

DROWNING IN MY DREAMS:
X/1999, THE MODERN MYTH AND THE
CONSTRAINTS OF GENDER CONSTRUCTS

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Drowning in My Dreams: X/1999, the Modern Myth
and the Constraints of Gender Constructs

by

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Abstract:

This thesis proposes an in-depth analysis of the Japanese animated series X/1999. It proposes that the X/1999 narrative is an example the term "modern myth" and expresses a gendered spirituality defined by both feminism and pro-feminism. It will analyze the narrative by mapping it against Joseph Campbell's structural model of monomyth. In doing so it will use the model to highlight the mythic and religious elements of the narrative, as well as demonstrate gender and universal criticisms of model itself.

Key Words: Feminism, Pro-feminism, Anime, Spirituality, Gender, Joseph Campbell, Monomyth, Japan, Motherhood

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Introduction

According to religious studies scholar Teramoto Tomomasa, the study of expressive forms in popular culture is a relevant and viable means to identify which elements of religious traditions have become widely known, influential or pervasive in today's society (Teramoto 2003:185). Religious elements identified by Teramoto include "direct depictions of super power, ascetic practices, teacher-discipleship, eschatology, future and past existences, demons, gods, spirits, karmic rebirth, and the final battle between good and evil...ontologies, cosmologies, [and] thoughts on spiritual growth" (Teramoto 2003:187). Many of these factors have historically been embedded within the mythic dimensions of religious traditions. Today, all of these factors are evident in the popular cultural mediums of *anime* and *manga*.

Anime, short for "animation", refers to "Japanese Animation", a genre/medium that has its roots in the 1960's, when the Japanese began making television adaptations of their version of comics, called *mangas*. This thesis proposes to analyze the religious or mythic elements present in the *anime* X/1999. Drawing upon the theoretical model of myth proposed by Joseph Campbell (1949), the thesis will argue that X/1999 can be understood as modern myth concerning gendered spirituality, in regard to both feminist spirituality and modern men's movement groups. In utilizing Campbell's theory of the monomyth to study X/1999, a critical appraisal of Campbell's theory will also be offered.

Through the application of Campbell's theory to X/1999, the thesis will argue that Campbell's model of myth is specifically flawed when it comes to analyzing gender in a contemporary mythic context. Although Campbell's model works well for interpreting

the cosmological dimensions of X/1999, and aids in the identification of religious factors prevalent in contemporary popular culture. it fails to adequately account for models of gender that depart from mythic patriarchal norms. Consequently, the thesis will utilize Campbell's theory to reveal the mythic dimensions of X/1999, and will use the theme of gender as a spiritual crisis in X/1999 to highlight the shortcomings of Campbell's model for understanding "modern myth". The thesis will therefore make contributions to the scholarly understanding of both contemporary myth, and the religious dimensions of *anime*.

Context: Religion in *Anime* (Chapter 1)

If we are going to use the word myth to represent a storytelling or narrative phenomenon in modern culture then we need to define the term. Myth, in and of itself, is difficult to define. Definitions often depend on the theoretical context within which they are used, and will often change as a result of differing scholarly notions of the origin, function and interpretation of myth. Some anthropologists, for example, restrict the definition of myth to those narratives that are parallel to, or congruent with ritual (Gaster 1954:132). Within this context there is an association made between myth and belief, in which the narrative is understood to provide an explanation for reality, and is believed in, and cited as authoritative, by the narrative community (Bascon 1965:9). However, as scholar of religion and literature Gregory Salyer suggests, humans are capable of holding many, sometimes conflicting, beliefs simultaneously, and this is frequently true in the case of religious beliefs (1992:62). A myth need not therefore be considered literally true

in order to have spiritual value for the community for whom the myth holds meaning.

Scholars such as Rudolf Bultmann have argued that myth still exists in the contemporary context because it explains not necessarily the rules and laws of reality, as science would, but instead expresses the human experience of reality (Bultmann 1953: 10; Segal 1999A: 24). Even in the non-believing “rational” minds of members of modern society, myths continue to act as a means to discuss the human experience of reality, even when divorced from traditional religious contexts and literalist interpretations of texts.

Accordingly this thesis will discuss the academic study of both traditional and modern myth. In doing so, we will examine Joseph Campbell’s model of the monomyth as a method to structure and analyze the narrative.

Gender and Spirituality (Chapter 2)

Gender has been a site of major crisis for the world in the last century. In much of modern society women have struggled to gain the right to represent themselves free of private or public coercion. This movement has involved both political and personal change. In feminist thought the personal is thought of as political and, consequently, the political in turn becomes personal. Therefore, challenging the norms and attitudes towards women is a fundamental step in seeking civil and social justice for all.

Moreover, this expansion of consciousness affected some groups of men as well, causing them to question their own definitions of masculinity and gender. To be clear, these groups did not always have the same motives, attitudes and intentions as the feminist movement. However, they were concerned with how gender norms, expectations and

assumptions shaped their identities and affected their communities. Consequently, a form of spirituality developed based on these questions, encouraging men and women to question both their perceptions of reality and the moral attitudes that shaped their behaviour. These groups questioned patriarchal values by exploring topics such as cultural imperialism, environmentalism, self determination, free-will and social justice. For men's movement groups these values and attitudes were seen as alienating. These groups often encourage a return to intuitive understanding of themselves as gendered beings in relation to their community as a whole.

The narrative plot of X/1999 in particular suggests a spirituality very similar to the crisis of gender seen in the modern world. The narrative suggests that the symbol of sacrificial motherhood in Japanese society can be viewed as a beneficial image when it symbolizes the commitment that individuals have towards the people they love and the community that promotes their well-being and equality. Furthermore, the fundamental crisis of the narrative is whether a young man can forego the violence and terrorism of patriarchal society and embody a form that identifies with the characteristics of the sacrificial mother in Japanese society. As the main hero is a male this thesis will use the monomythic journey of Joseph Campbell to demonstrate the mythic qualities of the narrative but also to trace the journey of a hero as his perceptions of the world change.

Joseph Campbell and the Monomyth (Chapter 3)

Joseph Campbell has been called many things: a priest of a new hero cult or of the religion of self-development (Lefkowitz 1990: 429), an anti-Semite (Gill 1989), a

postmodernist (Felser 1996: 395), a mystic (Segal 1987: 20), and a romantic (Hendy 2002: 196). His theory of myth has received both criticism and acclaim in lay and academic circles alike. In *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, he outlines the cosmic journey of the mythic hero, the universal pattern which time after time engages the hero in a journey of self discovery. The hero's journey begins with a departure from the familiar as he enters into a new realm of trials and tribulations, where he faces and confronts archetypal figures such as mother and father. From there he delves into the greatest depths of the abyss, and if successful in his journey, returns with a boon to deliver upon the world. The physical journey played out in myth, according to Campbell, is a metaphor for the development of the human psyche, writ large in mythologies from around the world. The power that is given to the hero is a change in perspective accomplished along the journey, inviting the hero to respond to the world in a new way (Campbell 1949: 28).

Campbell's approach is controversial for both its universalist and gendered emphases. With regards to its universalist emphasis, critics of Campbell point out that although the form and structure of myths from various cultures may be similar, the meaning and significance may be culturally specific. Campbell himself addresses this point however, when he writes in his introduction that his theory is about the similarities rather than the differences (Campbell 1949: VIII). For Campbell, culturally specific differences may indeed exist among hero myths, but the similarities are what he chooses to explore. Accordingly, this thesis will discuss both psychological and universal criticisms of Campbell, so as to provide a creditable interpretation grounded in the

sociological and culture context within which the original *anime* narrative was created.

The topic of gender in the monomyth is another concern that must be addressed. Gender is a significant issue to discuss when it comes to Campbell. Scholars argue that Campbell is limited in his understanding of myth or the goddess because he relegates the feminine, divine or otherwise, to the status of objects. In Mary Lefkowitz's article on Joseph Campbell, the goddess or women never become something to be aspired to, confronted, or identified with, or even remotely seen as equal, but rather become something to be conquered and obtained – mere expressions of the male psyche (1990: 429-434). Because myth often proposes and supports societal conventions and behaviour, what is associated with the goddess within myth is often conflated with what a society may conceive of as feminine or perceive of as female. Religious studies scholar Christine Downing explains that this bias of Campbell stems from a description of the feminine in myth from a "male" perspective (Downing 1990:104). However, Campbell does argue that the worship of the goddess was suppressed by patriarchal society and that her power was robbed from her (Campbell 1959: 313) and furthermore, that feminine values are something to be aspired to but that there are no examples of modern women in ancient myth (Campbell 1980: 74-85). Accordingly, mythologies that present alternate models of the feminine therefore serve as a challenge to this patriarchal emphasis in Campbell's theory. However, whether Campbell himself held these patriarchal ideas, or whether he cites them from patriarchal mythic narratives is an issue of debate. In using Campbell's theory of the monomyth as a means to analyze X/1999, these issues will be addressed within the thesis. In particular, the problematic nature of Campbell's image of

the goddess will be explored.

Mythological Themes in X/1999 (Chapter 4 and 5)

In 1992, Clamp Inc, a group of four Japanese women--Mokono Apapa, Ookawa Nanase, Igarashi Satsuki, and Nekoi Mikku--began the *manga* which was to eventually become their second *anime* and cult classic, X/1999. *Mangas* can be classified into two major categories: *shonen mangas* targeted for male readers and *shojo mangas* targeted for female readers. However, this classification is based on the manga's target demographic and both *shonen* and *shojo manga* are read by male and female audiences alike. X/1999 is a twenty-five episode *anime* based upon an original *shojo manga*, yet it incorporates the epic battle scenes familiar in shonen-style *mangas*.

X/1999 is an apocalyptical tale set in modern day Tokyo. A seer, Princess Hinoto, foretells the coming of the end of the world. In her vision, a young man, Kamui, is the pivotal character upon which the future will hinge. In Princess Hinoto's prophecy, Kamui has been chosen by destiny to either protect the world, becoming the Dragon of Heaven and siding with the "seven seals," or destroy it, becoming the Dragon of Earth and siding with the "Seven Angels." Kamui, bereft and grieving from the death of his mother, travels to Tokyo to face this destiny. He vehemently rejects this preordained future, and at first seeks to circumvent it by refusing to participate. Despite this, he strives to protect his childhood companions, Kotori and Fuma, from the cosmic forces that begin to gather around them. Kamui has the ability to choose his fate, however, all seers point to one unalterable eventuality: this world will end. Trusting in the words of

his mother, Kamui trusts in his ability to reject this preordained future, and in so doing, it becomes evident that the decisions of one person will bring about all possible futures, or at long last, put an end to them all.

This *anime* deals with many of the cosmological themes identified by Joseph Campbell's theory of myth. X/1999 places modern characters, rooted in religious traditions and myth, in an epic fight for humanity: they face a threat that stems not from outside forces, as is popular in much of science fiction, but from within. Human beings, although seemingly free to act of their own accord, are caught in the dictates of destiny: according to the seers there is only one future, and all choice is illusion. Despair exists as a result of destiny, in that we cannot change our fates but merely yield to the cosmic forces at play. The main cosmological question posed in this conflict is, should humanity be allowed to continue its existence upon the earth? The hero Kamui must confront this question, in the process engaging questions of free will, good and evil, mortality and immortality, self-sacrifice and love.

Embedded within this cosmological storyline is a subtext exploring the constraints of gender constructs. Within X/1999, gender constructs are placed within a mythological framework to highlight their position as a root of contemporary spiritual crisis. Gender has always been ontologically rooted in religion, whether male or female, mother or father, god or goddess, positive or negative, solar or lunar. As one of the primary defining factors of human nature, it has taken on symbolic representations within the human psyche. In light of this, X/1999 uses gender as a focal point for an analysis of human existence, taking mythological and cultural notions of gender and portraying them

in their contemporary context. In X/1999, a negotiation of gender roles, boundaries and stereotypes becomes the mythological battle ground upon which the fate of the world resides. Kamui, hero of this tale, crosses liminal perceptions of gender and in a monomythic manner, confronts and resolves mother and father images into his psyche. By doing so he shifts his field of perception, comprehending the world from a point of view beyond the notions of femininity or masculinity, and which, for lack of a better word, engenders him with the ability to save the world. Joseph Campbell's psychological approach to myth will, therefore, be used to interpret the theme of gender as a modern spiritual crisis within the plot of X/1999. As such X/1999 will discuss not only a sense of what gender is in society and "modern myth", but how said sense of gender and psychological awareness is affected by the parental relationship. Campbell's theory will, therefore, be useful in the interpretation of X/1999 in two ways, from both a cosmological and a gendered perspective.

This thesis will therefore also argue the following points: first, that the characters and their trials have a gendered subtext. In this interpretation, destiny is understood as the limiting expectations and roles inherent in gender constructs, which in turn limit human choice. Second, that the *anime* implies that qualities valued within any given society have been historically associated with masculinity rather than femininity, and appear to be flawed when taken to extremes. Third, that according to the storyline of X/1999, society can be saved from destruction by the acceptance of new models of behaviour, such as compassion and self-sacrifice, both of which have been culturally associated with the feminine in this *anime*; and lastly, that salvation at the end of the

series comes not when a feminine hero takes on the role of a man but when a man identifies with those models of behaviour associated with the feminine, transcending notions of gender. The hero realizes that these characteristics -compassion, self-sacrifice, emotional availability- are simply and fully human rather than masculine or feminine traits, and are only limited by the constraints society places upon them. The presentation and critique of gender roles within X/1999 encourages viewers to perceive the human ideal in all of us, transcending outdated societal stereotypes of behaviour, as a means to a new future.

Theoretical and Methodological Considerations

In this thesis I will apply the universalist model of Campbell to the *anime* X/1999 in order to highlight the mythic dimensions of the “text”. However, I will also contextualize the *anime* within the culturally specific framework of Japanese society so as to provide a creditable interpretation of the text. The thesis will discuss how traits, conventions and stereotypes associated with gender in Japanese society effect the roles that women and men play. As Japanese Studies scholar Kenneth Henshell notes, “gender cannot be meaningfully studied in isolation. Concepts of maleness...cannot be properly understood without contrast to concepts of femaleness and related expectations, and vice versa” (1999: 8). Therefore the thesis will provide a brief discussion of gender traits, conventions and expectations as found within Japanese society. A discussion of these traits will provide the context for understanding the gendered images presented in X/1999. As scholar of Japanese pop culture and communication Brian Ruh explains,

anime can act as a site of covert rebellion to societal gender norms, for within *anime* the feminine becomes a dialectic symbol that both represents and challenges societal norms (Ruh 2001B: 19). The gendered roles and images within X/1999 will be analyzed as representations of, and sites of resistance to, Japanese gender norms.

This thesis will draw upon methodologies from both the humanities and social sciences. From the humanities, the thesis will utilize the method of “deep reading” of the text in order to develop an in-depth analysis of the series. Deep reading is the method most often used in the study of literature, in that the reader goes beyond the surface reading of a literary or visual “text” to ask questions such as “what was the author’s intent in writing this text?” “who was the intended audience?” “what message was the author attempting to convey?” “What sources does this text draw upon (what are its historical and literary antecedents?)” and “how does this text relate to others within the genre?” In the context of X/1999, for example, the narrative structure of the *anime* series fits Joseph Campbell’s model almost flawlessly. Is this because the mythic storyline is modeled on any particular religious text? Or is it because the mythic themes identified by Campbell really are universal? Do the themes present in X/1999 really mirror, in terms of meaning and implication, the themes found in the world’s religious traditions? Or, were the writers of X/1999 familiar with Campbell’s work, and consciously drew upon Campbell’s monomyth to structure the X/1999 cosmological plot? Did the authors contextualize their discussion of gender constraints, concepts and conventions as found not only in Japan but in human nature itself deliberately within a mythic structure, or is the theme of gender an unintentional thread woven through the mythic storyline? Are the

creators of X/1999 deliberately presenting a critical appreciation of Campbell's work in order to discuss gender as a modern spiritual/human crisis?

Given that the "text" to be interpreted within the thesis is an animated television series, the thesis will draw specifically upon the work of John Wells as outlined in his book Understanding Animation (1998) to help formulate the questions appropriate for the study of an animated "text". The visual component of X/1999 is obviously integral to the series, and requires the analysis of the aesthetic components of the series in addition to the narrative components. As Wells notes, "The animated film has the capacity to redefine the orthodoxies of live-action narratives and images, and address the human condition with as much authority and insight as any live-action film"(1998: 4). It does so because animation has the ability to present and redefine reality, extend symbolism, and challenge accepted notions of gender, species and identity (1998: 188). According to Wells, for example, within animation "the figurative aspects of the body substantially collapse into the abstract. Bodies merely become forms subject to manipulation, exaggeration and reconfiguration" (1998:188). Thus, the body in this context can become the tool of revisionists to challenge orthodox and traditional concepts of reality (Wells 1998:188). In doing a deep reading of the aesthetic components of the series therefore questions such as "what do these visual images communicate to viewers?" "what qualities unique to animation help communicate the message of the series?" and "what do these depictions of gendered bodies communicate to viewers?" will also be explored.

The thesis will also draw upon the social sciences in situating the series in the

cultural context within which it was created. In doing so, the thesis will evaluate the narrative and visual elements of the series and discuss their symbolic and narrative structure within the larger social context of Japanese society. I will extract meaning from, not only the aesthetic quality of Japanese animation, but from the social context in which the series was created, produced, and consumed. Drawing on the semiotic method as outlined in Sonai Maasik and Jack Solomon, Signs of life (1994), the thesis will interpret the visual and narrative elements of the series as “signs” with potential ideological content. According to Maasik and Solomon, the semiotic method “is especially designed for the analysis of popular culture... a shirt, a haircut, a television image, anything at all, can be taken as a sign, as a message to be decoded and analyzed to discover its meaning” (1994:4).

In the context of X/1999, for example, the thesis will ask questions such as “why is it that both prophetic leaders in the series hold positions within the Japanese government?”, “What is being communicated by the roles each woman plays, namely a disabled Shinto Priestess and prophet, who secretly controls the government of Japan and a high profile and sexualized secretary who manages the Governor of Tokyo’s career?” “Why is the ‘good’ prophet blind, deaf and lame?” “Why is the ‘evil’ prophet overtly sexual?” “Why must each woman work from within the shadows or behind the throne to accomplish their ends?” “In what way does gender effect issues of free will, destiny, and self-sacrifice, and how do these portrayals of gender communicate something about Japanese gender roles and constraints?” In interpreting the semiotic implications of such elements of the *anime*, the thesis will place the mythic storyline in a cultural context.

Chapter 1: Religiosity in Popular Culture, Myth and Modern Myth

Religiosity in popular culture has become a topic of growing interest for many scholars. Concepts such as spirituality or religiosity have become increasingly used outside of their institutionalized and religious context. The study of science fiction, *anime*, comics and film has widened, as scholars analyze the religious dimensions of these popular expressions of culture. The purpose of the current project is to analyze the *anime* series X/1999 as an example of “modern myth”. We will examine what it has to say about modern society, the nature of humanity and the contemporary conception of gender. Before we begin discussing X/1999 as a “modern myth”, we must first explain what we mean by the term myth and more importantly, what we mean by the term “modern myth”. What do we mean when we use the term myth in a modern context? How does it function? What does “modern myth” have in common with traditional myth? In what ways are “modern myths” different from traditional myths?

This chapter will begin by discussing what we mean by the word myth, looking at how some of the major academic disciplines define myth, and the resulting disagreements and debates. In this discussion we will look at how Anthropology, Folklore, and religious studies have approached myth through its connection with ritual, belief and its ability to offer an explanation or structure for reality. We will also look at how psychological, sociological and Religious Studies approaches to myths might better help to outline what myth is as defined by its content rather than its status. From this we will propose a general definition of myth. Once we have looked at how academia has defined myth, we will begin to look at the concept of “modern myth”, its societal context and

issues of contemporary culture including authorship, fandom and economics. Later, in my discussion of “modern myth”, we will see that although the societal status of narrative has changed, the content of modern narratives still fulfills many of the functions of myth for members of contemporary society. We can even see a relationship between the communal status of myth for traditional society and “modern myth” for contemporary society. After looking at the concept of “modern myth”, we will briefly look at how the *anime* series, X/1999, meets our criteria of “modern myth” in both its content and its value for a narrative community.

