An's whole life. See details of the

divided the stories concerning his life into four main stages according to the important events of his life: “the remote past” (from the beginning to Gautama Buddha’s period as Phra Sri An’s time for the performance of meritorious acts as a Bodhisattva); the recent past (the period of his existence as a deity in Tusita waiting to descend to achieve enlightenment as a Buddha in the world); the present time (the period of his birth in the profane world before the end of Gautama Buddha’s era in B.E. 5000); and the remote future (from B.E. 5000 to the time of his enlightenment and entering nirvana).

**1. The remote past**

- I. His life before the Gautama Buddha’s period
- II. His life in the Gautama Buddha’s era

**2. The recent past**

- III. Living in the fourth level of heaven (Tusita)

**3. The present**

- IV. His birth in the profane world (circa B.E. 2500)

**4. The remote future**

- V. The time of decadence (B.E. 5000)
- VI. The prophecy of Phaya Dharmikaraja’s birth (the virtuous king)
- VII. The birth of Phaya Dharmikaraja
- VIII. The birth of *Sri An* Buddha

As previously stated, as a hero, Phra Sri An had to be repeatedly reborn again and again to perform meritorious acts. His long-term journey, which can be seen through the four main stages in his life,

through various spaces and times, forms the structure of Phra Sri An’s life.

In *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Campbell says that all of the mythical heroes share the same structure. The hero has to take a journey to cross from every day life to supernatural wonder through three main stages; the “departure” from the profane world, the “initiation” of his life in the sacred world and the “return” to the profane world with his new holy status. (Campbell 1956: 31–35)

In *The Writer’s Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers* (2007), Christopher Vogler applied Campbell’s concept of a hero’s journey to study the structure of various genres of films. He applied the 12 stages to the hero’s journey, explaining each stage, and presenting the hero’s journey as a circle. The hero crosses the threshold of the ordinary world to the special world. After taking the honest journey to approach the inmost cave of his soul and facing the ordeal, the hero crosses the threshold back to the ordinary world with his new status and the elixir to make other people happy (Voytillar 1999: 8–12). This is shown in the following figure:

---

structure of Phra Sri An’s life in Aphilak Kasempholkoon’s *Myths of Phra Sri An in Thai Society: Creation and Roles* (2009b)