Theoretical Issues/Problems Around the Word Myth

The intent of the current project is not to determine an exact definition of myth but to understand what “modern myth” might be by looking at the various characteristics that academia has applied to myth in general. So, before we can ask what “modern myth” is, we must ask, what defines something as myth? To begin let us look at how myth has been defined academically, by both its former societal status and its latter content. In the former, myth is defined according to the status and value placed on narrative by a faith community, in the latter, myth is defined according to how the content functions for a community. Both, the status and content of myth, function in tandem with each other. One approach, then, is to explain how myth functions by looking at its status in a community; that is, myth used in ritual, believed as truth, or as a primitive explanation of physical reality. A second approach looks at how the content is used to express psychological symbolism, to support social conventions, obligations, or

structures, and to offer images of spiritual/religious guidance. Should the definition of myth be determined by how it is used? Or, alternatively, should myth be defined by the nature of its content? Myth, whether defined by its status or content, is a diverse phenomenon with many functions and applications, which in turn makes the term myth difficult to theoretically define. According to the Folklorist Laura Honko, there are twelve modern approaches to myth, "some of which may have greater relevance than others depending on the nature of the material being studied and the questions posed" (Honko 1972: 47-48). Similarly, the Classics scholar G.S. Kirk says, that universally defining myth according to its origin or function is problematic because myth itself is such a diverse phenomenon, with its own purposes and motives, which may differ within any one given time and culture (1973: 55). Defining myth according to formalistic definitions, isolating narrative based on one or two of its subsidiary qualities, can be just as haphazard, for defining myth this way overlooks texts and materials that other disciplines might consider mythic (Kirk 1973: 55). As a partial result, what determines something as myth is arbitrary and often left to the decision of the scholars and their disciplines. Another contributing factor to the ambiguity of myth develops from the nature of interdisciplinary scholarship, in which the advancements and theoretical conjectures of one discipline spill over into the next. James Frazer's The Golden Bough, is one such example of an anthropological study of myth that has formed the early, and common, conception of myth in the disciplines of Anthropology, Religious Studies, Psychology and Folklore. So, although I will discuss the academic approaches individually, there will be some common factors in how and why disciplines define myth

as they do. To begin our discussion of the academic approaches to myth let us look at how key theorists in the discipline of Anthropology define myth.

Anthropology

Many early anthropologists restrict the definition of myth to those narratives that are parallel or congruent with ritual (Gaster 1984: 132; Segal 1999: 37). Furthermore, early anthropologists defined myth as a primitive form of science, stemming from the same human drive to make sense and control the natural world (Batto 1992: 7). Myth then provides an adequate belief structure, explaining traditional, institutionalized and religious behaviour. Anthropologists, such as Robertson Smith and James Frazer, saw the concepts of both belief and ritual as essential to an understanding of myth, in that ritual is an essential component in activating the power of myth.

Earlier views, such as Smith's, see myth as a secondary and plausible explanation for why rituals were performed once the true meaning was lost or forgotten (Smith 1889: 18; Segal, 1999: 38). For Smith, "myth was superfluous as long as the reason for ritual remained clear" (Segal 1999B: 38). Smith's theoretical discourse is significant in the study of myth for he was the first theorist that tied myth to ritual (Segal 1999B: 38). According to Segal, Smith is a behaviourist, whose theoretical view suggests that primarily studying myth and religion as beliefs is a mistake, and that they instead should be studied by how they are practiced (Segal 1999B: 37). Furthermore, according to Von Hendy, Smith's approach proposes that religion and ritual is affective, or in other words, evokes feeling and emotion in the participant, while myth is cognitive, more associated

with the creeds and laws of a society (Hendy 2002: 89). Myth, at least for Smith, is clearly secondary and unequal in status to the evocative power of ritual.

On the other hand, according to the anthropologist James Frazer, ritual and myth are connected by their origin in ancient magic and religious traditions; in his view, myth is primary. Ritual is seen as an enactment of myth, where through sympathetic magic, ritual served to control the universe or win the favour of the divine (Frazer 1922: 377; Segal 1999B: 39)¹. Myth is primary because a ritual would not be performed without the reason suggested in myth (Segal 1999B: 41). Following this, scholars such as Frazer considered myth to be “a kind of primitive science based on ignorance and misapprehension” (Batto 1992: 7) and therefore were contextualized as belief systems for the participant in ritual and myth. Frazer differs from Smith, not only in their relative stance in regards to the primacy of myth or ritual, but also in that he conceptualizes religion as a belief system (Hendy 2002: 94). Smith, on the other hand, argues that ancient religious behaviour had no part in creed, but consisted of primarily institutions and practices (Segal 1999B: 37). Both approaches tell us, however, that both myth and ritual have parts to play in evoking feeling and thought in the believer or participant.

So, what has the field of classical anthropology told us about myths? First, most anthropologists characterize myth in its association with ritual. As we have seen, for

¹ For example, Frazer suggests that the annual death and rebirth of fertility gods, along side with the ritualistic killing of the king, ensured fertility of future crops (Frazer 1922: 312-313; Segal 1999B: 40); similarly Frazer suggests that through re-enacting creation myths, the universe was actually recreated every year through the ritualistic act (Frazer 1922:312-313; Segal 1999B: 40).

Frazer, ancient rituals were often performed to aid in the fertility of the coming year.

This, in turn, associates ritual with belief systems, for if a ritual or myth is to be effective, the participant must believe that the ritual or myth is having some legitimate effect.

Accordingly, myths and rituals, have an emotional affect on the participant. Myths then are thought to invoke change, whether in their environment or in the participant. Myth from a classical anthropological approach, also attempts to explain reality. While myth does not work like science, it does help to contextualize the individual in relation to the natural world. So, the evocative power of myth, according to anthropology, is that it is tied to belief and through its invocation in ritual, has a “magical”, religious and transformative effect on the participant and their conception of the natural world.

Similarly, classifying myth according to belief has also been a fundamental characteristic in defining myth in the discipline of folklore.

Folklore

To begin, as in Anthropology, the discipline of Folklore defines myth according to belief. According to the Folklorist Albert B. Friedman, technically “a myth is not a myth if one believes it. Since we in this audience do not intimately believe the sacred stories and legendary traditions... [then] their traditions are for us myths” (Friedman 1971: 38). In this context, myth is a technical term used to distinguish between narratives which faith communities believe are true and false stories. Similarly, some groups have a tendency to label their own narratives as truth, yet label the narratives of other groups as myth or “cleverly concocted fraud” (Batto 1992: 5). For example, Batto notes the

distinction made by the Sophists, who distinguished between mythos and logos, advocating truth in lieu of fiction for those narratives they labeled as logos (Batto 1992: 5). As such, societies will label some stories true while others are labeled as fiction. Hence, in folklore there is a distinction made between myths, legends and folktales; "true stories" labeled as myths and legends and "fictive stories" labeled as folklore.

A folklorist perspective also defines myths according to the time frame, place, or type of character in the narrative (Bascon 1965: 9). Myths are differentiated from any other prose narrative on the grounds that they are seen as sacred and true, concern the actions of gods and the "creation of the world" (Bascon 1965: 9). Legends, like myths, are seen to be true, but describe the events of heroes, are mostly concerned with the actions of humans, and often happen at a point after the "creation" of the world in a culture's mythology (Dundes 1984: 6)². Furthermore, the folklorist William Bascon contrasts myths and legends with a third form of prose narrative, folktales. According to Bascon, folktales are fictive, can happen at any time or place, are treated as secular, and the principle characters are human and non-human alike (1965: 11). The folklorist perspective on myth is significant, for it aptly categorizes prose narratives, so that in turn, they may be compared on the basis of their relative function and status, within and across, any given society or culture.

2 Alan Dundes differentiates between myth and legend using the metaphor of an hourglass fixed to the table, the middle of the hourglass being the point of creation. Those events which happen in the lower half of the hourglass are myths, those in the upper half, legend, there can always be more legends but the number of myths are usually few and limited (Dundes 1984: 6).

However, folklorist definitions are formalistic, based on particular characteristics of myth, classifying narratives according to one or two subsidiary characteristics (Kirk 1973: 55). The labels are useful, however, in that they are analytical concepts for the purposes of cross-cultural examination of narratives (Bascon 1965: 10). This practice focuses on how the status or label of a narrative affects the functions it has for the community that finds it valuable. However, most prose narratives do not neatly fit into one category or the other, partially because myth may have a number of functions and different status depending on the time in which they exist (Kirk 1973: 55). Some myths having greater importance than others; some myths represent smaller communities than others (Eliade 1969: 139-140). Furthermore, the distinctions made among myth, legend and folklore are not recognized by all scholars when defining myth (Kirk 1973: 55). Consequently, mythic materials may be disregarded which might have otherwise been included (Kirk 1973: 55; Eliade 1969: 138). An example of this would be Joseph Campbell's theory of myth, in which he includes hero myths, otherwise labeled by folklorists as legends. Moreover, defining myth according to Bascon's criteria fails to take into consideration the dynamic nature of the scholarly term myth both in its ideological, philosophical and socio-political underpinnings. It says nothing about the content or the nature of myth (Kirk 1973: 55), whether having to do with spiritual, psychological or sociological concerns.

Religious Studies

From a Religious Studies perspective, myths are seen as sacred histories, often

explaining the creation of the universe, and upon whose truth depends the life of a community. Myth in a Religious Studies context is also adaptable and can draw upon older mythic elements to create structures and statements that reflect on ancient modes of thought, but are used to discuss issues of contemporary concern. Myth in the context of Religious Studies, also serves as a means to communicate spiritual values in discourses on the nature of existence, offering definitions of the nature of humanity, the world, and divinity. From a Religious Studies perspective, myth supports beliefs and an established tradition, and often incorporates many psychological and societal functions as well. Yet once again, as we have seen previously in the disciplines of Anthropology and Folklore, the truth of a given narrative has long assumed to be a defining characteristic of myth. Historian of religion Raffaele Pettazzoni and New Testament scholar and theologian Rudolf Bultman both discuss the nature of myth as true history.

Professor of the history of religion, Raffaele Pettazzoni differentiates between myth and any other kind of prose narrative, on the grounds that myth is seen as "true story" instead of a "false story" (1949: 102). He defines myths as those narratives which are taken to be true, owe nothing to logic, and have an evocative power and nature all their own (1949: 102). These narratives are myths because they are "true history," actual accounts of life and creation, which are held as sacred truths (1949: 102). For Pettazzoni myths are tied to the life of a community; a myth is "true" because it communicates to the believer something significant about the nature of their community. Pettazzoni says myths are an "absolute truth because a truth of faith, and a truth of faith because a truth of life" (1949: 107). Furthermore, he demonstrates this by saying that a myth's status of

"truth" is relative to the life of the community; a community cannot exist without its myth and a myth cannot exist without its community, if one changes then both ultimately change (Pettazoni 1949: 107-109). According to Pettazoni, as civilizations or cultures rise, change or fall, then so does the standard to which its myths are regarded as "truth." Often myths that lose their status of truth become the preverbal playthings and entertainment of latter societies (1949: 109). Considering Pettazoni's discussion, a fundamental factor in defining a myth from a Religious Studies approach is the value that is placed in the myth by a community. Myths are not narratives that exist within and of themselves: myths are the foundational assumptions of communities (Pettazoni 1949: 107). Considering this, myths can also be studied in socio-historical context to show how specific myths may have undergone modification to suit more contemporary situations (Honko 1972: 47).

Accordingly, traditional myths cite portions of older myths placing them in new contexts that mirror the concerns of the cultural time which uses them (Honko 1972: 47). Biblical scholar Bernard Batto's definition of "mythopoeic speculation" is useful in this discussion. He defines this as a process in which mythic elements are created to include new dimensions of society and as a conscious reflection of older myths are extended to new situations and experiences (Batto 1992: 12). So for example, redaction criticism was developed as a form of scholarly analysis of the Christian gospels. Redaction criticism is, "the method that studies the way biblical writers accepted or rejected, changed or expanded, or otherwise reformulated their oral and written sources, as well as how they reordered and regrouped them to make a certain point, composed new materials, and

constructed their accounts" (Dulin and Perrin 1994: 20). So these writers may have drawn on mythic elements to appeal to the communities for whom they were writing: for example, the Moses typology in the Christian gospel according to Matthew (Dulin and Perrin 1994: 342). Therefore, the ability of myth to draw on and re-contextualize older myths into viable forms of religious narrative has been a common characteristic of mythic narrative, and furthermore, demonstrates that myths are far from static and abstract narratives: their status and life is tied to the community that values them.

As such, the readings of myth in a Religious Studies context have also to do with existential discourses. Myth emphasizes experience and provides an understanding of suffering, suggesting a source for suffering, and a possible solution to this suffering. All of this is to guide humanity towards a greater sense of being. Religious Studies scholars such as Rudolf Bultmann have argued that myth exists in ancient times and into the contemporary world, not because it explains the rules and laws of reality, as science would, but because it expresses the human experience of reality (Bultmann 1953:10; Segal, 1999:24). According to Bultmann, myth should not be read cosmologically, explaining the literal creation of existence, but anthropologically or existentially (Bultmann: 1953: 10; Segal 1999: 24). According to Bultmann,

What is expressed in myth is the faith that the familiar and disposable world in which we live does not have its ground and aim in itself but that its ground and limit lie beyond all that is familiar and disposable and that this all constantly threatened and controlled by the uncanny powers that are its ground and limit. In unity with this myth also gives expression to the knowledge that we are not lords of ourselves, that we are not only dependent with the familiar world but that we are especially dependent on the powers that hold sway beyond all that is familiar, and that it precisely in dependence on them that we can become free from the familiar powers (Bultmann

1953:10).

As Segal points out, the conception of myth for Bultmann is far from psychological, for it focuses not just on the nature of humanity, or our relationships, but humanity's perception of itself in the world, how we perceive and respond to our existence (Segal 1999: 24).

What has the Religious Studies approach told us about the nature of myth?

Primarily, myths are regarded as "true stories" because they are believed in by a faith community and as a result of this belief are seen as sacred, valuable and unquestionably fundamental for the community. As well the question of authority is implicit here, as myth socially communicates tenants, norms and values to the community. However, defining myth by belief is somewhat inadequate, for belief is often relative for both communities and individuals. Thoughts and communities are not static, narratives will change and be employed by believers to suit their own purpose and to communicate truth in relation to the contemporary context from which they are speaking. Myth as a standard of truth might be a better defining factor, where belief and truth are measured by the value placed on a myth by a community, and that reflects an existential understanding of reality depending on the time and place of a culture. In this sense the content of religious narratives also have a great deal to do with understanding human nature, in that they integrate psychological aspects of the psyche and development of the personality, contextualizing them within the society that created them, and then integrating them in ritualistic behaviour and myth in order to sustain and support society. It is to the psychological and sociological content of mythic narrative that we now turn.

Psychology

From a psychological perspective, myths demonstrate cognitive categories, symbolic expression and the projection of the subconscious (Honko 1972: 47). Myth is a reflection of the human mind, in which case the intellect establishes symbolic representations of phenomenon in order to perceive them in relation to each other. In the psychological approach, myth symbolically represents aspects of the external world or of the subconscious mind (Honko 1972: 47). Scholars such as Carl Jung and Joseph Campbell conceive of myth as a product of the psyche, a reflection of the dream content in the subconscious mind. These symbols often become conceptualized as anthropomorphized images called archetypes. Archetypes, as Verena Kast describes them are, "Anthropological constants of experience, formation and transformation of behaviour" (Kast 1990: 91). Robert Ellwood says that these archetypes, according to Jung were aspects of the self, fragmented and repressed (1999: 44). In Jung's psychological study of myth, archetypes, appear in myths and fairy-tales just as they do in dreams and are the products of unconscious mind (Jung 1969: 37-38; Jung 1983:550; 100; Segal 1999B: 81). In the case of myths, these images are ordered in an understandable context, while in psychotic fantasy, they are generally unintelligible, irrational³. Furthermore, as Eduard H. Strauch, scholar of comparative literature, notes,

3 However, according to Eduard Strauch, Jung and Freud differed in their conception of myth. Freud, on one hand, studied myth based largely in regard to dreams and the psychotic, but Jung on the other hand, argued that myths and dreams shared a symbolism based on experiences widely shared by human beings who manifested no mental aberration in their everyday existence (Strauch 2001: 135-137).

Jung's theory of the archetype in relation to religion, mythology and art serves to "exhibit a creative tendency to synthesize experience, integrate personality, and synchronize energies with spiritual goals" (2001: 142). Archetypes are preconscious mental energies, which through their symbolic representation in myth, could be balanced so that a new individuated and actualized self could be achieved (Ellwood 1999: 44). This psychological conception of myth is similar to the work of Joseph Campbell.

Joseph Campbell's event-based theory of the monomyth combines Freudian and Jungian psychoanalytical theories of ego development and graphs it against the structure of both rituals and myths, proposing a theory of myth that focuses on the initiating and integrating power of myths for the individual. For Joseph Campbell the primary function of myth is the psychological because myth adapted cosmological, sociological and ontological understanding of experience, transforming and guiding the journey of individuals and communities. Campbell argued that the power of myth has been cut off from humanity due to our inability to actually believe mythic material, a consequence of our scientific age and the rationalized world in which we live (Campbell 1949: 387).

Campbell says,

Myth is the penultimate; the ultimate is openness—that void, or being, beyond the categories—into which the mind must plunge alone and be dissolved. Therefore, God and the gods are only convenient means—themselves of the nature of the world of names and forms, though eloquent of, and ultimately conducive to, the ineffable. They are mere symbols to move and awaken the mind, and to call it past themselves (Campbell 1949: 258).

For Campbell, the significance of these ancient and mythic symbols can be regained by the application of modern depth psychology, unlocking the hidden truths and

psychodynamic energies. Yet Robert Segal's criticism of Campbell's approach has been that he does not attend to the particulars of societies when looking at the content or function of myth.

Eduard Strauch argues that a psychological interpretation of myths demonstrates how these archetypes can act as human guides for survival, questioning the existential situations and problems that humanity has faced (2001: 143). More than reflecting patterns of behaviour, myths must also reflect the particular variables of that myth's environment, as he calls them "the physiological weakness and environmental perils" (Strauch 2001: 143). As much as these psychodynamic energies may be found in the mind, they are also drawn from the societal and environmental context in which they may manifest themselves (Strauch 2001:145). Therefore, these archetypes might have a basis in human developmental experience, but they also reveal other particularly important cultural experiences of society and culture.

What has the psychological approach to myth told us? First, the images that appear in myth are symbolic of patterns of behaviour. These patterns of behaviour have their counterpoint in the human psyche, as erratic and subconscious elements. The psychological perspective attempts to put these primordial images of the psyche into an understandable and concrete form. As such myth aids the individual by acculturating them away from the dependency associated with childhood to independence and self-actualized adult-hood (Campbell 1959: 79).

Sociological

From a sociological perspective, myth serves to integrate humanity's understanding of, and adaptation to, the fundamental problems of human life in relation to their environment and society. Myths can suggest acceptable patterns of behaviour and in the same instance validate social obligations, institutions, privileges, rituals, and values (Honko 1972: 47). According to Batto, "In this way disparate people are united into a single group and their identity defined in relationship to other groups. This serves the purpose not only of promoting the welfare of the group by validating its institutions, but also of defending the group against external threat[s]" (Batto 1992: 10). Faced with fundamental problems of society, culture, and nature, myths have the ability to reflect "individual tendencies and social necessities" (Honko 1972: 47), in which there can be created a view that is both individual, communal, and takes into account how individuals understand themselves in relation to their communities. For example, Albert Friedman describes the concept of an American myth as a "valorization of experience [that] is keyed to a mythology. Each of us carries around in our head a fragment of a collective national fantasy that assures him of his society's destiny and makes him accept his social obligations willingly" (Friedman 1971: 41). Myths then can tell us a great deal about the society and culture from which they arose. In this context many myths support communities, however, myths often also criticize social structures and behaviour and are not always supportive of the dominant culture⁴.

⁴ An obvious example in Western culture of myth's ability to challenge institutional structures and conventions, would be in the Christian tradition, when Jesus of Nazareth helped both the sick and the

Considering this, Jean Guiart argues that in myth there is a multiplicity of meaning, expressing the dominant cultural norms, but in the same voice questioning them. He writes, "Myth, then, contains at the very least two messages: the one the structuralist deciphers, studying his text as a vehicle of the culture as a whole, and the one the narrator impresses on it, which is the summary of his social position, affirming a disappointed ambition or one on the point of success, protesting against the wrong done him"(1968: 114). For Guiart, myth is "the fruit of a cumulative process, under the pressures of private and collective interest" (1968: 114). One could argue that myth in this sense has a paradoxical nature when it comes to society, even at times dismantling old structures and suggesting new ones, a perspective already discussed in relation to the Religious Studies approach to myth.

From a sociological perspective, myth contextualizes the individual within their society. It justifies the conventions, obligations and roles of the individual. Furthermore, myth can promote sometimes critical modes of thought, communicating cultural values and morals in its application. In this context myth is connected to ideology, in which truth, as seen above, is a subjective tool which transforms and interprets all of our experiences. In myth, psychological and sociological structures exist so as to contextualize our sense of self in relation to our behaviours, our psyches, and our social obligations. It grounds us in who we are as individuals and as societies, acculturating the believer both existentially and socially.

socially alienated. In this instance Jesus acts as a model for behaviour, but also acts as a challenge for the orthodox social and cultural conventions of his time.

Defining Myth

From the academic perspective, we can see that myth is a wide and varied phenomenon, whose function, definition and character depend on what terms we use to define it. It has associations with ritual, belief, and faith communities. Furthermore, it leads to religious, existential, psychological and sociological issues, values and content. Depending on the scholarly discipline or attitude of the individual scholar, what narratives we assume to be myth often change. For the purposes of this study, we will define myth on the basis of how it is used, as a narrative, which depending on our context, holds some standard of truth. Furthermore, myth is associated with communal and ritualistic behaviour, and deals with issues of spiritual, psychological and sociological import.

Modern Myth

The approach to narrative as a source of human insight and meaning is a common academic perspective. When discussing "modern myth", many scholars speak of the concept of "mythopoesis": a creative process in which humanity, as part of their natural and cultural environment, begins to transcribe experience into some form of comprehensible and meaningful knowledge, and then express it through narrative. So, it has been suggested that literature with paradigmatic depth may serve humanity the same way traditional myths do (Strauch 2001: 145), by revitalizing spiritual meaning for the individuals in a modern secular society. This is a modern story telling phenomenon that many scholars refer to as "modern myth" (Rauch 2003: 22-38). Here the word myth is

used in the context of traditional myth's various functions, yet there is a difference between the modern and traditional context in which each exists. In this section, we will look at how scholars have approached the concept of "modern myth". We will look at why and how it functions, and whether or not "modern myth" functions for contemporary society in the same way that traditional myths have for ancient societies. We will also compare "modern myth" with traditional myth in terms of, how they are similar in content, but also different in its societal status and context.

Modern myth has been referred to academically as: a modern cultural philosophy and as a modern narrative that has spiritual import. To begin, the term modern myth suggests a spiritual response to secular narratives. According to Stephen Rauch, modern myths are created by artists who draw upon their own experiences to express the concerns and values of modern communities (2003: 118). He draws on Joseph Campbell's view of myth by citing the effect that myth has on human creative endeavours (Campbell 1949: 3). Sociologists such as T. Luckmann have suggested that there exists a new form of religion, emerging out of a modern social context. This new form of religion is not only non institutional, but is also understood to be privately constructed. This is what Luckman calls "invisible religion" (Luckman 1967; Dobbelaere 2002: 148). For example, scholar of Comparative Literature, Eduard H. Strauch, argues that spiritual insight and depth can be engendered by modern secular narrative. He does this by drawing on the insights of philosophers, scholars and artists spanning from many disciplines and times in his book Beyond Literary Theory: Literature as a Search for the Meaning of Human Destiny (2001). Strauch proposes that, "the individual should seek to

discover his or her own sentient-spiritual response to [a] literary work" (2001: xv). He goes on to say that the individual can learn through the "living pictures of literature" elements of morality and wisdom (Strauch 2001: 179-180). He says that the study of literature can invoke a deep and personal analysis of the physical, emotional and spiritual side of humanity. One could see, for example that things like "truth, beauty, and hope" still exist despite the propensity of humanity cruelty and the perception of an indifferent universe (Strauch 2001: 180). Furthermore, Strauch argues that humanity has a teleological instinct, which is self evident by the existence of myth, religion and mysticism. He says that despite the seemingly paradoxical and contradictory nature of human thought, humanity's knowledge has a purpose: the self discovery of its own nature (2001: xxi).

Similarly, modern myth has been defined as a modern ideology that exists within a cultural context. Albert Friedman describes the American myth as a "valorization of experience [that] is keyed to a mythology" (Friedman 1971: 41). In this context myth is connected to ideology, in which truth as we have seen, is a subjective tool which transforms and interprets all of our experiences, justifying our roles, social obligations and sense of identity. However, Friedman notes a distinction in the use of the term by historians and sociologists: their use of the term "modern myth" has much to do with traditional myth as ideology, but little to do with myth as a narrative structure (1971: 43). He resolves this issue by hypothesizing that,

Mythology of complex cultures is crypto-typical, that such mythologies cover systems of assumptions, values, beliefs, personal wishes, socialized and social wishes internalized, which reveal themselves only in the images and

metaphors in which they get expressed, in syntactical relationships, in the articulation of incidents, in the fleshing out of archetypal personae and situations (Friedman 1971: 43).

This definition is important to our discussion because it describes myth as a cultural and ideological value system, shared by a community that holds the myth as a standard of truth, expressing truth as they see it through symbols, metaphors and narrative. It is this concept of modern myth as both a contemporary spiritual and cultural response to narrative that we now focus our attention.

Scholarly Approaches to the Nature of Modern Myth

Scholarly discussion of modern myth suggests that even the possibility of a real modern myth diminishes due to the rapidly changing nature of modern society. Rauch quotes Joseph Campbell in suggesting that a modern myth is hard to develop because, “life is so complex and it is changing so fast, that there is no time to consolidate itself before it is thrown over again” (Campbell 1988: 132; Rauch 2003: 96). Furthermore, in this contemporary context, value and meaning are no longer static, no longer defined by unquestionable authority (Rauch 2003: 14; 58). As a result no individual modern myth, if indeed it did exist, could ever encompass the entirety of human experience. Yet this does not deny the fact that, if viewed as modern myth, modern narratives may be seen as a mythology of modern times.

When Jung discussed traditional myth, he noted that any one myth cannot help us deal with all aspects of the personality, however, a whole mythology could aid us in doing so (Segal 1987: 132). This perspective is as relevant to modern myth as it was to

traditional myths which Jung studied. When looked at as a whole modern myths may compose a modern mythology, complete with thoughtful and relevant discourses that are keyed to the modern existence of humanity at the end of the 20th century. In addition, some scholars suggest that modern myth “needs” to exist.

Stephen Rauch characterizes contemporary life as anxiety provoking, isolating, indifferent, all leading to the “ache of modernity” (Rauch 2003: 13-17). Modern myth is necessary to reconnect humanity with the cold universe in which we live, much as traditional myths once did. Similarly, Thomas Howard describes the character of modern life, as a “brawling tumble of modernity, whose landscape is blasted with the ash heaps of technology and participatory democracy and the power struggle and chair personships and litigation and miles per hour and pragmatic banality” (1980: 23). For scholars of modern myth, the negative aspects of the human condition are enduring and in many ways not so different from those experienced in any time; however, they argue that there are problems today that are substantially different than those faced in other times. We will return to this issue later when discussing the comparison between modern and traditional myth. Moreover, scholars of “modern myth” suggest that due to the advent of scientific thought and rationalism we are living in a time that has started to abandon “the power of myth” or the expression of thoughts, feelings, experiences, and spirituality within a narrative (Rauch 2003: 13-17). From a scientific perspective, myth is no longer needed because science usurps the function that myth once served.

Rauch draws upon critics of modernity, Joseph Campbell and the work of Mircea Eliade, when he says that modern humanity has cut itself off from myth in its search for

meaning, as well that much of modern society has turned away from myth as providing an explanation of the universe. In Robert Segal's discussion of the future of myth, he suggests that myth's future has been called into question by science because science fills the role of myth by more accurately describing the nature of universe (Segal 1999: 19). However, on the other hand, scholars like Rauch suggest that although we may have gained in scientific fact, we have lost a great deal in meaning. We have replaced the mythic with the political, economic, and scientific ideologies of the modern time (Rauch 2003: 13). Glen Goodknight goes as far as calling political and scientific ideologies, "myths-that-are-not-myths", for Goodknight, these pseudo myths lack real myth's ability to nourish and integrate us with the universe (1980: 40). In this approach, there is a distinction between what we learn from facts and science and what we learn from art and religion. Thomas Howard says that literary or artistic imagination, "all, one way or another, bespeak the mythic mode – the mode of articulating significance by showing and telling than by explaining and dismantling"(1980: 20). Campbell goes as far to claim that the artists are the heroes and the shamans of the present day (Segal 1987: 65), for only their own experiences of horror and beauty can speak with the force of myth. Only those who have the proper depth or understanding could offer us some perspective on contemporary human existence. Similarly, for Howard, it is through narrative that we are able to keep alive our values and beliefs. As Howard suggests, myth, modern or otherwise, preserves and puts one in touch with the "high things", the best and ever present qualities of humanity as they exist parallel to the anxieties and complications of human existence (1980: 23). Vernon Hyles similarly argues that, "the real function of

literature in human affairs is to reanimate myth's ancient and primal endeavours to create a fruitful living place for humanity in a world that is at best oblivious to it and, at worst, malevolent towards it" (1992: 212). Therefore, the next question is: what function does modern myth have in modern society?

For modern scholars, the creative endeavours of an artist can give meaning to life experiences by thematically placing them within a narrative context. They argue that this is a fundamental and distinct from of thought, what they call "mythopoetic". These narratives would then, in turn, transform and direct the reader's appraisal and response to both old and new experiences. Moreover, this meaning that can be gaining through narrative is distinct from the knowledge gained through the acquisition of scientific theory and fact. Therefore, to be considered a modern myth, a narrative would have to invoke a sense of "kinship" in the reader, making them identify with the narrative, and shaping and transforming their search for meaning. Rauch says, "we must learn to live through a story, in order for "modern myth" to work in the same way myths have sustained communities for thousands of years" (2003: 21). Therefore, modern myth may do a number of things: offer a solution to feelings of alienation and new anxieties within the modern world; be a means in which to understand, conceptualize our existence within such a world; to give a conceptualized reason for the dominant order within the narrative; or to give hope or solace to those who live in spite of it. Yet to classify all modern narrative as myth would be foolhardy and dilute the evocative and transforming nature of myth, or myth-like creations. C.S. Kilby argues that there is a distinction between stories and myths. Stories may entertain, hold your interest, even involve you emotionally;

however this is not satisfactory enough to classify all narrative as mythic (Kilby 1984: 28). As we have seen, myths for Kilby are those stories that grasp and transform your “inner parts” through a sense of identity in the narrative (1984: 28). Therefore, the reader would have to identify with something in the narrative to feel a sense of “kinship with it, so that it would contextualize or shape their search for meaning.

An example of “kinship” in narrative can be seen in the research of Shaku Tesshu on religiosity in Japanese *Anime* and *Manga*. Shaku Tesshu says that there is a form of religiosity in *Manga* and *Anime* which aims to transform experience and meaning through identity and kinship. *Manga* and *Anime* are forms of artistic expression in contemporary Japanese society; *Manga* are graphic novels, or what are commonly called “comics” in North American society⁵. According to Shaku, the religiosity expressed in these modern narratives is entirely based on a form of kinship through which the buying power of readers affect the form of narrative in both of these genres. This is significant in our discussion for it demonstrates what we mean by kinship by contextualizing it within the proper societal context, the market place of popular culture.

Shaku says in his discussion of religiosity and popular culture, that comics as a commodity of modernity place inflated human desires upon the market place (2003: 180). Shaku’s form of religiosity can be characterized as: first, appealing to a dedication and zeal inspired by these narratives in fans, and second, as discussing issues of suffering and

⁵ *Anime* is a genre of animation in Japanese society, often shown on television, but which also has a significant presence within the Japanese film industry. Furthermore, *Anime* are often adaptations of those *Manga* whose popularity merit further production and marketing.

desire, which through identification in a narrative, suggests both a transformation of perception and life experiences. Shaku begins by suggesting four types of religious narrative in Japanese popular culture: “grand tales”, “private tales”, “rousing tales” and “soothing tales”. “Grand tales,” according to Shaku, are an older form of narrative, whose themes transcend notions of generation and gender, promoting humanism, abstaining from over indulgence, and dedicating oneself to effort and achievement (Shaku 2003: 178). He explains that in these “grand tales”, “to achieve a purpose one must concentrate and invest all one’s psychic and physical energy” (Shaku 2003: 178). “Private tales,” in contrast, focus on stories of individuals and their desires. In private tales, “the realities are...about what I am, what do I want, and how can I live a good life” (Shaku 2003: 180). According to Shaku, private tales emerged in the 1980’s once the grand tales of early *manga* and *anime* became contextualized within a market driven economy, characterized as competitive and self promoting, which in turn switched the market’s focus from grander narratives about humanity to individual and desire-based narratives. What was once universal became relative; what once promoted the abstention of desire became the affirmation of it (Shaku 2003: 180).

Furthermore, Shaku suggests that there are two other forms of religious tales in Japanese *Manga*, what he calls “rousing stories” and “soothing stories”, both with their own distinctive form of religiosity (2003:182). “Rousing” stories deal with spiritual themes such as “abstinence and effort bring victory” and “miracles happen only to those who believe;” while “soothing stories” deal with themes of self-denial such as “my desires strangle me” and “life is easy when one controls one’s desires.” “Rousing tales”

are a commonly found and significant form of religiosity in Japanese popular culture, yet the “soothing stories” are just as significant and have a religiosity all their own.⁶ When socio-economic repercussions create anxieties based on the individual’s inability to successfully meet all of their desires and ambitions, “soothing stories” re-contextualize those experiences, so the source of the problem is the misperception of and response to their own desires. Shaku identifies such socio-economic repercussion as the civil unrest caused by the burst of the bubble economy, the big Hanshin-Awaji earthquake and the Aum Shinrikyo (Shaku 2003:177), therefore, “soothing” stories occurred in part as a means to communicate a reassuring message about the state of Japanese society despite widespread societal frustrations and conflict (2003:181). According to Shaku, whether through the commitment to hope and desires, or the realization that our hopes and desire prevent us from happiness, these “comics” reflect our identities and egos. In Shaku’s argument he contextualizes this in relation to traditional thought on religion, the self and the ego. He says, “In other words, knowing the comics that fascinates you is to know yourself. Dogen (1200-1253) said, “To study the Buddha way is to study yourself” (Dogen 1970:36)...In this sense, comics have become religious devices whose function it is to reflect me as I really am” (Shaku 2003: 180). For Shaku, the comics which fascinate readers the most raise questions which have particular significance in their lives, furthermore, they contextualize these experiences for the reader, affecting the reader’s

6 It is worth noting that the use of the word “soothing” is in relation to how he contextualizes the other form of narrative as “rousing”. In this instance “soothing” is used to convey a calming message despite failing desires and ambition.

appraisal of experiences. As in our discussion of modern myth, these narratives have a similar form of religiosity by demonstrating that it is through identity or "kinship" that experiences are re-contextualized; in the case of "rousing stories" marshaling strength, or in "soothing stories" overcoming suffering by changing the way we perceive desire.

From the various scholarly characterizations of modern myth it is clear that scholars have described modern myth in a number of ways: as having a social and cultural context; as advocating a new response to new myths that reflect modern times; that showing things can be learned from art and narrative that are not otherwise gained by science; allowing readers to identify with these narratives; and, in turn, emphasizing how these narratives affect how the readers conceive of themselves and the world around them. Scholars who use the term "modern myth" suggest that people within contemporary society can have a powerful, spiritual and transforming response to narrative. Now that we have discussed how we define "modern myth", we will begin to look at both the similarities and differences between modern and traditional myth.

Comparing Traditional and Modern Myth

According to the scholarly disciplines that define myth by its societal status, modern myth would be largely impossible, seeing that modern narratives are not in the traditional sense associated with ritual or believed to be literally true. Modern myths are more like the folklorist definitions of legends and folktales than like traditional myth. However, an argument can be made that the content of modern myths is similar to the content of traditional myth. The following section will look at how modern myths do

raise issues of psychological, sociological and religious concern. Furthermore one can distinguish between traditional and modern myths, mostly based on their status, we will see how, in regard to the communal aspects of modern myth, they may still have characteristics in common.

Whether through symbolic projection of archetypes, as suggested by Jung, or the significance of events in narrative mirroring ego development, as suggested by Campbell, modern myths would, according to their content, be those narratives which help us understand ourselves psychologically in relation to the world, to ourselves, and to our relationships. Furthermore, these narratives discuss archetypal figures in relation to their modern context. How do we understand our relationships to our mothers and fathers, and furthermore, what is the significance of these roles in our own lives? Has motherhood or fatherhood changed since ancient times? How in turn, do these archetypes affect our perception of existence? What way do these archetypal figures guide the development of our egos or our sense of self and identity? Therefore, both modern and traditional myths can be seen as drawing upon these archetypal figures to psychologically guide, structure and balance our identities.

Similarly from a sociological context, modern myths, like traditional myths, help us to understand ourselves in relation to social structures, institutions and obligations. Yet modern myths would do so within a contemporary context, reflecting contemporary concerns, which may not be found within traditional myth. What does modern myth have to say about our societies and how they are structured? How do we make sense of our reality with the increasing scope of the internet, the immanence of cloning technology,

the promise of vivid virtual reality or even now the concept of a computerized and self-created identity? To what end do these transformations of modern society lead us? The content of modern myth can in many ways reflect functions in traditional myth, in that it too seeks to understand human social nature through the content of a narrative. Modern myth would in some ways be freed from the strict obligations to authority suggested in traditional myth. However, they would meet societal demands in other ways, for example, through media restrictions on content, morality, or even the whim of societal approval and economic demand (Ruh 2001; Shaku 2003).

Considering how modern myths discuss aspects of both the psyche and society, they often also discuss religious and existential issues not addressed in traditional myth. An example of this would be cloning: are artificially new born life forms human? Do they have "souls"? If we die and our clones live on, do we have some participation in their existence? If one day we are able to download our memories or experiences into computers, are we truly still alive, how in this turn do we conceive of death? Following from this, Rauch in his work on modern myth suggests that a fundamental characteristic of modern myth is that it reapplies old symbols and structures to new and relevant situations.

We saw in our earlier discussion of how myth is understood in the context of Religious Studies as a discipline, that both traditional myths (Honko 1972: 47) and their modern counterparts (Rauch 2003: 96-116) frequently cite portions of older myths, placing them in new contexts that mirror the concerns of the contemporary culture. Stephen Rauch argues that this is a fundamental quality of modern myths as they cite

older myth (Rauch 2003: 96-97). Modern myth like traditional myth, draws upon older mythic content to express contemporary concerns and values in familiar and culturally ingrained forms through symbolic and narrative content. However, it should be noted that modern myths adapt material more liberally. So, although mythopoetic speculation may occur in a different context than it does in traditional myth, specifically in regards to the sacredness of the content, the incorporation of old into new is not something new in the study of myth in general.

Moreover, in today's society, spirituality and belief systems are no longer confined to organized religions, furthermore, sociologists have demonstrated that the function of secularized religious beliefs are similar to the function of traditional beliefs. According to sociologist Karel Dobbelaere, one of the marks of secular society is the break from traditional religions, where non-religious entities can successfully rise and compete in realms once restricted to organized religion (2002: 150). On the creation of modern pluralism she writes,

As religion lost its societal functions, religious pluralism developed. The religious tradition, which prior to the advent of modern society could be authoritatively imposed, lost its monopoly position and a pluralistic situation developed. In such circumstances, religion has to be marketed. This of course further deobjectified the sacred cosmos, which allowed for non-religious rivals to emerge and to compete (Dobbelaere 2002: 157).

These secular rivals not only exist in contrast to traditional religion but also have a similar functional character. Dobbelaere suggests that there exists a form of religion in contemporary society, which although social in nature, has not been measured by membership in any institutionalized religious structure (2002: 150). Additionally,

Luckman asks, “whether, in contemporary society, any socially objective meaning structures but the traditional institutionalized religious doctrines function to integrate the routines of everyday life and to legitimate its crisis?” (Luckman 1967: 27; Dobbelaere 2002: 148). Dobbelaere suggests in accordance with the work of Thomas Luckman (1967), Yinger (1977), Nelson (1976) and Wade Clark Roof (1979; 1980) that there are a number of factors in contemporary society that can give rise to a form of “invisible religion” independent of institutional structures. These factors include “the basic, permanent and presumably universal questions that give rise to religious expression”, including, “the experiences of meaninglessness, suffering and injustice” (Yinger 1977: 68 Dobbelaere 2002: 149). Other factors contributing to the emergence of invisible religion include a “belief or acceptance” of ordered and patterned experience which, “emphasised religion as a means to deal with threats to the social order” (Dobbelaere 2002: 150); and the “value of religious efforts” which Dobbelaere defines as a form of non-doctrinal commitment (Dobbelaere 2002: 150). Accordingly, “privatized, “invisible”, non-doctrinal religious structures exist, [pointing] to the transformation of religion on the individual level” (Dobbelaere 2002: 150). Although studies of invisible religion tend to focus their analysis on individual awareness and interest in experiences that help shape private spiritual belief, they also acknowledge other factors that should be taken into consideration, such as “cultural aspects (shared rites and beliefs) and a socio-structuralist aspect (group formations)” (Roof and Hodge 1980: 91; Dobbelaere 2002: 149). These factors can be compared to how Shaku Tesshu describes the religiosity in *Manga and Anime*: what he calls “rousing” and “soothing” stories.