**ORDINARY WORLD**

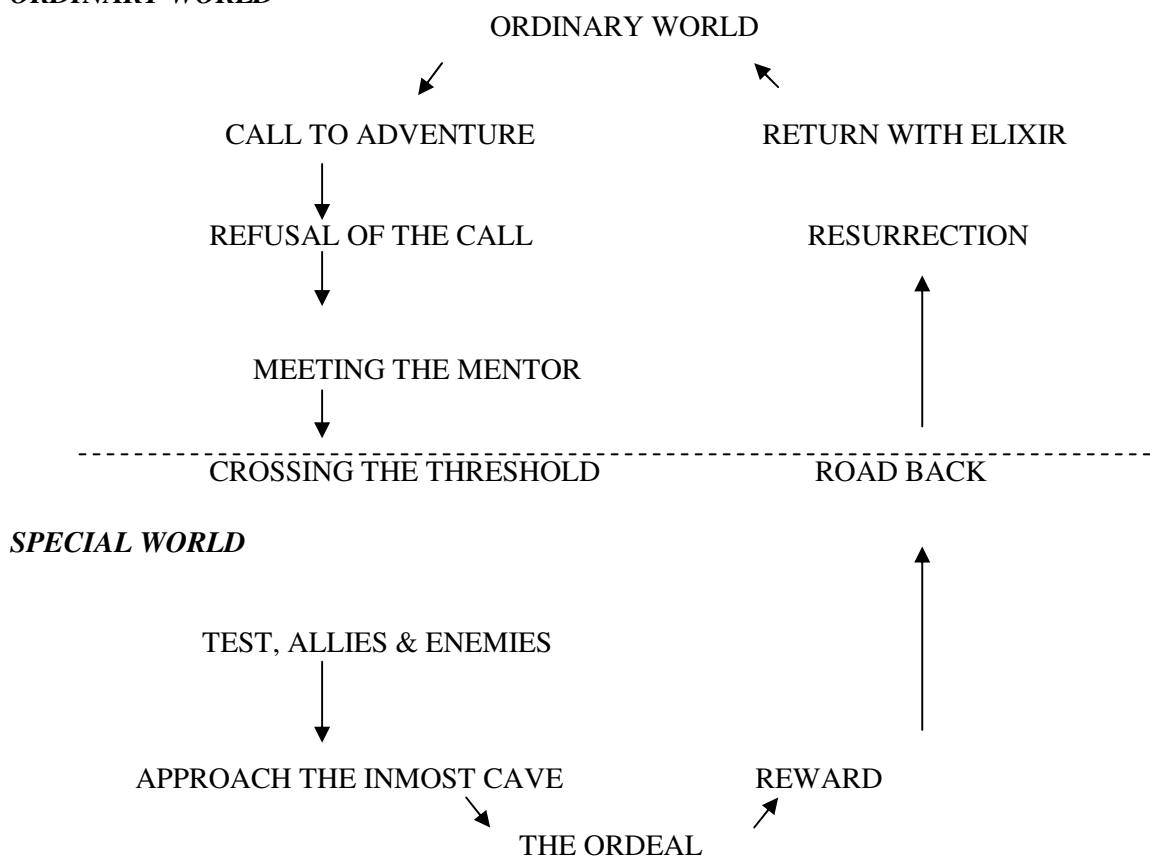


Figure 1: Vogler's chart of the stages in the hero's journey

Vogler's concept of the stages of the hero's life can be applied to study the stages of becoming the future Buddha through the *Phra Sri An* myths in Thai society. This is because Campbell's definition of "the hero" influenced Vogler's concept corresponding to the future Buddha's life. Firstly, Campbell defines the hero as a person who devotes himself to greater things; (Rawin 1999: 255) as Phra Sri An devotes himself to enlightenment in order to teach his sermon to ordinary people in the future. Next, the stages of a hero's journey are considered by Campbell to be a journey to search for spiritual essences in order to bring the

essential truth back to normal life; (Rawin 1999: 256–257) corresponding to the practice of meditation and the performance of meritorious-acts of the Buddhas who lived in the distant and near past and who will come in the future. Lastly, the heroes in Campbell's boundary are not only heroes in Greek mythology, but also religious heroes, such as the Lord Buddha and Moses. (Campbell 1956: 31–35)

According to the above structure of Phra Sri An's life, when drawn to compare with Vogler's stages of a hero's life, the differences and similarities between them are presented in the following table.

<b>Vogler's stages of hero's life</b>	<b>The structure of Phra Sri An's life</b>
1. Ordinary world	<b>1.</b> - The time of Phra Sri An's life before the Buddha period and Gautama Buddha's enlightenment - The time before having the firm aspiration to attain Buddhahood - The time of committing bad karma as an ordinary person
2. Call to adventure	<b>2.</b> His life before Gautama Buddha's period from the time of having the passion to be a Buddha to being reincarnated in Gautama Buddha's era
3. Refusal of the call	<b>3.</b> -
4. Meeting the mentor	<b>4.</b> His life in which he met many Buddhas and was prophesied by them to achieve enlightenment and become a Buddha in the future
5. Crossing the threshold	<b>5.</b> After the prophecy, he was transformed from being an ordinary man to being a Bodhisattva, a holy man.
6. Tests, allies and enemies	<b>6.</b> During his lives of performing meritorious acts, he had to face tremendous troubles and was killed in many lives.
7. Approach the inmost cave	<b>7.</b> In his future reincarnation, he will be ordained in the Buddhist tradition to search for the eternal truth.
8. The ordeal	<b>8.</b> After entering the monkhood, he must search for the eternal truth via many paths and will encounter much greater troubles than he has ever experienced.
9. Reward	<b>9.</b> He will discover the eternal truth and eventually achieve enlightenment.
10. Road Back	<b>10.</b> He will teach his knowledge to ordinary people in order to lead them to have a happy life.
11. Resurrection	<b>11.</b> The people who listen to his sermons will have faith in him and praise him as the Lord Buddha who will be greater than any of the Gods of the three worlds.
12. Return with elixir	<b>12.</b> He will teach ordinary people the eternal truth which leads them to nirvana.