As we saw earlier, rousing stories are narratives when "abstinence and effort bring victory" and "miracles happen only to those who believe". "Soothing stories", on the other hand, basically say that "my desires strangle me" and "life is easy when one controls one's desires" (2003: 182). These descriptions approximate what Dobbelare called "the value of religious effort" in that they too are characterized by both belief and commitment. Similarly, these narratives, although not institutionalized or doctrinal, contextualize the individual's experiences that give value to suffering or desire. Therefore, a religious response to secular narratives could be considered a form of cultural non-institutionalized religiosity. This religious response to narrative, what we in this discussion are calling modern myth, could fill a niche of what we are now coming to know as "invisible religion." Accordingly, contemporary fictions can take on the aura of myth, proposing a new kind of myth rooted in ritual and belief, but valued for what they can independently say about human existence to the individual who finds them valuable. If modern myth does serve functions similar to invisible religion, then defining myth according to the status given it in an institutionalized context is problematic. It is to these differences between modern myth and traditional myth that we now turn our attention.

The differences between modern myth and traditional myth arise out of the status given to traditional myth. Modern myth, by origin and function, is not associated with ritual, believed in as literally true, based on factual historical evidence, and does not offer an explanation of reality as traditional myth did. Furthermore, modern myths do not have oral antecedents such as traditional myth, other than the fact that modern literature does have its roots in traditional myth, which in turn has its beginning in oral traditions.

However, these distinctions offer us some insight into how we define modern myth in its contemporary context, not only in how it differs but also in how through communal sharing of a narrative, modern myth mirrors some of functions associated with traditional myth's status. As such the following section will focus its discussion of modern myth, in regards to authorship and its communal character in regard to fandom.

As we have seen in our discussion of myth, many scholars limit the definition of myth to ancient narratives, and exclude modern narrative as a form of myth (Kirk 1973:57; Gaster 1954:125). According to the comparative religion and folklorist Theodor Gaster, myth has developed away from its religious and ritualistic beginnings through four stages that he labels "the primitive, the dramatic, the liturgical, and the literary" (1954:125). In the latter category, even modern forms of literature might be considered myth, or to contain mythic elements, should they meet the criteria of myth in other ways. Kirk, for example, claims that novels are not myths, but may contain elements of myths (1984: 57). In attempting to establish the essence of myths, he looks to a "traditional oral tale" in which myths, "are repeated and told by anonymous storytellers" (Kirk 1984: 56, 57). This, by definition, excludes the concept of a modern myth – modern myths have clear authorship - which he himself acknowledges (Kirk 1984: 57). Literary creations are but one of many forms of myth (Gaster 1984: 112), so if an argument is to be made for the creation of modern myth in literate society, authorship must be a defining factor.

Modern narratives, particularly those we will define as modern myth, have extensive communities of fans. Brian Attebery argues that modern storytellers lack the

context in which "story telling could spill over into ritual and belief" (1988: 26).

However, fans gather at conventions, discuss symbolism, interpret the text, even re-enact them in ritualistic behaviour and costume. Some fans expand on the original, establishing their own meaning in the fictions they create. Also, as we saw in our discussion of myth, a myth is believed to be true because it believed in by a community, but belief, particularly in the contemporary context, is relative. Indeed, the text might not be believed to be true, yet the message of a narrative, if believed to reflect a subjective version of a truth about life or society, could be indeed valued as truth. In this way modern myth can contain a truth, similar to the truth seen in myth from a traditional context.

In this sense the scholarly term modern myth exists in a new social context, departing from literalist interpretations, institutionalized ritual and anonymous authority. Through the creative expression of artists and communities modern myths can serve similar functions as those of traditional myths, based mostly on their content, whether psychological, sociological or religious; furthermore, they have a social context that reflects some of the ritualistic and communal aspects of traditional myth. In this way we can begin to place modern myth in a specific social context. Modern myth differs from traditional myth, but it also serves many of the same functions of traditional myth. So for the purposes of our discussion, modern myth exists, as a modern narrative, bearing many of the same functions and characteristics of traditional myth, having spiritual, psychological or sociological import, recognized by a narrative community that sees it as valuable.

X/1999 as a Modern Myth

In 1992, Clamp Inc, a group of four Japanese women -- Mokono Apapa, Ookawa Nanase, Igarashi Satsuki, and Nekoi Mikku -- began the *manga* which was to eventually become the cult *Anime* classic: X/1999⁷. It is to this particular narrative that we turn our attention, looking at what it has to say about modern Japanese society, and in what ways is it a modern myth. To begin I will briefly describe the main plot and main characters of X/1999, discuss the main themes suggested in the *anime*, and also discuss the gendered subtext evident in the narrative.

X/1999 is an apocalyptical tale set in modern day Tokyo. A seer, Princess Hinoto, foretells the coming of the end of the world. In her vision, a young man, Kamui, is the pivotal character upon which the future will hinge. In Princess Hinoto's prophecy, Kamui has been chosen by destiny to either protect the world, becoming the Dragon of Heaven and siding with the "seven seals", or to destroy the world, becoming the Dragon of Earth and siding with the "Seven Angels". The symbol of this power is a holy sword born of Monou Saya, mother of his childhood companions, Kotori and Fuma. Saya loses her life in giving birth to the sword. At this time Kamui's mother, Shiro Toru, took him away from the events beginning to unfold, because he was too young to play the role destiny had decreed for him.

For many years they lived alone together until Kamui's 16th birthday. As Kamui returned home one evening, he discovered his mother standing behind a psychic shield,

⁷ *Anime*, short for "animation", refers to "Japanese Animation", a genre/medium that has its roots in the 1960's, when the Japanese began making television adaptations of their version of comics, called *mangas*.

their home burning down all around her. He tried to save her but was unable to do so.

Amongst the flames she implored him to return to Tokyo, to grow strong and protect the ones he loves. Grieving over the death of his mother, Kamui fulfilled her wishes and traveled to Tokyo to face this destiny. At first he sought to circumvent it by refusing to participate, yet he soon discovered that destiny cannot be simply ignored. It is soon after his arrival in Tokyo that he and those who were destined to play a role in the apocalypse discovered the existence of another holy sword. From Hinoto's dreams and the appearance of the second sword, they soon discovered that the final apocalypse was not a simple choice of life or death, but that there were two swords, two Kamuis, two alternating principles which would battle for the fate of the world. There was a Gemini, a figure to fulfill whatever role Kamui did not choose. However, even though destiny has shaped this apocalypse as a battle between heaven and earth, all seers point to one unalterable eventuality - this world will end.

Despite this, Kamui tried to protect his childhood companions, Kotori and Fuma, from the cosmic forces that began to gather around them. Kamui said that he did not really know what way the world should be, but that he wanted to protect Fuma and Kotori, so he decided to become the dragon of heaven. However, beyond even Princess Hinoto's ability to control, once Kamui decided this, Fuma, Kamui's most beloved friend, was transformed into the dragon of earth and the darker side of his nature. Fuma took the holy sword and killed his sister, Kotori, before Kamui's eyes. Fuma would then attempt to destroy everything that is cherished by the dragon of heaven, including Kamui himself, the seven seals and this entire world. Thus Kamui is presented with a paradox:

how is he to destroy the dragon of earth and prevent the world's destruction, when his power lies in his ability to protect the people he loves?

Kamui's psychic powers and the holy sword are not the only powers he can draw upon. The seven seals all have the ability to create *Kekkai*, massive fields of power that alter reality, protecting the environment, infrastructure and human beings within its area. If a seal dies, or if they lose sight of the one person they desire to protect most of all, then they lose their ability to produce this field. Once all seven seals are "dead" the world will begin to end. As a result of Fuma's role as the dragon of earth and the death of Kotori, Kamui is unable to produce the *Kekkai*. Therefore, Kamui will never become the true dragon of heaven. The world will end and the vision of the future will remain unaltered.

As events begin to spin out of control, Kamui finds himself left with few options, and turns his intentions toward killing Fuma and saving the world. However, as soon as he strikes out at Fuma with the holy sword, it shatters in his hands. If he strikes out against the one he loves, then his only future is to die. As events come to a climax on top of Tokyo Tower, Fuma, dragon of the earth, pierces Kamui's chest and the world begins to fall down around them. As Fuma prepares to deliver the final blow, one of the seven seals saves Kamui, reminding him of his intentions to save Kotori and Fuma, asking him whether this hope and desire has changed. Through this question, Kamui overcame his grief, realizing the powerful lesson taught him by the self-sacrifice of the many people who have tried to protect him. It is through their belief and hope in him that a new future is possible. In the end, Kamui gains the ability to protect the world through channeling this self-sacrificial power. He stops striking out in violence; instead he reaches out to

Fuma, allowing him to destroy his body. Instead of doing battle, he focuses on who he loves. Although there is grief, grief is based in love and that the dead live on inside the memories of the living, as he will live on in Fuma's heart, as Kotori lives on in his. Upon this realization, a globe of light emanates from his body, at last Kamui is able to produce a *Kekkai*, protecting the world from destruction. He has made his choice, to stop fighting, to trust in those who love him, to trust that they will carry on his wishes, his desire to protect this world from those who would destroy it, even if it should mean an end to their own lives.

X/1999, is a great example of modern myth for it tries to make sense out of human existence, the fact that we suffer, the fact that we often feel alone, and how indeed we attempt to put this suffering into context by social engagement. It takes into consideration subjects like the growth of technology, its integration into our lives, the perception of free will in modern society, and contemporary notions of gender. It is therefore a great example of the depth, import and appeal needed in defining a modern myth and differentiating it from any other form of narrative. How then does X/1999 mirror contemporary Japanese thought about society and culture? What does X/1999, as a modern myth, say to and about culture and society?

The cosmological themes in X/1999 are: humanity's destruction of their fellow human beings and the environment; humanity's mortal and finite nature in regards to death; whether when we die, we continue to live and what is that nature of that life; the despair that is felt when it is perceived that our destinies are fixed; that the collective actions of human beings have led society down the path to utter annihilation; and finally

that human beings either create, or feel, so much suffering, that it is actually a blessing from the dragon of earth to bring about our destruction. However, like many myths, in the cosmological discussion there is a reflection of hope and the discovery of a new future through the actions of a hero. Humanity's right to exist is proved by the enduring power of love. The *anime* responds to the suffering in the cosmological themes by pointing out that, despite suffering, humanity has the ability to grieve, and that it is in this grieving heart of humanity that things find an existence beyond death and destruction. Although we die there is an existence beyond, within the hearts of the living, where we serve to inspire and give hope.

Within this cosmological storyline, one can also see that the subtext of the *anime* identifies the constraints of gender constructs as the pivotal element in this cosmological discussion. Within X/1999, gender constructs are placed within a mythological framework to highlight their position as a root of contemporary existential crisis. The symbols surrounding gender have always been used in religious contexts, whether male or female, mother or father, god or goddess, positive or negative, solar or lunar. As one of the primary defining factors of human nature, it has taken on symbolic representations within the human psyche. In light of this, X/1999 uses gender as a focal point for an analysis of human existence, taking mythological and cultural notions of gender and portraying them in their contemporary context. In X/1999, a negotiation of gender roles, boundaries and stereotypes becomes the mythological battleground upon which the fate of the world resides. Kamui, hero of this tale, crosses liminal perceptions of gender to confront, and resolve mother and father images into his psyche. By doing so he shifts his

field of perception, comprehending the world from a point of view beyond the notions of femininity or masculinity, and which gives him with the ability to save the world.

Furthermore, destiny is understood as the limiting expectations and roles inherent in gender constructs, which in turn limit human choice. The *anime* shows that qualities valued within any given society have historically been associated with masculinity rather than femininity, and appear to be flawed when taken to extremes. According to the storyline of X/1999, society can be saved from destruction by the acceptance of new models of behaviour, such as compassion and self-sacrifice, both of which have been culturally associated with the feminine in Japanese society. These models of behaviour are only limited by the constraints society places upon them. The presentation and critique of gender roles within X/1999 encourages viewers to perceive the human ideal in all of us. Through the deconstruction of these stereotypes, such as passivity and activity, feeling and will, emotion and logic, violence and compassion, the viewer can perceive that the saving power implied in the narrative through feminine imagery lies in the intent behind the behaviour, rather than implications implied in the stereotypes. As such, it takes on a mythological dimension in proposing, as Batto suggests, “paradigmatic symbols for human existence” (Batto 1992: 11).

Finally, let us look at the fandom and appeal of the series and the extent to which it can be considered a modern myth by its narrative community. X/1999's popularity has lasted eighteen years, since the first book was released in 1992. During this time it has crossed genres from *manga* into television and a feature length film. It has gained a world wide audience, having been translated into Chinese, English, Korean, Spanish,

French and Indonesian. It has also inspired a great deal of fan fiction and fan art, much of which re-contextualizes religious imagery. More than simply making a profit, the economic market in which modern myth exists demonstrates the significance and depth of the narrative community, as it crosses both genres and borders, offering an interpretation of existence through a modern mythic narrative.

As such X/1999 can be seen as a modern myth that does have a narrative community which values it highly. It engages in both psychological and sociological discourses on human existence, and expresses spirituality through an existential discussion of human nature within contemporary society. However, despite its world-wide audience and appeal, little in-depth analysis has been done on the series. In its use of science fiction to envision new possibilities that transcend biology and culture, and its use of mythic structures to express and criticize cultural norms, X/1999 is a great example of modern myth, and this thesis will begin to redress the lack of scholarly attention the *anime* has received.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has looked at various approaches to a definition of traditional myth, its relation to ritual, as primitive science, its relation to belief, existential and ontological discourses. We have seen that myth has various definitions and qualities dependent on the theoretical views of Anthropology, Folklore, Religious Studies, Psychology and Sociology. We have then looked at various definitions of modern myth, how modern scholars approach modern myth, and how modern and traditional myth have significant

differences and similarities. As well, we have briefly described X/1999, its themes and the cosmological, psychological and sociological content of its narrative, and how in turn this narrative content functions for a community which perceives it as valuable. As a means to study X/1999 as a modern myth, this thesis will critically appraise and apply Joseph Campbell's model of the monomyth to the *anime* X/1999. We will look at some of the praise and criticism his theory has received, how it fits into our conception of modern myth and how, in turn, his model can be used to structure cross cultural analysis while drawing upon sociological content to produce a credible interpretation of the narrative text.

Chapter 2: Engendering Spirituality

In chapter one on the nature of modern myth, I proposed the thesis that the animated series X/1999 is a modern myth about contemporary gender in Japanese society. In comparing what is termed “modern” and “traditional” myth, it was suggested that modern myth expresses spiritual ideologies of human nature similar to the truth claims expressed in traditional myth. Furthermore, the ideologies presented within these modern narratives are directed towards a specific groups within contemporary society. In defining X/1999 as a modern myth, I do so in light of political, cultural and spiritual gender movements of the 20th century. Although the gender message in the series can be discussed with regards to the general human condition, for the purposes of this thesis it will be analyzed in the context of Japanese society, where the narrative was created and for whose target audience it was originally intended and shaped.

In X/1999, gender constructs are placed within a mythological framework to highlight their position as a root of contemporary spiritual crisis. It can be argued that in X/1999 feminist and pro-feminist discourses are expressed through the mythic framework demonstrative of a spirituality which problematizes patriarchal constructs of gender in Japanese society. They accomplish this through an examination of the challenges and expectations of both men and women in regard to self determination and socialized gender roles. The narrative examines the ideological consequences of behavioural norms, the gendered characteristics that have been valorized by society, and finally, the characteristics that are decidedly more beneficial to human survival as expressed in the narrative. They accomplish this dialogue of philosophy, gender theology and role

exploration through the male hero's identification with the symbol of motherhood in Japanese society. It is through his re-examination of his preoccupations and gender assumptions that he is able to transcend the norms of behaviour that the narrative suggests are destructive to the world. Through this journey of re-examination he discovers a path towards a better future that none have yet foreseen. This chapter will analyze the significance of gender assumptions and re-evaluations by plotting the significance of gendered archetypes in X/1999, using Joseph Campbell's psychoanalytical model of the monomyth (discussed in Chapter 3).

The following chapter will seek to accomplish the following: define the cultural and social context of gender values and expectations inherent in Japanese gender roles. This section will outline the issues that feminist and pro-feminist scholars of Japanese gender relations have problematized in contemporary society; and explain the significance of sacrificial motherhood in Japanese society and how it acts as a cultural symbol, and present the prominent thesis of this analysis in light of gendered spirituality, namely, through personal sacrifice, associated with motherhood in Japan, the narrative suggests that we are able to protect the people we love from the destructive consequences of the patriarchal system.

First, I will look at the significance of gender and spirituality in modern political and gender movements, attending to topics of feminist spirituality and men's movement spirituality. I will compare and contrast them to illustrate what topics of importance are significant in each movement. This discussion will touch briefly upon criticisms of these movements, but it is not the intent to challenge or undermine these movements so much

as it is to provide a descriptive framework for understanding gendered spirituality in X/1999. Following this the next section will discuss the specific conceptions of gender that will be used in the analysis of X/1999, i.e. gender in Japanese society. The chapter will examine gender roles, expectations and limitations in Japanese society. As the role of motherhood is significant to the series, we will address the historical and symbolic role of motherhood in Japanese society. This chapter will then conclude by grounding the preliminary hypothesis in gendered spirituality, highlighting both feminist and pro-feminist aspects suggested in this reading of the narrative. It will also suggest an appropriate form of analysis that will be discussed and expanded upon in the next chapter concerning methodology.

Gendered Political, Cultural and Spiritual Movements

As previously mentioned in Chapter One, gender is a prominent theme of interest in the study of religion, spirituality and myth. It is incorporated into pantheons, spiritual principles, and moral codes. Gender has been used in many myths to metaphorically represent aspects of human culture, ideology and the psyche. Often when these symbolic characteristics are analyzed in their specific historical and cultural context they correlate with what a society conceptualizes as appropriate gender norms, roles and behaviours. Also as we have seen in the study of myth, contemporary religious and spiritual symbolism is often adapted from older images to reflect new norms for the society for their time. Accordingly, this chapter will discuss the relevant issues affecting gender relations as they pertain to spirituality. More specifically it will look at what we mean by

gendered spirituality or a way of conceptualizing spirituality through a constructed sense of gender identity. This section will begin to discuss the significance of gendered political movements in the 20th century, briefly examine how these movements have called societal constructs of gender into question for both men and women, and how members of each gender have responded.

Needless to say the most predominant gendered movement in history has been feminism⁸. It presented to the modern world an awareness of the power that gender roles have over people. Consequently, it was the societal valorization of competitive, aggressive and individualistic masculinity that feminists have problematized in modern society. Historically, men have been given greater access to education, opportunity and self determination than women. Women were expected to play, and were limited to, the roles that the patriarchal systems had provided for them - mother and wife. These roles have been and continue to be valued by women, the expectation to conform to and be limited to such gender roles in lieu of free choice and self determination lie at the root of feminist challenges to patriarchy (Carr 1986: 54). As a result an important aspect of modern feminism is an ongoing process whereby women are redefining what it means to be gendered. Also, in modern feminism there is a call to men to question the assumptions of male superiority and evaluate their own attitudes and behaviours. As religion and

8 This movement began to challenge, question and confront the patriarchal structures that oppress women. Their struggle was rooted in what feminist scholars have labeled "the patriarchy" – a system of societal, political and economic rule that promotes a single conception of masculinity as dominant, aggressive and individualistic (Schacht and Ewing 2004: 60-61; Bonvillain 1995: 8).

spirituality were some of the major agents of gender socialization they become a popular topic of discussion in the feminist movement.

Gender has always played an important role in the study of myth and religion. Although much of the literature on gender in religion discusses how women were marginalized and limited in their active role within various communities, it is important to note that women have always played significant religious roles whether as leader, healer, authority, mystic and, ultimately, as goddess⁹. Accordingly, although a considerable amount of feminist work has focused on the suppression of women, within religion, individual women and/or divine figures have always held a position of both influence and significance in religious circles.