According to the above table, the stage of becoming the future Buddha and the stage of a hero's life share similar and universal characteristics in Thai and Western cultures. That is, all heroes are born as ordinary people, make a decision to cross the threshold of the ordinary world to the sacred world, approach the inmost cave of their soul to discover something great, become a hero, and bring a special thing

from the sacred world to help ordinary people in the profane world.

Specifically, the reasons why the hero myths and *Phra Sri An* myths can be said to share similar characteristics are twofold. Firstly, Campbell's definition of a 'hero' corresponds to the future Buddha's life. They share the same characteristics of heroes, those who devote their lives to something much greater than themselves, approach the inmost caves of their souls and are religious heroes. Secondly, the narratives of heroes in mythology are from real stories; as Thomas Carlyle said, all narratives written by humans come from great men's stories (Chopra: 13–15). Campbell, moreover, reasons that the structure of mythology is related to the human rites of passage (Kingkeo 2008: 145–146). For the Buddhists, both *Phra Sri An*'s and Gautama Buddha's life are believed to have been "historically real" and the myths relate to the stage of transforming them from ordinary men to becoming Bodhisattvas and from Bodhisattvas to being Buddhas in each era.

However, the characteristics of the *Phra Sri An* myths are distinguishable from Campbell's concept of hero myths by the absence of the "refusing-the-call" stage and the changing of the position of a stage by switching the "facing-test-allies-and-enemies" stage so that it is placed between the "calling-to-adventure" stage and the "meeting-mentor" stage.

The absence of the "refusing-the-call" stage in the *Phra Sri An* myths is because of the concept in Buddhist texts that the person who will be the future Buddha must have firm determination and strong faith. This must be emphasized several times by the strong intention to become

enlightened and is evident in many *jatakas*.

The "facing-test-allies-and-enemies" stage is switched and placed between the "calling-to-adventure" stage and the "meeting-mentor" stage in order to test *Phra Sri An* and see if he can pass the hero's primary test before crossing into the sacred world. The tests can signify the performance of meritorious-acts corresponding to the concept of becoming a Buddha, who performs meritorious acts for numerous lives before achieving enlightenment.

According to the Buddhist concept, all of the Buddhas can be categorized into three types by their performance of meritorious-acts. Firstly, *Phra Panyadhika Samma-buddhachao* is the Buddha who has the greatest wisdom, weak faith, and spends only 20 *Asankheyya*<sup>12</sup> and 100,000 *Mahakappa*,<sup>13</sup> less than the other types of Buddhas, performing meritorious-acts. Secondly, *Phra Saddadhika Sammasambuddhachao* is the Buddha who has strong faith and moderate wisdom, and spends 40 *Asankheyya* and 100,000 *Mahakappa* performing meritorious-acts. Lastly, *Phra Viriyadhika Sammasambuddhachao* is the Buddha who is very diligent, but less wise, and spends 80 *Asankheyya* and 100,000 *Mahakappa* performing meritorious-acts (Prayot Songklin 1997: 11). *Phra Sri An* is categorized in the last group.

---

<sup>12</sup> An *asankhyeya* is the Buddhist name for the number 10<sup>140</sup>. The word "asankheyya" literally means "innumerable" in Sanskrit.

<sup>13</sup> The interim period when the age limit of human beings rises from ten to an indefinite time and then falls to ten again, which is known as an *antara kappa*. Twenty such *antara kappa* equal one *asankheyya kappa*, literally-an incalculable cycle. Four *asankheyya kappas* equal one *maha kappa*.