However, feminists are correct in their criticisms of patriarchal religious

9 For example the supreme deity of Shinto in Japan is the sun goddess, Amaterasu. One can see examples of female Bodhisattvas in Buddhism, such as Guan Yin. In the Taoist tradition, one of the eight immortals, or *Hsin* is a woman, namely, Immortal Woman He or He Xiang. In Judeo-Christian texts there were prominent female figures beginning in the Torah such as Sarah, wife of Abraham, or Miriam, a Prophet, Debora, the fourth judge and a prophet, Ester, a Jewish heroine. Later in Christianity other figures arose as Mary of Nazareth, the holy mother of Christian god Jesus Christ, or Mary Magdeline, the often contested lover/disciple/friend of the Christian god. One can also see women playing prominent roles throughout religious history as leaders, healers and mystics. One such example from Buddhism would be Ani Tenzin Palm, a nun in the Drukpa Kagyu lineage and founder of Dongyu Gatsal Ling Nunnery in Himachal Pradesh in India. From Christianity some of the early church leaders were women, and historically there have also existed several figures such as Julian of Norwich or St. Teresa of Avila, both women who contributed greatly to the practice of mysticism. Other more contemporary figures would also include Mother Teresa—founder of the Missionaries of Charity in India.

institutions. These criticisms were based on the fact that as part of any given dominant culture, religious organizations often supported and socialized patriarchal gender roles, limiting the scope and influence that women could have within their communities (Schneiders 2004: 75-81). For instance according to Darlene M. Juschka, "Women have, in large part, been written out of history. Their presence has, and continues to be, either ignored or subsumed under the generic man which erase them from the historical record" (2001: 17). In the same way women are also denied positions of prominence within the community. "In Roman Catholicism, Theravada Buddhism, Orthodox Judaism, and Islam, for example, women are excluded from positions that represent official status: priest, monk, rabbi, iman" (Juschka 2001: 14). This position is based on an essentialist and patriarchal understanding of the feminine. For example, in studies of ritualistic pollution and sexuality, women are seen as impure due to menstruation. Moreover, their sexuality is seen as dangerous and must be controlled by men. In societies where woman are denied entrance into realms of prestige they are also denied roles in ritualistic behaviour¹⁰. For these reason feminists often argue that patriarchal spiritual and theological narratives do not inform readers about women's lives, practices, or involvement in religion or spirituality (Juschka 2001: 16-17). However, despite subjugation and oppression, women have often found a means to thrive and hold important roles within traditional organized religion and have contributed their knowledge and wisdom to those traditions through their determination (Wolski Conn

10 The only exception to this rule would be in the case of spirit possession whereby the medium is controlled by a force beyond her influence (Bonvillain 1995: 246-247).

1986: 20-24).

In response to the redefinition of gender in the feminist movement, albeit much later in the social conscious of the 20th century, men began to question how they define "masculinity". For example scholars define the movement of pro-feminism as men beginning to question the definition of masculinity, suggesting that patriarchal masculinity was imposed on men and, therefore, needed to be confronted and redefined (Schacht and Ewing 2004: 95). This was similar to how women had to redefine for themselves what it meant to be gendered. What makes up a pro-feminist perspective is two fold: one perspective questions men as agents of oppression and the other questions the gender expectations and patriarchal roles that oppress men as a gender (Schacht and Ewing 2004: 95). Sociologists Schacht and Ewing (2004) suggest that the first step of pro-feminist consciousness-raising is men's realization of the privilege and place of power given them by the patriarchal structure. What they see as a useful contribution of men to feminism is the exploration and deconstruction of these attitudes and assumptions. Drawing on the theoretical insight of Iris Marian Young (1992), Schacht and Ewing break down the concept of oppression into five different categories: exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence (Schacht and Ewing 2004: 95). Where men can not fully experience the oppression women experience, they must come to understand how they are agents of oppression as a better means to assist in challenging patriarchal structures (Schacht and Ewing 2004: 95).

The second aspect proposed by Schacht and Ewing (2004) involves men questioning their own sense of gender and how it has restricted them as individuals. The

stereotypical role of modern man has been of “bread winner”. For men, redefining gender is not a quest to reacquire social rewards, opportunity and the ability to determine the course of their own lives. Instead, it involves confronting the stresses and frustrations that emerge as a result of trying to live up to the roles society expects from them.

Increasingly, men have become aware of a rift between what actually happens in their personal lives and what they had been taught to expect. This disconnect between personal and societal goals and expectations ran the spectrum from unattainable goals to goals which individual males did not wish to pursue (Schacht and Ewing 2004: 75).

Consequently, pro-feminist groups ultimately challenged the patriarchal system by asking the question, how is “masculinity” controlled and shaped by patriarchal culture?

Historically men have often re-attributed and projected the source of these anxieties upon women, a phenomenon referred to as “castration anxiety” in psychological theory.

However, proponents of pro-feminist movement argue that men in contemporary society have embraced change and have taken on roles that were in the past relegated to women both in the domestic sphere and within vocational opportunities. New modes of behaviour have become more acceptable for men, awareness of how the patriarchal definition of masculinity prevented men from becoming emotionally available rather than emotionally cold, from being caring and nurturing rather than competitive and aggressive, from sharing in the social rewards and responsibilities of our communities rather than oppressing and dominating them through power, money and violence lies at the heart of the pro-feminist re-evaluation of masculinity.

Counter point to this new gendered mystique, other groups resist the change in

gender roles. They suggest that traditional stereotypical roles should be reinforced in both behaviour and vocation for the preservation and continuance of society (Bonvillain 1995: 179). Accordingly, gender today is still a site of controversy. The “battle of the sexes” has affected culture, society and politics in an unprecedented magnitude. It has questioned how we conceive of ourselves as gendered beings. It has caused many to confront both personal and political perceptions of gender, at times being inclusive of both genders, yet more often than not concerned primarily with only their own. However, as a consequence of this new cultural awareness, contemporary gender roles have begun to change. Today women have far more access to opportunity than in the past: property rights, career possibilities, leadership opportunities, and behavioural assumptions to name just a few. This is true for both North American and European societies, as well as Japanese society. Similarly, the lives of men have begun to change with increasing numbers of men staying at home, raising children, or basically embracing life styles that are both more emotionally and socially engaging. These changes are not prevalent throughout the entire global community, nor has the struggle to attain even greater degrees of gender equality ended in more liberal communities, but feminists and pro-feminist movements are active in all parts of the world and have affected how women and men have begun to think of themselves as gendered beings.

Gendered Spirituality

One aspect of contemporary society undergoing re-evaluations within contemporary gendered movements has been the spiritual and/or dimensions of religious

life. Traditional religions have continuously involved gender. One could speculate that this is because gender is one of the major defining factors of human nature. However, gender constructs within mainstream religious or spiritual communities may provide only culturally dominant images of gender, and have been described as sites of oppression in the definition of femininity and masculinity. Mainstream religious organizations are a part of the over all dominant culture, and as a result often participate in patriarchal systems that subjugate women. In response to traditional images of gender in religion, contemporary movements have taken radical or innovative means to challenge what they see as outdated, marginalized and stereotypical images of gender and readdress the crisis of “spirit” related to it.

In a religious or spiritual context, gender acts as a metaphor for different forms of thought or behaviour. Psychologist Durres Ahmed explains the nature of religious symbolism of gender in Jungian terms. He writes, “[The] terms masculine and feminine are psychologically symbolic concepts in which, for example, masculinity may represent a certain type of reason, one that is penetrative and analytical. Similarly, ‘feminine’ represents a different sort of intellectual attitude, one that is receptive, poetic, and more inner-oriented rather than an external, action focused view” (2002: 83). From this description one can note how the cultural concepts of gender affect the categorization of thought¹¹. No religious movement or spiritual framework is exclusive to one sort of spirituality or symbolism, they would have aspects of both, yet some may be more

11 At this time I will not criticize the “appropriateness” or “rightness” of this description but take it as a generalized paradigm often used to describe gender symbols.

“masculinized” or “feminized” to reflect both cultural and political attitudes dependent on their time and place within history. The study of gender in spiritual and religious terms is significant because it: demonstrates how norms are socialized and communicated within a society; rationalizes gender roles; outlines expectations; and imparts a sense of what is “normative” for each gender. Nancy Bonvillian aptly describes the importance of gender constructs when studying mythic narratives and religious thought. She writes,

Ideological constructs are powerfully incorporated into religious beliefs. Consequently, through enactment of ritual and recitations of religious narratives, ideological foundations of a culture are transmitted and reinforced...because attributes and relationships of women and men are basic features of social life, religions offer people explanations for and justifications of prevailing cultural constructs of gender...by examining religious narratives and ritual practice, we can attempt to understand these symbols and to learn how people conceive of themselves and how they organize their lives" (1995: 221).

Drawing on Nancy Bonvillian's insights, we can understand how the study of gender and religion is important in understanding traditional societies. Similarly, contemporary groups that draw their spirituality from either a feminist or pro-feminist perspective are significant. They borrow from existing cultural and spiritual heritage by taking old symbols, redefined and re-signified, giving them new meaning relevant to contemporary culture.

Feminist Spirituality

Spirituality plays no small role within the feminist movement. According to feminist and film maker Joan Ohanneson, "The term feminist spirituality began to be used very early in the "second wave" of modern feminist movement, arising in the US in the 1970s and Europe in the 1980s"(1980: 74). Feminist Spirituality is an inherent part

of feminism, in that it is an evocative, personal sense of knowing, necessary to compliment the spirituality of the latter several centuries. Feminist authors describe traditional spirituality as often adhering to the development of an individuated, alienating personal experience that cuts emotion from rationality (Ochs 1997:20-21; Carr 1986: 51-52; Schneider 2004: 89). Sandra Schneiders (2004) defines feminist spirituality as a reclamation by women of the reality and power designated by the term 'spirit'. Furthermore, it is an effort to unite those factors which inform and give perspective on spirit and body, heaven and earth, culture and nature, eternity and time, public and private, the political and personal (75). Similarly, Ann Carr, professor of divinity, defines feminist spirituality as a relationship with divinity based on a deep awareness of the historical and cultural restrictions of women in a narrowly defined place and time (1986: 54). Therefore, within this next section I will take a brief look at feminist spirituality and characteristics that have defined it. We will begin by examining, the importance of feminist-defined spiritual contexts, the importance of relationship-oriented contexts as compared to the individuated and isolated patriarchal religion [described as diametrically opposed to feminist spirituality], and lastly; the importance that political and social agendas play in feminist spirituality.

One of the most salient aspects of feminist spirituality is the importance placed on a feminist-defined spiritual context. Scholars of feminist spirituality such as Ochs, Carr and Schneider's have discussed various reasons why spirituality needs a feminist context and have outlined how feminists have begun to construct it. This discussion will begin to look at why a turn towards feminist spirituality is significant to modern culture, and then

to proceed onward with how feminists began to construct it.

According to several feminist authors, much of the authoritative writings on spirituality have been traditionally dominated by men. However, this is not to say that women have not had a significant role within their religious traditions. There have been many female mystics and holy figures throughout world religions. Even though women have had an important role to play, they have nonetheless often been excluded from participating in spiritual dialogues based on a lack of exclusion from formal education. In adhering to patriarchal oriented forms of spirituality they would also have to limit their experiences as women and conform to behavioural roles traditionally defined as masculine (Ochs 1997: Xiii; Schneiders 2004: 75-81). Accordingly, the experiences of women as they share their personal and unique experiences through story telling is a powerful aspect of contemporary feminist spirituality (Schneiders 2004: 89; Carr 1986: 55). Consequently one of the important aspects for feminist spirituality has been the resurgence of the feminine in its use of gendered metaphors to conceptualize spiritual virtues and the principles they often represented.

The feminine in traditional religion has always existed. Some feminist authors cite a transformation in archaic societies where goddess worship was replaced with a monotheistic male conception of divinity (Bonvillain 1995: 239; Downing 1990: 100-103). However, whether the "idyllic" goddess ever existed, was one of many ancient divine beings, or even represented a peaceful period or feminism is a subject of debate (Schneiders 2004: 76; Russell 1998: 261-268)¹². Although goddess worship has declined

¹² For further discussion of the plausibility and significance of the archaic universal goddess see Pamela

with the prominence of masculinized monotheism, the existence of goddess imagery is still prevalent in traditional religion, albeit, reformed and subjugated to reflect patriarchal thought on women. However, the revival of older goddess imagery has begun to thrive in both traditional and new age religion alike. Generally, gendered symbolism is often used in traditional religious pantheons through a dichotomy of deities which usually have male and female counterparts. Examples include such religious and mythic figures such as Mary: Jesus; Hera: Zeus; Shiva: Durga. These gods or goddess usually adhere to a societal conception of gender. A common expression of the goddess describes her representing creative nature, the body, intuition, the hearth, home and community. Male deities often represent the spirit and authority, the acquisition of knowledge, warriors and hunters, not to mention sexual prowess. However, these images are not exhaustive and there are as many examples that demonstrate the contrary, such as Balder god of light and beauty [Norse], Diane/Artemis the hunter [Greco/Roman], Jesus Christ representing the healer or peace maker [Christian], Kali, the creator or destroyer [Hindu], Sophia, embodiment of wisdom and spirit [Judaism].

Often the revival of goddess imagery is used as a counterpoint in religions or societies that are male dominated. They empower woman through these alternative images. For example, the modern business woman could draw upon images of Diane/Artemis, the hunter, who embodied their more "masculinized" characteristics such as being determined, action oriented, and powerful. According to Sandra Schneiders (2004), goddess imagery can provide a psychological tool for woman to actualize all the

inner goddesses and archetypes of female power, not just as mother, child or wife, but also huntress, leader, thinker, and achiever (83-87). More importantly they remind us that these are not traits that exclusively lie within the domain of men and that can just as easily be accessed by women to describe and get in touch with their own sense of identity.

Spiritual principles are also often separated and categorized dualistically to reflect human gender roles. Gender offers an easy symbol of dichotomy for these psychological and spiritual principles, feminine (passive, wisdom, intuition, nurturing, emotive) as compared to masculine (active, knowledge, logic, aggression, rationality). Ultimately, these images are shaped by the societal background of these concepts and the significance they had for their communities. Also significant to the present discussion, some cultures valorize particular characteristics depending on the societal context from which they arose. Furthermore, according to professor of theology, Sandra Schneiders, this norm of dualistic thinking relegated the aspects of the body to the feminine while masculinity was associated with the spirit. This led to a gradual exclusion of woman in the realm of spirituality (Schneiders 2004: 75-81). Accordingly feminist spirituality scholars state that contemporary women have begun the process of revitalizing and reclaiming the spirit through inclusive language in narrative and ritual, the use of goddess images in belief systems; and alternative forms of liturgy (Winter, Lummis, Stokes 1994: 195; Schneiders 2004: 83-87).

Feminist scholars have also defined spirituality as evoking the various and unique experiences of women. Accordingly, this discussion will also address a traditional yet

innovative form of spirituality that scholars of feminist spirituality see as important - the role of Motherhood. For Ochs looking at the nature of motherhood was an important ground for a spiritual work because: we have all been mothered; traditional writing on spirituality says little on the topic; and drawing out the spiritual significance of motherhood gives legitimacy to what mothers have always done (Ochs 1997: 31).

According to Ochs "Mothering teaches us about love: its physical-caring aspects, its knowing aspects, and its capacity to let go. It teaches us how to relate to our mistakes and to the mistakes of those to whom we are connected" (Ochs 1997:31). The experiences of motherhood such as protecting a child, mediating the child's environment can also act as a context for spirituality. Through this process of caring for another the self is changed. For as Ochs describes, motherhood involves a natural sacrifice of self importance in order to mediate the experiences of the infants budding sense of self (1997: 30). Similarly, the mother in turn must let go of the child as it grows older to develop its own sense of self, ultimately related to but distinct from the mother. From this discussion on motherhood and its spiritual significance we can see a little further into what feminist spirituality can offer society beyond the masculine spirituality that has become predominant. Ochs describes it as a supplementary discourse for all people, despite barriers and perceptions of gender. Having addressed the issue of a feminine-oriented spirituality we have suggested that a relationship oriented perspective is integral to its development and nature. What then specifically do feminist authors mean when they refer to a relationship oriented spirituality?

Another factor important in understanding feminist spirituality is the centrality of

relationship or interpersonal context. The self sought after in much of feminist spirituality entails promoting relationships amongst individuals, where the experience of the individual's day to day life becomes a context for spirituality. As mentioned previously feminist spiritual discourses arise in response to traditional patriarchal spiritual contexts. Sandra Schneiders describes feminist spirituality as coming into relationship in that it is developed outside the confines of organization religious hierarchies in favour of participatory communities, it addresses concern for a non-human world that has been abused and plundered by humanity, and reconnecting and reintegrated all of the dichotomies that traditional spirituality has set in opposition (1986: 83-87). Following this Ann Carr also states that feminist spirituality is relationship oriented in that it supports and promotes networks amongst race, age and class, fostering communities that are non-competitive, non-hierarchical, and non-dominating (1986: 55). Furthermore, feminist philosopher Carol Ochs, describes a need for women to provide a balance between the male ideologies that dominate much of spiritual thought. She argues in her book, Women and Spirituality (1997) that male spirituality is oriented around individualism, while female spirituality is oriented around relationship.

Ochs defines the feminist spiritual context as involving work, love and our interpersonal relations, as a consequence, blurring the line of what we have traditionally deemed spiritual versus secular. In simpler words, spirituality encompasses how we as humans relate to our lives, other people and our environment. Ann Carr presents a similar perspective on feminist spirituality, suggesting that it promotes a worldly understanding of manifested spirit rather than an other worldly displaced form of

divinity. According to Ochs and Carr, mainstream patriarchal religions are focused on the self, a rejection of the “secular” and everyday life, and the process of purgation as the only path to spiritual clarity. However, this statement describes men’s spirituality only in the traditional and largely western context, as we will see, contemporary men’s spirituality does involve understanding individualism, but also has elements of relationship, emotional availability, and incorporates men’s experiences into personally understanding themselves as men. For Ochs, feminist spirituality involves an emotional context, which draws on personal experience as the source of insight particularly those that change our perceptions through life altering experiences.

As an example of feminist defined spirituality, Ochs describes a continuum of ecstasy, religion and spirituality. Ecstasy she describes as “standing outside of oneself (ex stasis)...[A] means [in which] the normal self, which includes our usual ways of thinking, judging, and evaluating, is displaced... Whether ecstasy is brought on by grief, suffering, joy, or love, it is an experience equally authentic and significant for coming to understand reality and our relationship to it.” (Ochs 1997:8). Ochs suggest that there is a spiritual change within the individual brought about by personal emotions in regard to experience, provoking a change of perception. From this primarily experiential response she moves to a definition of religion which she defines further as the reflection on these Ecstatic experiences, and furthermore, the communication of them through a particular vision of reality (Ochs 1997:8). These individual experiences, she explains, are often common experiences felt by humanity. Therefore, she further defines religion as the

common insights into human experience (Ochs 1997:9)¹³. Ochs' definition of religion focuses on the aspects of community in religious groups, where spiritual thought is built upon common human experience. Lastly, Ochs describes her thoughts on spirituality. She defines spirituality as the process where what we conceive of in religious thought is "accepting or rejecting, consenting or denying, loving or enduring one's life (Ochs 1997: 10). For Ochs spirituality takes the cognitive system of thinking about religion and applies it to the every day life as "an active and continual relationship with reality" (Ochs 1997:10). She warns, however, that although experience plays a fundamental role in spiritual life, these experiences, whether of ecstasy or rapture, are not ends in themselves (Ochs 1997: 12). She then problematizes an over-emphasis on experience, in that by doing so we are led into several negative behaviours: the over-valuing of the unique in lieu of the ordinary in day to day life; the tendency towards self-centeredness; the evaluation of the experiences of others; or confusing the experience for the underlying reality behind it (Ochs 1997:12-10). She suggests that this can be overcome by the continual realization that it is not the experience we seek but the personal and communal transformation that such experiences can deliver to us. This is one particular insight through which women are able to contribute to study of spirituality through the context of their personal lives. The personal is often the political from a feminist perspective and vice versa. From this motto we must address the importance of political and social

13 In choosing to define religion in this way she purposefully leaves out elements of structures, doctrines and hierarchies, focusing her discussion on the primacy of all experiences, not just the normative, but also the personal experience of religion by all people (Ochs 1997:9).

agendas as another distinctive characteristic of feminist spirituality. As said before feminist spirituality draws upon personal experience as a source of spiritual insight. As their sense of spirituality ultimately entails personal knowing, part of that self is defined through women's struggle with patriarchal systems. According to already introduced Sandra Schneiders, "perhaps the most important characteristic of feminist spirituality is that from the very beginning it has involved commitment to the intimate and intrinsic relationship between personal growth and transformation and a politics of social justice" (2004: 188). Ann Carr agrees, a part of feminist spirituality entails not only the restoration of social justice in regard to women, but also a perspective that all oppressed people must be liberated. It is significant because women's oppression gives insight into the dimensions of human suffering on a wider scale (1986: 55). By drawing on the oppression of woman and the desire for both personal and societal transformation, political and social agenda's make up a significant characteristic in defining feminist spirituality.

In this previous section we have ultimately discussed the importance of self-oriented gender contexts, relationship-oriented contexts, and the importance of social and political agendas in feminist spirituality. From this discussion we have tried to foster a sense that throughout the discourses on feminist spirituality, whether such discourses are socially situated in new religious movements or within the body of older traditions, the goal of spiritual transformation is ultimately the transformation of society on a spiritual level through an exploration of what it means to be feminine. Feminist spirituality has nurtured the unique roles available to women that are often dismissed or under valued in

patriarchal contexts and it continually readdresses what it means for women to be women, rather than for women to be confined to roles and image of women defined by or in relationships to men. In the next section I will begin to look at the counter point to feminist spirituality, the controversial men's movement, its strengths and weaknesses, but I think most significant for this text, what it means for contemporary men to redefine masculinity and spirituality, in non-patriarchal contexts.