In regard to the profane and the sacred worlds, Phra Sri An's journey is more complicated than the hero's journey of Vogler. This is because, according to the *Phra Sri An* myths in Thai society, his journey did not begin and end in one lifetime, but continues through his numerous lives from the past to the future. The ordinary world in *Phra Sri An* myths can be categorized into two types: firstly, "the ordinary world I" (see Figure 2) at the present time as presented by Vogler; secondly, "the ordinary world II" in the future when Phra Sri An will be reborn.

The sacred world, also, can be divided into two types: firstly, Tusita, or the fourth level of heaven, as "the sacred world I" where Phra Sri An Bodhisattva lives; secondly, the ordinary world where Phra Sri An will descend to be reborn and achieve enlightenment, which is considered as "the sacred world II" because only virtuous people, not all people, can be born and live here.

More interestingly, while the hero *Phra Sri An* is in Tusita, the "sacred world I," he can return to the "ordinary world I" occasionally when the society is in a time of decadence, before his journey to Phra Sri An's world, the "sacred world II." Before entering the "sacred world II," Phra Sri An will not have achieved enlightenment; therefore, living in the "sacred world I" signifies that he has to be reborn in *samsara*, according to the Buddhist concept. This is a great opportunity for him to descend to be reborn in the ordinary world to perform more meritorious acts through the actions of eliminating the Dark Age as a hero's mission.

The following chart shows the stages of Phra Sri An's journey, using bold and italics, adapted from the hero's journey concept of Vogler, presented below with normal letters. This chart shows both the universal concepts shared with Vogler and specific concepts only found in the *Phra Sri An* myths in Thai society.

**ORDINARY WORLD I**

The time of Phra Sri An's life before the past Buddhas and also before Gautama Buddha Era