Men's Spirituality Movement

Men have generally held significant roles within religious organizations based on their access to education, opportunity and leadership roles. However, the men's spirituality movement that will be discussed for the purposes of this project focuses on the gendered spirituality that has existed outside of organized religion. This discussion will bring to mind an image of men sitting in a large circle, with a drum and/or talking stick, discussing their feelings about being husbands, father and sons. We picture an image of men becoming emotionally available to each other, at times crying in each others presence, discussing what it means to be fathers and "men" in competitive professional environments. Within these groups you can see evidence of castration anxiety and frustration with what society has expected from them as men and how they struggled to fulfill these roles. Some scholars (Clatterbaugh 1995; Brown 1992) have criticized these communities citing examples of misogyny or the reiteration of older patriarchal forms; however, one can also see healing of pain, expanded understanding of themselves as men, and ultimately a sense of *communitas* in what it means to be men.

Although, this thesis will draw on some of these criticisms of the ideologies, my intent is to remain descriptive rather than critical of these groups. This section will attempt to: establish that men are struggling with their conception of gender, and that they are attempting new methods to explore and define it. This discussion will demonstrate that the men's spirituality movement has a similarity to feminist spirituality, although "unique" in its own way. The main themes I will discuss on men's spirituality are: importance of self-defined gender constructs, the importance of relationship and a sense of *communitas* in the conception of masculinity, and the relative lack of a political context. What we will begin to see is that some men have gone through a similar transformation in how they define their gender in relation to spirituality, the core of which is centralized around a masculinity that has been created by the patriarchal system and imposed on men like patriarchal femininity was imposed on women.

An important part of the contemporary men's spirituality movement has been the centrality of self-defined gendered constructs. Men's spirituality draws upon critiques of patriarchal gender norms similar to pro-feminist critiques on the nature of femininity, emphasizing in particular how men understand and relate to the concept of masculinity. As one of the primary embodiments of men's spirituality movement this section will examine scholarly thought on the Mythopoetic Men's movement led by Robert Bly. Robert Bly was a charismatic leader that began the mythopoetic movement and promoted a men's spirituality based on the concept of "Iron John". Ken Clatterbaugh (1995: 50) describes the creator of the men's mythopoetic movement as an advocate of the idea that men need to redefine their own sense of masculinity in light of a new contemporary

society in which men are raised, taught and initiated into masculinity by women. In his philosophy on gendered spirituality, Bly theorized that it was problematic that men were taught their sense of masculinity by their mothers through socialization. Relationships between fathers and sons, and the subsequent transference of what it means to be “masculine” are flawed in today’s society. According to Bly, although men have gained from female socialization the virtues of passivity, compassion, and gentleness, they have lost the ability to take any real action, to be strong or determined¹⁴. To reclaim the powerful aspects of masculinity Bly looks to a return to ancient myth and rituals of men, to initiate men by men, to reconnect relationships with older men, and to rediscover their lost sense of masculinity. This Bly accomplishes by encouraging men to engage with an archetypal shadow figure called “the wild man” or which in an American context he referred to as “Iron John”, drawing upon the Grim Brothers Fairy Tales of “Iron Hans” to facilitate this archetypal image. According to scholars such as Ken Clatterbaugh and Michael Messner, Bly’s wild man was an archetypal shadow figure that Bly considers necessary to balance the “softer” masculinity of modern day (Clatterbaugh 1995: 50-55; Messner 1997: 17; Bly 1990). For Bly the important questions became, what does it mean to be masculine? What have contemporary men gained in the softer masculinity? Emotional availability, kindness, empathy. What have they lost? Ability, determination, action. Ultimately, proposing the question, how are they able to integrate both

14 For Bly, masculinity had swayed too far from being completely defined by patriarchal structures to a masculinity that has been defined by women so much that it has lost its symbolic masculine aspects (Clatterbaugh 1995: 50).

perspectives?

Bly's analysis of male gender has been applied by mythopoetic groups, wherein men examine their feelings and images of masculinity. According to Goldrick-Jones, on the thoughts of one pro-feminist, "Mythopoetic healing work argues that the nature of these activities invites parallel with feminist consciousness-raising, allowing men to be liberated from patriarchal roles and expectations. This analysis suggest not only that the women's movement provided the catalyst for mythopoetic work but that this work is grounded in feminist theories about personal experiences and ways of knowing" (2002: 55). However, some obvious feminist criticisms have been raised, in that these groups do nothing to confront the assumptions of men's power and misogyny. Some feminist authors label it as a new age patriarchy but now fully equipped with the communal sharing of emotion and personal experience (Clatterbaugh 1995: 47). Whatever the case may be, this specific example of men's spirituality movement does illustrate the concept that some groups of contemporary men struggle with how they define and balance the qualities that identify them as men. It shows that men have embraced concepts of emotional availability and, furthermore, that they feel a disconnection with what is stereotypically seen as active, able, or capable. For groups such as these they experienced an impoverished sense of spirit in regard to their masculinity. What then became important was the activation of the "masculine" inherent in the "Iron John" complex through the use of ritual, story telling and drum. Through this process men used their emotionally availability to redefine for themselves what it meant to be masculine in both its "softer" and "harder" aspects. As the communal sharing of experience with other

men was an essential aspect in this process, this section will address the importance placed upon the relationship-oriented context.

Drawing upon Michael Schwalbe's work (1995), men's spirituality movement has continually focused on developing a sense of *communitas* around the concept of masculinity. One method to study any religious or spiritual group is to focus primarily on what the leaders or central philosophers have said or promoted. However, Schwalbe suggests that the actual men who participate in the movement are far from the philosophies touted by its creator Robert Bly. Instead, his perspective focused on what these actual men were doing within these groups. Many viewed it as a source of therapeutic healing, promoting self confidence, acceptance and better knowledge of themselves as emotional beings. It fostered a re-understanding of the concept of "masculinity" as a moral identity, developed through a sense of *communitas*, or relating to others through shared feelings outside of roles or statuses within society. Although not a community in a literal sense, as in sharing materialistic or physical means of survival, they fostered a greater understanding of themselves and their gendered identities as "men."

Although there are many parallels between the men's movement redefinition of masculinity and the feminist movement redefinition of what it means to be a woman, one significant difference between these two social and spiritual movements is the apolitical nature of the men's spirituality movement. Schwalbe suggests that a partial explanation for the men's movement apolitical nature, arguing that the sense of *communitas* fostered in mythopoetic movements explains the generally non-political nature of this men's

movement in regard to patriarchy. Although men in the movement are highly critical of and reject the capitalistic, greedy, selfish, and predatory nature of contemporary society, they generally view this society as a genderless “other” rather than as a society shaped by the actions of other “men.” According to Schwalbe, to view society instead as based on masculinity would destroy the sense of *communitas* fostered within the group. It would shatter any unity or brotherhood or identity through the concept of masculinity¹⁵.

Schwalbe says, “the mythopoetic men believed that engaging in political or sociological analysis would have led them away from their goals of self-acceptance, self knowledge, emotional authenticity and *communitas*...They did not want to compete over whose interpretation of social reality was correct. They wanted untroubled brotherhood in which their feelings were validated by other men, and in which their identities as men could be infused with new value” (1995: 202). As Schwalbe argues, however, what is now needed is more than just the healing of identity work and masculinity within these groups: “[they] will have to take big risks in trying to abolish the race, class, and gender hierarchies that damage us all,” Schwalbe says most poignantly, “They will have to learn to create *communitas* in struggles for justice” (1995: 203). This far we have looked at several factors definitive of men’s spirituality movement and have attempted, if only in part, to demonstrate what they have tried to accomplish in self definition, the importance of relationship and communal sharing, and the problematized apolitical nature of the

¹⁵ Schwalbe suggests this a necessary change that must come about in the mythopoetic movement, that they cannot avoid politics, they must acknowledge men’s privilege, the actual restraints and freedoms of that privilege, and foster a self-critical understanding of themselves as “men.”

movement. From the discussion above we can see that men's movement spirituality has been driven to question and re-define for themselves what it means to be masculine. The constructs of masculinity sought after in men's spirituality movement has involved concepts of relationship-oriented self knowing. This new understanding of masculinity is based on personal experience which fosters a sense of *communitas* around the societal construct of gender. This is accomplished by men sharing and exploring their experiences as men, and therefore nurturing a journey of self-actualization amongst men within the group. As we can see there are many similarities between both gendered spiritual movements, but how then do they really compare and contrast?

Gendered Spirituality: Two Sides of the Same Coin

In comparison both masculine and feminine spiritual movements have sought to redefine gender constructs as a means to better understand themselves as spiritual beings. This has involved questioning gender roles and expectations. Women explore femininity beyond a male patriarchy-defined context through their own experiences as women. Men question what it means to be masculine in relation to each other, criticize a female socialization structure, yet do not outwardly blame the masculine system of rule. They do however recognize it but label it as "other" so it does not conflict with the feeling of *communitas* they share as men. Both groups blame the opposing gender for contributing to the limitations placed on them as gendered beings. Both groups valorize essentialist characteristics of gender and promote these as the spiritual ideal. However, both suggest that the discourses on gender have significant context for both men and women. For

example, Ochs says that by providing a feminine counterpart to the spiritual traditions that have been traditionally masculine,

women, in whatever roles they have chosen or – more usually – been thrust, can contribute in a unique way to the attainment of spirituality by all; and (b) that the mother process itself (in which male participation has been virtually non-existent for millennia) provides an unusually good context for spirituality. At the same time it is my fervent hope that, instead of endorsing a particular role in life for women, I succeed in opening everyone to new, more natural possibilities for spirituality (Ochs 1997: 3).

Another comparison between contemporary men's and women's spirituality is the emotional and interpersonal context in contrast to traditional "masculine" spirituality. They both build their spiritual ideologies on their day to day lives as they experience gender, both in its power and oppression. This has been seen as innovative as compared to traditional thought on spirituality which has focused on purgation and self-focused individuality. For both groups this emotional and interpersonal experience is mediated through a communal context, where they come into contact with similar gendered people and their feelings of frustration, limitation, anxiety and a need for self determination. Last but not least, both groups attempt to fuse seemingly opposing characteristics into one balanced human perspective.

All this being said, one point of major contrast between feminist and men's spirituality movement has been the political versus apolitical context for feminist and men's movement spirituality respectively. One could obviously point out that the need for woman to be more active in a male privileged world describes the proportionally stronger significance of social agendas in feminist spirituality. This political versus apolitical nature creates an enduring and problematic situation in men's movement

spirituality. On one side, women find themselves in a situation where they can actively draw upon arguably positive and essentialist attitudes towards women, in such an instance the concept of femininity is valorized. They promote the power of difference in some occasions and pragmatically adapting "masculine" characteristics to their own positive ends. As such "patriarchy", the rule of the fathers, is projected away from women's groups and have only in the past decade have been criticized and re-evaluated in post-modern feminism. Men on the other hand have a different problem, masculinity having been predominantly constructed by patriarchal society still holds a place within men's identity. Although the principles we are discussing, masculinity and femininity, are in large metaphorical, they do have a literal context in the formation of identity. Therefore, men need to begin to discern the patriarchal attitudes inherent in concepts of masculinity and begin to construct new forms of masculinity freed from the patriarchal archetypes or structures that bind them. For men the work of personal transformation has begun, what must logically follow next is the necessity of societal transformation fostering a sense of self determination, equality and ability in all people, both male and female alike.

In summation, gender in a contemporary context has become a unexpected context for spirituality. As we have seen men and women's contemporary gendered spirituality movements are defined by how one defines and relates to one's own sense of gender and the cultural constructs of gender. These new paradigms have an emotional and relationship-oriented context which many have seen as lacking in traditional spirituality. Although the particular forms of gendered spirituality we have discussed

have been drawn from western culture, they serve to generally describe what I mean by gendered spirituality and can be applied cross-culturally given regional variations.

Therefore, the sections to follow will focus on how gender in Japanese society has been socially and historically constructed, for both men and women. We will examine some of the anxieties, social agendas and struggles each group has had throughout their history as a means to understand gender in Japanese society. It is these ideologies, and more importantly, the rifts and complications between them, that comprise the gendered spirituality I have theorized as self evident in the narrative X/1999.

The Particular Cultural Context - Gender in Japanese Society

Before we can suggest that X/1999 is a narrative that problematizes gender in Japanese society, we must first begin to outline the some of the main aspects of gender relations in Japan¹⁶. This section will begin by outlining both male and female gender roles, expectations and limitations. We will look at the implications that Japanese feminists and pro-feminists have described as the effect it has had on their own lives and their communities. We will also examine the significance of a particular type of motherhood as a cultural symbol: the sacrificial mother. In this we will briefly look at the socio-political and historical context of motherhood and the implications this image has had on women's lives. We will also comment on what some scholars see as a distinct

16 It goes beyond the scope of this project to fully re-account all of the historical, political and social progress in regard to gender in Japanese society. Consequently, this discussion will focus on the prevalent attitudes, gender roles and expectations of women and men in Japanese society today.

difference between western and eastern feminism, in that Japanese feminism is described as balance-focused rather than focused on straight out "equality" per se. From this discussion we will begin our application of gendered spirituality and Japanese gender roles in understanding X/1999 as a modern myth.

In many ways Japan differs from North America in many issues concerning women. For example scholars such as Ohinata Masami (1995) suggest Japan is ahead on issues affecting both motherhood and child care due a difference in the cultural significance of both. While on the other hand she argues Japan is behind when it comes to the feminist movement as there is an emphasis placed on the reproductive function of women and child raising (207-209), moreover, the emphasis is placed on a particular kind of motherhood, the sacrificial, completely devoted mother with no thought for herself. They argue that although laws and policies have changed, attitudes and assumptions have not and offer the greatest challenge of contemporary feminists in Japan. Yet, the standard to which the feminist movement has progressed in Japanese society is a very relative one, with it's own set of challenges, barriers, goals and values, which are by no means equally shared between Western and Eastern feminists, nor by feminists within Japan itself. There have been many positive changes for both women and mothers in regard to both education and work in Japan. According to Fujimura Fanselow (1995), "The kinds of obstacles to women's attainment of greater equality and opportunity are, to an important degree, sustained and buttressed by norms, values, attitudes and expectations pertaining to gender roles which persist in the consciousness of many Japanese, including women. Moreover...those norms and values continue to be reproduced and passed on to the

younger generation of Japanese in the home and through schools and the mass media" (Xxiv). The section to follow will present some of the norms, values and attitudes held in regard to gender in Japanese society and the consequential benefits and restrictions that scholars have described resulting from them.

According to feminist scholars on gender, the most stereotypical role of men in Japanese society has been the corporate warrior (Lummis, Nakajima, et al: 1995). This image they describe as a work-aholic absent father who spends his spare time with his coworkers either drinking or golfing. In regard to this predominant image of men, women are seen as much freer in some regards. In Charles Luminis' research on the affects that gender expectations have on men in Japan, he explains that,

The daily lives of most Japanese men are controlled by the organization for which they work. Nearly all of their time is spent working (including working overtime), sleeping, or getting drunk...even among women who are employed, I don't think they are as caught up in their work lives. It is not as though their sense of identity or self worth is dependent upon being part of a particular company, so that they are less fearful of doing something that might endanger their position in their company. As a result, paradoxically [women] are much freer than men (1995: 236).

Joy Hendry offers a similar assessment of Japanese business life, in which the company takes over much more of their employees lives, expecting loyalty and long term service with the company, what is often called the "salary man" (1987: 136). To be fair this is not without compensation and employees have access to such social rewards like health care, pensions, bonuses, dormitories for unmarried workers, apartments for families, sport facilities. But according to Hendry, "In return for all this, employees are expect work hard and often late, to take few holidays and to spend much of their leisure time

with colleagues, drinking in the local bars, playing sports together or going on office trips and outings with them" (150-151). To put it simply, the culturally ingrained loyalty and dedication that accompanies being male in Japanese society have created stressors within the gendered framework which many Japanese feminist and pro-feminist alike have begun to criticize. One Japanese feminist writes, "this kind of lifestyle and the corporate structure and the value system that sustains it has come under a severe criticism...for maintaining a rigid division of gender roles, hindering the development of gender relations based on equality and sharing of family and community responsibilities, and creating what amounts to a father-absent family system" (229). In response to this, some men in Japanese society have begun to question the gender role of masculinity and the life style it engenders.

Some men have taken on a greater role in the household, spend more time with their families, work less or take more frequent vacations. However, they are as journalist Yamaguchi Masanori puts it, "a small minority within Japanese society...[And] tend to be viewed by their colleagues at work as oddities, or traitors to the male sex who have gone over to the enemy camp" (1995: 253). To conclude this section on the restrictions of gender roles felt by men in Japanese society, Yamaguchi Masanori aptly discusses the significance of men's identification with women and their restricted lives in relation to patriarchal systems. He writes,

The impetus for these men to question and re-examine the present day society in which men dominate has come from the women around them. Whether they had wives or not, when they turned their ears to the criticism voiced by women, they felt their whole way of life was being questioned. And when they turned their attention to themselves, they realized their lives were

restricted and hampered by the values and norms associated with the dominant concept of masculinity prevalent in society and that, to discover and reclaim their own sense of self, it was necessary to abandon the concept of masculinity and to subject an examination to society as a whole. Once they went through this process they could understand how women have had to struggle to break loose of the spell of "femininity" and to struggle against a male dominated society that seeks to prevent them from breaking loose. A society in which each individual can live in a way that allows one to be true to oneself, values equally the human rights of all citizens. Men who have begun to move in this direction will be an important source for change in Japanese society in the future (1995: 253-254).

I do not think anyone has articulated this issue better than Yamaguchi Masanori. He aptly describes what some men have been feeling in regard to the extreme gender identity in which they are socialized, its limitations, its roots in feminist identity and, predominantly, the change necessary to provide a community that is both balanced and whole. From this view of men's identification we will now turn to the expectations, norms, values and restrictions that women confront in Japanese society.

The most common characterization of women in Japanese society is by the concept of "good wife, wise mother". As men in Japanese society feel the gender restrictions of the role of "bread winner," so too do women feel the restraints that motherhood's expectations place upon them. Despite these powerful gender roles women have traditionally held a significant control over many of the decisions made within an individual household. Traditionally speaking it was frowned upon for women to follow the career pursuits of men, however, within their own domestic domain their influence was whole and absolute. This makes the case of patriarchal subordination not so simple or obvious in Japanese society. The traditional Japanese mother controlled the family budget, gave their husbands allowances, determined most major purchases, and have the

majority of the control in how children are to be raised and educated. This said, many expectations are consequently placed on the role of the mother. Also the expectations to become mothers is very strong, particularly a certain type of motherhood, the self-less sacrificial mother.

As a result of political policies and agendas this traditional image has been galvanized into a particularly powerful cultural symbol in Japan. According to Yamamura's cultural analysis (1971) of the symbolism of motherhood in Japanese society, the word "mother" brings to mind more than just the real life personifications, it conjures an image of "devotion to children, parental affection, and self-sacrifice" (Ohinata 1995: 205). Whatever suffering the mother may feel is surmountable if it contributes to the welfare of her child (Yamamura 1984: 162)¹⁷. "A concern for the child thus takes precedence over everything else, including the mother's welfare and autonomy" (1984: 163). When it comes to praise or criticisms of individuals, the mother becomes the central focus, and their achievements are vicariously accomplished through both her hard work and devotion to their children. This image is significant as it dominates much of the expectations of women as they become adults. It is reinforced by men's expectations of women but also women's expectations of themselves. "Japanese Mothers, quite apart from their actual family relationships, have thus been bestowed with the function of serving as symbols of great social value. This, in turn, has functioned in

¹⁷ According to Yamamura on a survey done in 1984 many women defined their *Ikigai* (life's worth) as oriented primarily around children. The image constantly reinforced is of a mother who always shows affection, and is willing to sacrifice her own plans and desires on their behalf (1984: 205).

women's consciousness and emotions as a type of socio-cultural standard informing them about both how they ought to live and how they ought to raise their children" (Ohinata 1995: 206). Humanities scholar Ohinata Masami goes as far as to say, "For [the] Japanese this image of mother exceeds money and honour in its ability to control behaviour. People's devotion to the concept comes close to that of a religious faith" (1995: 205). From this I will briefly touch upon the history of this role in Japanese society and how it has grown into the cultural symbol that it is today.

The social and historical context of the mother's role in Japanese society has been a process through which political and social agendas have produced an image of the selfless and sacrificial mother. Ohinata Masami describes the importance of motherhood in Japanese society as taking place in five stages (1995: 200-203). The first period, beginning ten years after the enforcement of Civil Law in 1898, primarily concerned policies about women and the family. It supported an ideal of "*Fukokukyohei*" (rich country, strong army). The emphasis on motherhood was due to the logic that to develop a strong nation one would have to invest in the care of the children as future soldiers and representatives of Japan. The focus was not just on women, but the entire family unit in general. It led to the societal ideal that motherly love and devotion were essential to a child's development and education.