**(1. The Remote Past)**

**ORDINARY WORLD II**

The time of Phra Sri An's Era

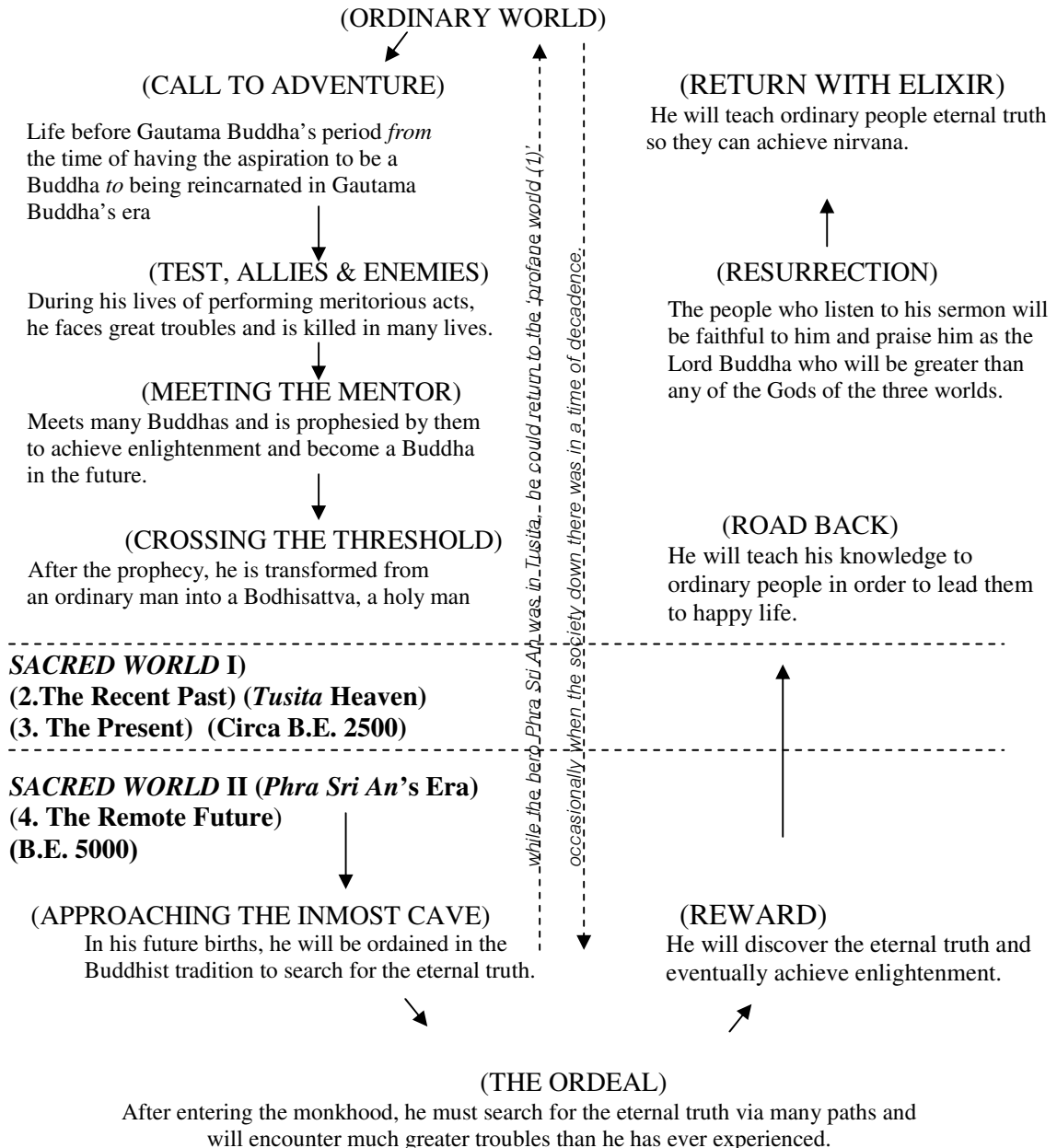


Figure 2: Chart presenting the stages of Phra Sri An's journey as the hero through adapting the hero's journey concept of Vogler

The invention of the becoming-future-Buddha stages as shown above expresses the circle of Phra Sri An's journey and also reflects the universal concepts shared between Western and Thai culture, as well as specific characteristics only found in Thai society. Phra Sri An's long-term journey emphasizes the concept of a Buddha as a hero who experiences ordeals, performs virtuous deeds and discovers the elixir which is, here, the Four Noble Truths (*Four Ariyasac*) as the way for Buddhists to practise in order to reach nirvana. This concept has helped induce Buddhist minds to increase their faith in Buddhism, consider its importance and worship Buddhism because of its sacredness.

In addition, according to the chart, Phra Sri An's sacred world could reoccur not only in his era but also in some critical periods of the earth. This idea shows that each time Phra Sri An was born, the profane world could be changed to be sacred. On the one hand, Phra Sri An is a religious hero, on the other hand, he is a hero in the form of a ruler (thus, a profane one), especially as being Phaya Dhammikkarat, who drives away all evils and "clears the profane world."

## **Conclusion**

The analysis of Phra Sri An's journey reflects both the universal and the Thai cultural concepts of heroes. Concerning the universal concept, Phra Sri An's journey shows the same concepts of "seeking for the spiritual truth" and "overcoming hardship," especially in the heroes' minds, which can be found in the journey of the universal heroes. Regarding the Buddhist and Thai concept, the absence of "refusal of the call" demonstrates that all the Bodhisatvas have to have the strong determination, without any reluctance, to be the Buddha. And particularly for Thais, seen from the stories

composed in Thai society, Phra Sri An can be reborn several times to collect his meritorious acts so that his sacred world can occur more than once.

Furthermore, a structural analysis of *Phra Sri An* myths in Thai society reveals that the Thai concept of life emphasizes the belief of "rebirth." In the Thai worldview, life is a cycle. Such a concept is a Thai "perception" reflecting their desire to see the performance of long-term meritorious acts to accumulate *parami*. Many Thai folktales and folk *jataka* tend to present a hero as a Bodhisattva born and reborn in many lives to perform meritorious acts.

The concept of performing long-term meritorious acts of Phra Sri An highlights the sacredness of Phra Sri An's world in that his numerous births in the distant and near past have been for the performance of meritorious acts eventually leading to his last birth. His last birth transforms the profane world into the sacred world or the sacred space in which only some people who behave morally and virtuously in the past will be allowed to live.

Not only space is sacred in Phra Sri An's world but also time. The rebirth of Phra Sri An allows the rebirth of the Buddha era in which all humans living in the sacred world at that time will be able to free themselves from endless further rebirths in *samsara* and attain nirvana. This can be considered as the salient signature of *Phra Sri An* myths, which are significantly different from other myths in Thai society. This also reflects the deep influence of *Phra Sri An* myths on Thai society. Accordingly, the study of *Phra Sri An* can help understand Thai perception and thought more profoundly.

## References

- Anant Laulertvorakul. 2003. *The Thai version of Pathomsombodhikatha by the Supreme Patriarch H.R.H. Prince Paramanujitajinorasa: content relation to other biographies of the Buddha* (ปฐมสมโพธิกถาภาษาไทยฉบับสมเด็จพระมหาสมณเจ้า กรมพระปรมานุชิตชิโนรส : ความสัมพันธ์ด้านสารัตถะกับวรรณกรรมพุทธประวัติอื่น). Doctoral Dissertation, Department of Thai, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University. (In Thai)
- Aphilak Kasempholkoon. 2009 a. 'Convention and Invention in the Phra Sri An (Maitreya) Myth in Thai Society,' in *Rian Thai: International Journal of Thai Studies*, Volume 2, pp. 27-43, Bangkok: Institute of Thai Studies, Chulalongkorn University. (In Thai)
- . 2009 b. *Myths of Phra Sri An in Thai Society: Creation and Roles* (ตำนานพระศรีอาริย์ในสังคมไทย: การสร้างสรรค์และบทบาท). Doctoral Dissertation, Department of Thai, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University. (In Thai)
- Bampen Rawin, Nithi Eawsriwong (ed). 1999. *The Collections of Chronicles of Phra Anakatavamsa, a Popular Version* (ประชุมพงศาวดารฉบับราษฎร : พระอนาคตวงศ์). Bangkok: Amarin Printing and Publishing Public Company Limited. (In Thai)
- Chopra, D.K. *Heroes and Hero-Worship*. Agra: Laksmi Narain Agrawal.
- Eliade, Mircea. 1956. *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*. New York: A harvest Book.
- Campbell, Joseph. 1956. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. New York: Bollingen Foundation.
- Campbell, Joseph. 1991. *The Power of Myth*. New York, Anchor Books.
- Kingkeo Attagara (ed.). 2008. *The Power of Myth* (พลาณภาพแห่งวรรณกรรม), 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, translated by Baranee Boonsong. Bangkok: Amarin Printing and Publishing Public Company Limited. (In Thai)
- Prayot Songklin. 1997. *Buddha: A Comparative Study in Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism* (พระสัมมาสัมพุทธเจ้า : ศึกษาเปรียบเทียบแนวความคิดในพระพุทธศาสนาเถรวาทและมหายาน). Master's thesis, Department of Comparative Religion, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mahidol University. (In Thai)
- Prince Paramanujitajinorasa. 2008. *Phra Pathom Somphot* (พระปฐมสมโพธิ). Bangkok: Wat Phra Chetuphon Monastery. (In Thai)
- Vogler, Christopher. 2007. *The Writer's Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers*. New York: Michael Wiese Productions.
- Voytillar, Stuart. 1999. *Myth and the Movies Discovering the Mythic Structure of 50 Unforgettable Films*. Studio City, California: Michael Wiese Productions, 1999.