The second stage began in 1920's in the *Taisho* Period. The primary facilitating factor in this period was the power of the media. In this time magazine articles and the media focused on the role of the mother as essential to child's development. In many cases the mother's role in socializing and educating over shadowed both formal but also

social education. Ohinata suggest that this emphasis was based on the changing structure of the family unit, marked by increasing industrialization and more and more women finding alternatives to filling the motherhood role (such as hiring wet nurses).

The third stage began with the breakout of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937 and continued to the pacific war in 1941. The war time mentality that gripped the populace in Japan at this time heavily emphasized mothers. According to Ohinata, "it was a time when everything seemed to emphasize "mothers for a country at war." Indeed under the government policy slogans such as, "Have more babies! Prosper!" were common place. At this time the Patriotic Women's Association (*Aikoku jido Kyokai*) began its annual congress, proclaiming, "mothers, return to your homes!" (1995: 202). The desire for woman to return to their homes and take up life styles congruent with a strong nation and a growing army were self evident. Mothers were to give birth to the "emperor's babies" (*Tenno no Sekishi*). Consequently, in that period of time the mother and the emperor's will were for all intents and purposes synonymous. It was believed that motherhood in Japan was without parallel, in that they joyfully sacrificed themselves for the sake of their children. This promoted solidarity and strength of their nation accomplished through the solid moral foundation of the family unit, rooted deeply in the concept of motherhood.

The fourth period began in the middle of the 1950's into the 1960's after WWII. Ohinata describes this as a time when there was a break down of the family system promoted during war. It was also a period of high economic growth. As in the past, the family was expected to play a foundational role in economic growth. Male workers were expected to fulfill their highest potential in the work place; this meant their homes had to

be a place of rest to re-energize. The role of motherhood became once again a central key point to developing the future of Japan. They produced tomorrow's labour force, once again the role of mother was emphasized. The money to be made pursuing a career was nothing in comparison to the care they would be providing both their families and their nation.

The final period began in 1973 when Japan entered a period of slower economic growth, and there were cut backs in the amount of money received to take care of children and the elderly; as a result the family took over these responsibilities, or, more correctly the mother did so her role as provider and caretaker was once again called upon in the support of a strong nation. These historical, political and cultural aspects have galvanized the image of the mother into a foundational value in Japanese society. According to Ohinata, as long as the family is targeted as the foundational unit of society, the role of motherhood will always play a central role. Furthermore, this emphasis has been on a special kind of motherhood, the selfless sacrificial mother.

There are practical realities, both positive and negative, concerning motherhood as cultural symbol in Japan. According to Ohinata this symbol promotes the importance of child rearing, promotes a responsive, warm, affectionate, responsible relationship between mother and child with appropriate amounts of stimuli, which is indispensable in guaranteeing children a strong physical and mental health (1995: 206). The negative aspect comes with regard to the restrictions that are placed upon women and the role they play in society. In present day Japan there are laws promoting equality amongst the sexes, however, the still largely held conceptions of motherhood make full time

employment positions difficult for women to obtain or justify (Ohinata 1995: 207-208). Furthermore, little effort is made to see other household members sharing the tasks assigned the role of mothers, care for children or the elderly (Ohinata 1995: 207)¹⁸. In a society with an overly masculinized work environment this becomes problematic. Any women's employment and wages are generally seen as a means to supplement the household income and because employers view them as secondary they often pay them lower wages. According to feminist scholar, Yoko Kawashima, "as long as changes in the male-centered workplace culture and the share of responsibility at home by males stay minimal, Japanese women's ambivalent attitude toward work is likely to prevail. Firms, in turn, continue to view women as secondary workers and, thus, the cycle of inequality is not easily broken" (1995: 289). This attitude that men should work and women should stay at home has declined in the last thirty years, yet it still enjoys considerable support, more so in men than in women (Fujimura Fanselow 1995: xxxiv).

Often what exists is a difference between equality versus balance within Japanese society which makes it distinctive from feminism in Western society. Considering the corporate structure and the societal gender norms felt by Japanese society, some feminist scholars suggest a balance of give and take is more appropriate. If one partner works considerable amounts outside the home while the other maintains the household, there is a balance of social rewards and opportunities in the long term versus short term. This

18 Although children's development is a combination of various relationships both in their own family and the society at large, when problems occur with children the mother is held responsible (Ohinata 1995: 207).

attitude is more defined by gender balance rather than gender equality. Considering the still rigid gender roles and standards that men adhere to, this still leaves many women with fewer and fewer options when they desire to pursue either marriage or motherhood. Similarly some feminists in Japanese society do not see the corporate life that neglects both family and personal lives as an amiable characteristic of masculine "freedom". Men as such are bound by different restrictions and limitations than woman are within society and for some feminists in Japan men are more than welcome to it.

In summary, powerful gender roles and expectations are still evident in Japanese society. The politics of gender in Japan are complicated, with both social responsibilities and rewards for each. Neither of these roles are easily qualified as negative or positive. The real problem becomes the extent to which individuals can reasonably pursue their own paths in light of such intense cultural expectations. Juxtaposed to this sentiment is the genuine desire to fulfill social obligations so as to produce a functioning, healthy family and, consequently, a nation.

X/1999 and Gendered Spirituality

In X/1999, a negotiation of gender roles, boundaries and stereotypes becomes the cosmological battle ground upon which the fate of the world rests. Kamui, hero of this tale, surpasses the traditional perceptions of gender by confronting and resolving mother and father images into his psyche, similar to how it is described in Joseph Campbell's psychological model of myth. Doing so he shifts his field of perception. (He identifies with the mother images, which convey the message that although there is suffering in the world and although our actual control is limited, it is through the self-sacrifice we make

for the people we love that we are able take control and give meaning to our lives.

Whether this sacrifice is in the case of the forces of destiny, from the sorrows and despair felt as a result of death, or the pressures of an alienating, aggressive, and patriarchal society.) The narrative begins to deconstruct the system of patriarchal and societal assumptions when the hero comprehends the motivations behind those people who died for him, like his mother. Through these realizations he is able to overcome the dragon of earth, a personification of death, violence, and arguably patriarchal constructions of masculinity, and save humanity from the consequences of patriarchal ideologies. The hero learns that it is through social engagement that we are able to make positive change in the world, sacrificing some of our sense of autonomy in lieu of the strength and support offered by a community. This new sense of community combines both the freedom of individuality and the support of communalism, where a community is bound together through mutual respect, empathy, and compassion. The manifestation of these characteristics becomes *the ultimate boon* gained by the hero at the end of his journey, which explains his apotheosis and sacrifice at the end of the series.

The series uses the image of the mother and the struggles of women in Japanese society to communicate these principles of "salvation" to the hero. The narrative suggests that the constraints felt by women within Japanese society are similar in nature to the constraints everyone feels in regard to self-determination in that the attitudes and values which have been perpetuated throughout society do not always support individuals as members of communities and that furthermore, this lack of self determination can be a cause of suffering and despair felt by these individuals. On one hand you have the limits

felt by women in regard to the expectations of gender roles imposed on them in a patriarchal system. The mother is expected to devote her life to childcare and give up her own sense of self determination. On the other hand you have the limits felt by men to be emotionally distant, competitive, violent and aggressive, which is arguably imposed on them in the same system. In a contemporary society where individuality and autonomy are valued as masculine characteristics, behaviours such as competition, aggression and violence are valorized over seemingly feminine qualities, such as social engagement, emotional availability, and compassion. As women have been oppressed by society, in terms of the options they are able to pursue in life, so too are men, and at large, humanity limited in what actions they can take. In most instances people choose to use violence over self-sacrifice, autonomy over social-engagement, individualism over communalism.

The social norms of both the “corporate warrior” or the “good wife, wise mother” are extended from their societal context into hyper realities, where competition and individualism associated with the corporate warrior is translated into violence and alienation. Similarly, the limits of choice felt by women who take upon the role of mother are translated into an image of compassion and physical self-sacrifice as a means to re-contextualize their suppression. In these ways gender in X/1999 becomes a context from which to look at spirituality as it: shapes our choices and behaviours, the suffering and despair felt as a result, and querying alternative modes of behaviour to compensate for the arguably violent and destructive nature which threatens human life.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter we've begun to look at the gender politics and culture that has caused a spiritual crisis of sorts in contemporary society. We've looked at the significance of gender movements in contemporary society, and the significance of spirituality within these movements. We've looked at important defining characteristics of feminist spirituality, and have compared and contrasted them to men's movement spirituality. What we found is that both groups feel frustrations through the limitations of their gender roles in society. These groups have begun to redefine their gendered identities through fostering emotional engagement and relationship-oriented ways of knowing. As a central aspects of these movements, societal transformation is accomplished through personal transformation. The norms, roles and assumptions we each have about gender and behaviour are called into question and new modes of behaviour are suggested and embraced as a means to change society. We've also begun our discussion on the trials and tribulations that gender expectations have within Japan - the society our subject matter was originally created and whose audience in which it was originally produced. We've looked at the implications that Japanese gender roles have upon self determination, in particularly the powerful cultural symbol of the sacrificial mother. Lastly we've begun to apply the gendered spirituality and societal context specifically to X/1999. Before I proceed to a full analysis of the text to support the preliminary hypothesis, I will outline the methodology I will be applying, the "universal" monomyth suggested by Joseph Campbell as a means to structure the particular ideologies we find evident in the text.

Chapter 3: Joseph Campbell's Monomyth in "X/1999"

The portrayal of heroines in *Anime* has been a common means to question and reconstruct patriarchal constructions of the feminine. In Japan this has occurred in *Manga* and *Anime* in a variety of ways. Television series such as Sailor Moon, Serial Experiment Lain, and Magic Knights of Rayearth all demonstrate that the feminine heroine can be the mechanism by which the authors engage audiences on the topic of gender (Ruh: 2001B; Newsom 2005). In these series, the main characters are usually female and through their journeys confront patriarchal norms, stereotypes and systems of control. According to sociology scholar Suzuki Kazuko, Japanese comics began to confront patriarchal norms by challenging assumptions of gender and suggesting new models of behaviour (Suzuki 1998: 246-247). Often these *anime* problematize Japanese cultural values such as group cohesion and the power of social engagement and they challenge audiences by exploring themes such as individualism, communalism, free will and self determination (Ruh: 2001B; Newsom 2005).

In contrast, some *Manga* and *Anime* artists employ alternative techniques, whereby the patriarchal context is put into question without directly challenging the stereotypes. These *anime* seemingly support dominant values such as group cohesion and seemingly traditional conceptions of gender, while simultaneously subverting these values through promotion of solidarity in women's relationships (Newsom 2005; Ruh: 2001B). Yet other narratives use even more radical methods to criticize gender norms, such as in the case of *Yaoi*, or male-to-male romantic stories created for female audiences. Through such narratives women are able to vicariously experience a

relationship where both partners are equal in status (Ruh: 2001B; Suzuki 1998: 247-248)¹⁹. In addition, some narratives simply swap the physical gender of the characters while the personalities and attitudes remain the same. For example in the series Ranma ½, the male hero turns into a buxom young female whenever he gets wet. The antics and gender swapping allow for a reversal of roles, permitting the main character to experience the social norms of the other gender while maintaining their original gender's attitudes and perspectives (Ruh: 2001B). Given that *anime* has an established pattern of exploring and/or challenging gender norms, how then does X/1999 attempt to challenge these stereotypes and in what way is it unique to the genre?

X/1999 differs from a "typical" feminist narrative. In X/1999, the main hero is a male. The main plot is centered around the experience of a young boy as he grows into maturity. Although there are elements of the *Yaoi* within the series, strictly speaking, it is not the predominant theme. The main heroes of Clamp's narratives are often female, who are called upon to confront patriarchal systems (Ruh: 2001), right wrongs, and to borrow from another artist's *motto apperendi*, "triumph over evil" (Sailor Moon). As an innovative means to discuss the topic of gender, this thesis will explore the artists' exploration of feminist spirituality through a young adolescent male as he confronts patriarchy. There are many important female heroes within the narrative, who play

19 Suzuki interprets *Yaoi* as a product of a premature feminist movement emerging as it did in the 1970's that had at the time not produced a rhetoric or means to challenge the patriarchal system. By using homosexual male relationships they allowed the reader to break free from heterosexual gender norms (Suzuki 1998: 247-248).

significant roles in the hero's journey, but the primary hero is a male. He is given two unacceptable choices modeled in the traditional division of the sexes, and is asked to choose one of them. The feminist power of the *anime* comes through exploring his dilemma, the quest of whether he must, in choosing, sacrifice his ideals, or if he can find a third option outside the bounds of traditionally-patterned gendered choices.

In the course of my analysis, I will argue that Clamp accomplishes this by using the model of the male psyche evident in mythic narratives. Similarly, I will contextualize the narrative as a modern myth about gendered spirituality. The thesis will pose such questions as, how does a man define himself as masculine in contemporary society? What masculinized stereotypes shape his behaviour and life style? What are the social rewards to being masculine, and consequently, in what ways does the patriarchal definition of masculinity limit men?

As stated in my previous chapter, this series uses the image of motherhood and the struggles of women in Japanese society to communicate these principles of "salvation" to the hero. The narrative suggests that the constraints felt by women within Japanese society are similar in nature to the constraints felt by everyone in regard to self-determination. The narrative and the gendered symbols when analyzed together suggest that the attitudes and values which have been perpetuated throughout society do not always support individuals as members of communities, and that furthermore, this lack of self determination can be a cause of suffering and despair. Men, therefore, are prone to many of the same limiting factors that have controlled women in patriarchal society. As, we have seen in our discussion of gender in Japanese society, there is a spectrum of

social rewards when it comes to gender, but their value is relative depending on what is required to acquire or maintain them.

Although political change has dramatically created new opportunities and power structures in society, the traditionally and socially pervasive images of both masculinity and femininity still affect the self determination of the individual. Whereas gender is culturally defined for both men and women, a comparison can be made between the struggles both have experienced in a system that values patriarchal masculinity. For the purposes of the thesis, we will define the imposing patriarchal characteristics of masculinity as emotionally distant, competitive, aggressive, violent and destructive²⁰. Often these characteristics are valued and expected as a means to achieve greater independence and self determination in contemporary society for both men and women. In response, the narrative suggests that the unique qualities, lessons and strengths gained by women through their struggles with patriarchy can be just such a model to liberate men. It would suggest new ways to deal with conflict and explore what it means to choose. This interpretation suggests the universality of feminism to the human condition.

Following this interpretation the main plot of the narrative can be interpreted as follows. Kamui, the main character, is a young man who must overcome his own ego-centric thoughts about his mother and her death, and confront how he makes his own decisions and directs his own behaviour. The final act to prevent the apocalypse requires that men and women join together to find new means to deal with conflict and define

20 This definition was synthesized from both feminist and pro-feminist sources (Schact and Ewing 2004; Schneider 2004).

their lives. X/1999 is an example of a modern myth, for it is a narrative that draws upon the nature of spirituality in gendered movements and conveys it in both mythical and ideological structures. In this light, the most desired social reward is choice. As we will see through the course of my analysis, this struggle for self determination is relevant to other topics of feminist thought, such as the environment, interpersonal violence, and war, all of which are common themes throughout the X/1999 television series.

This approach will seek to elaborate more on the process and the critical commentary used in discussing these themes. First, it will seek to both use Joseph Campbell as a model to analyze the religious elements of the story, and demonstrate how the creators may have adapted his structure to suit their narrative. For the purposes of studying X/1999 the analysis will map Joseph Campbell's monomyth against the narrative plot. When the narrative structure of X/1999 is plotted against Campbell's monomyth more than a few striking similarities can be seen. Differences arise because the narrative is feminist in nature, yet uses the patriarchal mythic structure to deconstruct the male ego, in particular, how he understands and relates to the role of motherhood. Therefore, this analysis will note points of similarity to guide the narrative yet pay clear attention to the differences which exemplify what is unique about the narrative and its particular cultural context.

Therefore, prior to commencing my analysis, this chapter will take a closer look at the influences and structure of Joseph Campbell's monomythic model. Accordingly, we will focus on two distinct aspects of commentary and criticism of the monomyth. First, this chapter will examine its appropriateness as a cross cultural and "universal"

theory of myth, and secondly, address concerns of a feminist nature in regard to gender. Based on these arguments we will synthesize an informed and critical approach to using Campbell's model in the study of a contemporary example of modern myth. After the discussion of Campbell's model, the chapter will conclude with a description of my primary sources, the X/1999 television series.

Joseph Campbell's Monomyth: A Critical Approach

Joseph Campbell has been called many things: a priest of a new hero cult (Lefkowitz 1990: 429), an anti-Semite (Gill 1989; Segal 1999: 134), a postmodernist (Felser 1996: 395), a mystic (Segal 1987: 20), a romantic (Hendy 2002: 196), a visionary who relished in and sought to bring the similarities and nuances of myth to their forefront (Salzer 1992: 56-57). If nothing else Campbell was a provocateur who invited criticism and acclaim equally from academia. Joseph Campbell was an American mythologist whose work spanned fifty-five years (his vocation was primarily as an English professor at Sarah Lawrence College mainly concerning myth). His first book was released in 1949, The Hero with a Thousand Faces, from there he went on to write other volumes on myth in a series entitled, The Masks of the Gods, a series that discussed Occidental, Oriental, and Creative mythology. As a scholar Campbell saw myths as wisdom stories, spiritual and sacred items (Segal 1999: 199-120). He thought of them as kinetic, not a static and outdated narrative, but as relevant to modern humanity. He makes this point clearly on the first page of The Hero with a Thousand Faces when he says,

Throughout the inhabited world, in all times and under ever circumstance, the

myths of man have flourished; and they have been the living inspiration of whatever else may have appeared out of the activities of the human body and mind. It would not be too much to say that myth is the secret opening through which the inexhaustible energies of the cosmos pour into human cultural manifestation. Religions, philosophies, arts, the social forms of primitive and historic man, prime discoveries in science and technology, the very dreams that blister sleep, boil up from the basic, magic ring of myth (Campbell 1949:3).

Several scholars see him as a visionary, deconstructing some of the basic assumptions we have about myth by employing contradiction and paradox in an evocative and extensive study of mythic literature world wide (Salyer 1992: 67; Doty 1990: 6-7). He promoted international communication through the study of world myth as having the same underlying message and meaning (Campbell 1949: VIII; Salyer 1992: 56). However, Joseph Campbell states in his preface to *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* that in his attempt to demonstrate the similarities amongst myth he may not do enough to highlight their differences; this said, his intent is to demonstrate there is "hope that a comparative elucidation may contribute to the perhaps not quite desperate cause of those forces that are working in the present world for unification, not in the name of some ecclesiastical or political empire but in the sense of human mutual understanding" (Joseph Campbell 1949: viii). To put it simply, Joseph Campbell's intent was apparently to re-mythologize a world which had spent the last several decades demythologizing thought through science (Segal 1987: 65-67). With the popularization of the monomythic model through a series of televised interviews with Bill Moyers, Joseph Campbell has become not only a theorist but a cultural symbol himself.

In his premiere treatise on myth, The Hero with a Thousand Faces, Joseph

Campbell suggested the concept of "the monomyth." In this book Campbell outlines the monomyth, a cosmic journey of the hero, a universal pattern in which the heroic figures of myth who embark on journeys of both spiritual and self discovery. In describing the monomyth, Campbell writes: "The cosmogonic cycle is presented with astonishing consistency in the sacred writing of all the continents, and it gives to the adventure of the hero a new and interesting turn; for now it appears that the perilous journey was a labour not of attainment but of re-attainment, not discovery but rediscovery" (Campbell 1949: 39). According to Campbell, this inner journey of self analysis played out in myth is similar to the journey of the individual played out in psychoanalysis through the study of dreams, in particular demonstrated by the case work of both Freud and Jung. Campbell says,

Most remarkable of all, however, are the revelations that have merged from the mental clinic. The bold and truly epoch making writing of the psychoanalysts are indispensable for the students of mythology: for, whatever may be thought of the detailed and sometimes contradictory interpretations of specific cases and problems, Freud, Jung and their followers have demonstrated irrefutable that the logic, the heroes and the deeds of myth survive into modern times (Campbell 1949: 4).

Furthermore, Campbell explains that, "it has always been the prime function of mythology and rite to supply the symbols that carry the human spirit forward, in counteraction to those other constant human fantasies that tend to tie it back" (Campbell 1949: 11). Campbell argued that despite variations, myths are telling the same story. Of course no particular example of myth will be exactly the same, elements of the monomyth reflect categorizations of experience in relation to human communal life and, therefore, would be focused, fused and duplicated across myths worldwide (Campbell

1949: 245-247; Salyer 1992: 56-66; Segal 1990: 88-89). Accordingly, he derived his structure based on the commonality found between myths. These he argued were expressed through the independent invention of similar themes, archetypes and symbols throughout world cultures. Campbell writes, "For the symbols of mythology are not manufactured; they cannot be ordered, invented or permanently suppressed. They are the spontaneous production of the psyche, and each bears within it, undamaged, the germ power of it's source" (Campbell 1949: 4). Therefore, he argued that the particular aspects of a myth can be comprehended cross-culturally, because they point towards a relationship to the human psyche and offer a gate way into the horizons of another society, culture or even time

Indeed, Campbell's monomyth was psychological in nature. Campbell drew upon both Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, two earlier psychologists interested in the study of human personality and particularly, the role that religion, spirituality and myth played in modern life (Campbell 1949: 12-13; Segal 1987: 125-126). Freud's influence on Campbell is revealed in the importance he places on childhood relationships with parental figures and how they affect the adult psyche. Freud argued that adult preoccupations were based in the earliest moment of life, the infant's object orientations for its primary caregivers, mother and father (Campbell 1949: 6-7). The mother represents comfort to the child-like ego, however, the child feels the eventual need to retaliate against the mother due to absence of mother's comfort or the need of the mother to hinder the child (Campbell 1949: 5-7). The child then in turn views the father as an intrusion on relationships with the mother through competition for her attention. He then is labeled by

the immature psyche as 'enemy' or "other". For Freud it was through the drama of the childhood experiences that he/she is able to put aside their infantile preoccupation with the mother as a source of comfort and father as an antagonist and fully form self actualized concepts of self in relation to the appropriate gendered parent. To do otherwise was to develop a deviant personality that was debilitated in function (Campbell 1949: 6)²¹. What is significant to this study is that both Campbell and Freud argued that coming to terms with how we conceive of our parents is essential to mental health and is a prominent theme within myth.

Freud and Campbell differed in their views of the function of myth, however. Freud saw myths as veiled outlets for the incestuous drives described previously. He studied myth as psychotic, unresolved, and imbalanced neurosis. For Freud, myths are a part of an illusionary stage of human development, rightly to be replaced by science (Freud 1927: 53-55). Campbell disagreed. Campbell thought to simply interpret myth through the imagery of the psychotic would be to undermine myth's ability to guide individuals or communities. Instead, Campbell suggests that, the purpose of myth is to "carry people away from childhood – from dependency – on to responsibility." (Campbell 2008: 79). Accordingly, Campbell thought Freud's negative approach to mythology lacking and found inspiration in Carl Jung's archetypal theory of myth.

Carl Jung's work focused on that section of life from adult hood unto death and the value of myth for people (Segal 1987: 125). His theory focused primarily on the

21 Obviously, there are many flaws in Freud's interpretation of gender, parenting and the development of personality, far too many to engage in this limited project. See for example, Robert Segal in "Joseph Campbell: An Introduction" (111-133) for a full discussion of Freud's theory and criticism of it.

integration of archetypal figures into the psyche of the individual. Campbell's approach to myth is similar to Jung's use of archetypes. Verena Kast summarizes what we mean by the term archetype. According to Kast, "Archetypes are the basic structural elements of the human psyche ...anthropological constant of the experience, formation, and transformation of behaviour" (Kast 1992: 90-91). These archetypes are similar in nature to the figures that the hero discovers on his journey as found throughout myth. Several Jungian archetypal symbols - for example the father/ogre - shadow/animus, anima - the goddess - are integral to Campbell's model of myth.

Campbell's monomythic structure incorporates elements of both Jung and Freud. The earlier part of his monomyth draws upon Freud, dealing as it does with the hero giving up his most basic egotistical attachments. The latter part of Campbell's suggested monomyth draws upon Jung, as the hero matures as an adolescent and begins to enter the world of adulthood and specialized adult action. For Campbell, the exploration of myth had relevance to modern people as it continually engaged topics related to the relationships that shape our understanding of reality²².

Structure of the Monomyth

The monomyth is structured in three stages, the *departure*, *initiation*, and the *return*. The *departure* stage marks a period where the hero first hears the call of destiny and adventure. The hero can either accept or reject this call. However, in each case he

22 Similarly a full in depth study of Jung and his comparison to Campbell goes beyond the present study. See "Campbell as a Jungian" in Joseph Campbell: An Introduction by Robert Segal (125-135) and Transformation of the Consciousness in Myth (19-54) for a full discussion.

will be confronted by heralds, guides, or guardians who will in turn either help him in his journey or provoke him into accepting it. According to Campbell, mirroring Freud, these symbolic figures represent parental figures, both loving and terrifying, both mother and father (Campbell 1949: 5-7). This stage symbolizes the hero letting go of his old way of thinking. The hero leaves the safety of his community to be tested and then ultimately transformed. This journey ends as the hero gets sucked into *the belly of the whale*, in similar terms, he is transported to a new world where he tested again and again, challenging his ability and his nature as a hero (Campbell 1949: 49-94).

The second stage of the monomyth Campbell entitles the *Initiation*. This stage occurs within an unknown and hidden world to the hero, whether a new country he has never known existed, new responsibilities he has gained as an adult, or a journey into a supernatural realm. In this stage the hero goes through of series of trials and transformations as he confronts goddess and god figures, full embodiments of the gendered manifestations he first saw evident in the *departure* stage. Here he meets the goddess. She is associated with desire, comfort, and bliss. Once again Campbell's analysis draws from Freud in that he is describing the infantile response of the ego, viewing the mother or the feminine aspect as representative of happiness, bliss and sustenance (Campbell 1949: 111). Campbell suggests that the hero's response to the divine feminine archetype mirrors the way a child responds to the mother (Campbell 1949: 6; 111). According to Campbell and Freud, a child looks to the mother for joy and sustenance. Campbell says, "She is the promise of perfection; the soul's assurance that, at the conclusion of its exile in a world of organized inadequacies, the bliss that once was

known will be known again: the comforting, the nourishing, the “good” mother - young and beautiful - who was known to us, and even tasted, in the remotest past (Campbell 1949: 111). However, if denied, the child turns these feelings of desire into resentment. The adult when looking to the world has the expectations of joy, and similarly, an egotistical response when joy is denied him by the world, characterizing it as cruel or unfair (Campbell 1949: 111). According to Campbell she is often perceived as, “the absent, unattainable mother, against whom aggressive fantasies are directed, and from who a counter-aggression is feared; the hampering, forbidding, punishing mother; the mother who would hold to herself the growing child trying to push away; and finally the desired forbidden mother (Oedipus complex) whose presence is the hidden land of the adult’s infant recollection and is sometimes the greater force (Campbell 1949: 111).

Consequently, the hero in Campbell’s monomyth characterizes the divine feminine in terms of the “good mother” or “bad mother” depending upon whether the goddess and the world provide joy or hardship. Furthermore, the goddess represents love in the hero’s life. She represents the promise of joy, love, bliss (Campbell 1949: 111). This said she also represents negative aspects. She symbolizes the death and destruction of the body. As the progenitor of life the goddess figures becomes the symbolic source and end of all life (Campbell 1949: 120-126). According to Campbell, the hero who can overcome the childlike impetus to fulfill his desires will win the love of the goddess and join in complement with her. Consequently, her connection with the physical world and the senses characterize her as the guide or impulse to discover the world (Campbell 1949: 113). Therefore, she acts as the impulse of his discovery and usually provokes him

further into the trials and tribulations that are yet to come. Campbell suggests that generally she is never greater than the hero but can promise more than he is able to comprehend. In this context, the goddess is often represented as "temptation" (Campbell 1949: 120).

Generally we refuse to admit to within ourselves, or within our friends, the fullness of that pushing, self protective, malodorous, carnivorous lecherous fever which is the very nature of the organic cell. Rather we tend to perfume what was and reinterpret; meanwhile imagining that all the flies in the ointment, all the hairs in the soup, are the faults of some unpleasant someone else. But when it suddenly dawns on us, or is forced to our attention, that every thing we think or do is necessarily tainted with the odour of the flesh, not uncommonly, there is experienced a moment of revulsion; life the act of life, the organic of life, woman in particular as the great symbol of life, become intolerable to the pure, the pure, pure soul (Campbell 1949: 121-122).

In linking the symbol of the divine feminine, the body, women and the world with temptation the monomyth associates the feminine with opposition to or distracting from the spiritual journey of the hero. Women become a barrier to the hero's spiritual pursuit which he creates to himself through his misinterpretation of reality.

Following his encounter with the goddess, the hero next encounters the god figure that will test the hero's awareness of that which is spiritual and not of this physical existence. This figure is representative of the father or for the male hero the masculine archetype. According to Campbell, in the imagery of the father there is balance of characteristics: between justice and wrath with mercy and grace (Campbell 1949: 128). Therefore, if the hero is to succeed in his quest he must transform the wrathful ogre image into a protective father symbol. Campbell's ogre figure draws from the Freudian "nursery scene". According to Campbell "the fixating idolatry of that pedagogical non-

thing prevents the child from growing up...the father is the archetypal enemy"(Campbell 1949: 129). Following Campbell, the series of initiations by the father are the preparations of the child to engage in "the world of specialized adult action" (Campbell 1949: 136). The purpose of the father-figure transformation is to scare the hero into realizing that the tragedies he has experienced and the ruthless nature of existence all have their part to play in the cosmos. The hero transcends the "blind spot" of his own particular tragedies. According to Campbell, the only one who may usurp the cosmic role of the father is someone who can put off infantile elements such as self absorption, personal preference or resentments are removed (Campbell 1949: 136-137). Campbell explains this transformation of perspective when he says, "Ideally, the invested one has been divest of his mere humanity and is representative of the impersonal cosmic force. He is the twice born: he has become himself the father. And he is competent, consequently, now to enact himself the role of the initiator, the guide, the sun door, through whom one may pass from the infantile illusions of "good" and "evil" to an experience of the majesty of the cosmic law, purged of hope and fear, and at peace in the understanding of the revelation of being" (Campbell 1949: 136-137). Ultimately, the father figure then also must represents a reflection of the hero's future self. Campbell writes, "The tale of indulgent parenthood illustrates the antique idea that when the roles of life are assumed by the improperly initiated, chaos supervenes. When the child outgrows the popular idyl of the mother breast and turns to face the world of specialized adult action, it passes, spiritually, into the sphere of the father who becomes, for his son, the sign of the future task (Campbell 1949: 136)". It is the hero's change in perception of

the god that transforms him from the ogre into the protective father figure. The hero discovers that he and the father are not different, the father is the antecedent of what the son will become. The transformation and acceptance of the father's role in myth represents a fully integrated adult male.

When the hero has matured enough to give up his juvenile resentments of the mother and father, he is ready for the possibility of deification, which Campbell refers to as Apotheosis. This form of the hero is often represented in a bisexual or androgynous form, masculine and feminine (Campbell 1949: 152). It is an indiscriminate form in which both energies are merged. This form demonstrates a destruction of duality into one solid undifferentiated state, both time and eternity, love and death, desire and hostility, self and other. According to Campbell,

This is the meaning of the bisexual god. He is the mystery of the theme of initiation. We are taken from the mother chewed into fragments and assimilated into the world annihilating body of the ogre whom all the previous forms and being are only the course of a feast: but then, miraculously reborn we are more than we were. If the god is a tribal racial nation of sectarian archetypes, we are the warriors of his cause; but if he is a lord of the universe itself, we then go forth as knowers to whom all men are brothers. And in either case, the childhood parent image and ideas of "good" and "evil" have been surpassed. We no longer desire and fear, we are what was desired and feared. All the gods, Bodhisattvas, and Buddhas have been subsumed in us, as in the halo of the mightier holder of the lotus of the world (Campbell 1949: 162).

From here the hero enters the third stage of his journey and takes what he has learned, whether in a new enlightened form or from a magical elixir, and returns it to the world of the living (Campbell 1949: 181). The end result in Campbell's model truly lies in the perspective gained during the course of the journey (Campbell 1949: 181). The

hero through his trials responds to the world in a new way and as a result is able to freely pass between the two worlds as a master of them both.

The last stage of the monomyth as described by Campbell is the *return* stage. In this stage the hero must leave *the belly of the whale*, or world womb, in which through his trials he has been reborn. He is either retrieved from without (Campbell 1949: 207-217) or must try and escape with the life-giving elixir that he has found within (Campbell 1949: 196-207). The problem now for the hero is to embody the aspect of eternity in the physical world. He may be the master of both the physical and spiritual worlds and can travel freely between both, however, the challenge presented him now is the difficult task of representing what he has learned in a world that is still limited by duality, violence and self involvement. Campbell says, "that symbols are only the vehicles of communication; they must not be mistaken for the final term, the tenor, or their reference...no one should attempt to read or interpret the final thing...the problem of the theologian is to keep his symbol translucent, so that it may not block out the very light it is supposed to convey ...mistaking a vehicle for its tenor may lead to the spilling not only of valueless ink, but of valuable blood" (Campbell 1949: 236). In this passage Campbell expresses clearly his idea that symbols and religious systems are means to discussing the larger context of human nature, but he also presents his own personal politics in that believing one's perception of the truth to be the penultimate understanding of the natural world leads to conflict and violence, missing the very point that he thought religion and spirituality were meant to express.

For the purposes of studying X/1999 I will be mapping Joseph Campbell's

Monomyth against the narrative plot of the *anime* series. When the narrative structure of X/1999 is plotted against Campbell's monomyth, more than a few striking similarities can be seen. Differences arise because the narrative is feminist in nature, yet uses the patriarchal mythic narrative to deconstruct the male ego, in particular how the hero understands and relates to the role of motherhood. Therefore, the thesis will note points of similarity to guide the narrative and analysis, yet it will pay clear attention to the differences, which exemplify what is unique about the narrative. Accordingly, some of the major points of academic contention when it comes to Campbell's model will be discussed. Using these discussions of his work, the thesis will synthesize an informed and critical approach to using Campbell's model in the study of a contemporary example of modern myth. Two topics that will be explored are the application of Campbell's universal model to a particular narrative; and his understanding and use of gender and the feminine in the monomyth.

The Universal Character of Campbell's Model

One of the first ways that X/1999 fits Campbell's pattern of the monomyth is in its use of a variety of mythic systems, both East and West alike. Both Campbell and X/1999 borrow mythic elements from various world traditions, including Buddhism, Shinto, and Christianity. In both cases, these images are not being used in their original and "proper" cultural context; they are being adapted and combined to suit the purposes of a "secular narrative". The "universality" and cross cultural appropriateness of Campbell's model is a topic of considerable controversy. On one hand, some authors

argue on behalf of his ingenuity and the depth of his knowledge of various world religious traditions. This argument suggests that Campbell was able to place myths from around the world side by side and draw upon their similarities with considerable skill and impressive knowledge. According to Guilick, Campbell studies these myth as "consistently attend(ing) to issues of existential meaning without bringing the nature of this meaning into thematic focus" (Guilick 1990: 34; Doty 1996: 424). This can be seen expressed in his understanding of the hero as a master of both worlds, the particular and the universal. Campbell writes, "Freedom to pass back and forth across the world division, from the perspective of the apparitions of time to that of the casual deep and back - not contaminating the principles of the one with those of the other, yet permitting the mind to know the one by virtue of the other - is the talent of the master...It is possible to speak at only one point in time, but that does not invalidate the insight of the rest (Campbell 1949: 229). Similarly Gregory Salyer argues that Campbell sought a pluralistic and interdisciplinary approach to myth, one which he realized would be "necessary but ultimately imperfect" (Salyer 1992: 57) in order to study the aspects of a multi-dimensional world. To clarify his point Salyer compares reductionist approaches to myth as similar to the Buddhist parable of the blind men and the elephant. Each man touches a part of the elephant and believes he knows the essence of the elephant based on his immediate experience, but none see the whole of elephant and are limited in understanding of what an elephant is in actuality. According to Salyer, myth for Campbell exists as a synthesis of dualities and paradoxes. The universal similarities are experienced through their local and ethnic applications, allowing myth to speak in its own

terms (Salyer 1992: 201). Accordingly, myth, then, is "a polyvalent symbol that functions as both universal and particular. Just as any story or theory operates in order to "make sense" of experience, myth both reduces human experience and sets it free" (Salyer 1992: 61). Salyer continues by suggesting that myth within Campbell's understanding is "the engine of both the upholding of values and the paradigm shift...the way things change and the way they stay the same"(Salyer 1992: 66). For Salyer, Campbell's approach to myth acts as a synthesizing agent of specific human experience and the universal themes in myth. Therefore, the elements of one myth may be discussed in a context of another myth. Campbell's approach is given credit as it allows a horizon to be opened among myths. It attests to a similarity in human experience, specifically, the shaping influences of our parent-child relationships and then later, their symbolic significance to the psyche and the world as we experience it.

However, Campbell has also been criticized on the grounds that by proposing a universal theory of myth he ultimately limits the meaning of world myth to a unified, ethno-centric and limited conception of spiritual life. Campbell has been criticized for failing to incorporate particular aspects of a culture when analyzing a myth drawn from that culture. According to Segal for example, although Campbell derives topics, themes, archetypes and images from myth, he analyzes few of them completely (Segal 1987: 137). Campbell does not often use sociological content to analyze myth. He is more interested in human nature, which he finds revealed in myths (Segal 1987: 137-138). According to Segal, Campbell's perspective treats myths as a store-house for the experience, knowledge and beliefs of man's own nature. According to Segal, this limits

Campbell's understanding of myth.

This argument is similar to Maurice Friedman's criticism of a universal theory of religion in general, which in his article includes theories such as Joseph Campbell's model of a monomyth specifically. Friedman argues that universal theories lose the true essence of religion by attempting to understand religion according to a "formula" or universal theory (1998: 395). According to Friedman, theorists of such universalist models do not hesitate to ignore all instances that do not fit their personal perception. By using a single and unified definition, meaning, or interpretation of all myths or religions they lose the particulars that make them purposeful to a society. For Friedman, "the real issues is whether one ends by subsuming all the particulars under some generality or uses the categories and generalities in order to return again to the unique religious phenomenon" (1999: 469-470). This is a fair criticism of the process of applying a universal theory to a particular myth and must be taken into consideration when applying the monomyth to an *anime* series that was created for a domestic Japanese audience.

Accordingly, in this thesis, particular attention will be paid to the application of Campbell's universal model as to X/1999 grounded in the socio-cultural context of Japanese society. For example this thesis will draw upon gender constructs and expectations in Japanese society to guide our analysis. It will demonstrate how the narrative uses Campbell's model to shape the *anime* as a myth of the male ego and its journey towards enlightenment. The particular differences in regard to gender, that Segal and Friedman argue are dismissed in a universal theory, will be viewed as agents of social commentary, whereby the nature of gender as it affects human experience and

spirituality will be the primary focus of analysis.

Gender and the Feminine in the Monomyth

Campbell describes goddess imagery in the context of many well documented and traditional examples. He describes the "goddess" in mythology as often embodying qualities such as the power of creativity, nature and love (Campbell 1949: 110).

However, for Campbell she also dualistically represents the darker aspects of the body such as death and entropy (Campbell 1949: 122). According to Religious Studies scholar Christine Downing, Campbell spent a portion of his academic career acknowledging and defending the premise that goddess worship held a significant role in the ancient world, where burial rituals were seen as a return to the mother for rebirth and where women and by extension the feminine "had a magical force and wonder...no less a marvel than the universe itself" (Downing 1990:100). He argues that the influence of the feminine has been a power which has been continually controlled and used by patriarchal societies. According to Downing, Campbell saw "male myths and rituals are really reaction formations, attempts to deny the mother's power or to take it from her" (Downing 1990: 103). According to Downing, Campbell argued that with the appearance of city-states and nomadic invaders, Goddess worship began to decline and was transformed, reinterpreted and suppressed in mythology and society (Downing 1990: 99-100; Campbell 1959: 313)²³.

23 As mentioned previously, this theory does not indorse that ancient societies were more egalitarian or matriarchal in nature but instead acknowledges that patriarchal societies preclude women from an active role in society by transforming goddess figures into subsidiary roles, in turn reinforcing the socialized

This is similar to Howard Teich's perspective on Campbell. Teich argues that Campbell was aware of gender bias and patriarchy and in fact he heavily criticizes them (Teich 1992: 90). Teich says Campbell was not misled by the "confusing assignment of gender labels to characteristics" (Teich 1992: 90). Teich says Campbell was receptive to the concept of solar/lunar qualities in other traditions. Teich defines lunar qualities as "tenderness, receptivity, intuitiveness, compassion, [and] emotional availability" (1992: 90) and solar qualities as, "clarity, wilfulness, competitiveness, [and] endurance" (Teich 1992: 90). According to Teich, Campbell's transcendent solar/lunar vision allowed him to see beyond gender biases into the energies of the psyche that permeate all psycho-spiritual traditions" (1992: 100). Accordingly, both set of qualities were essential to an understanding of the spiritual and mythological traditions of any people but are often valorized and assigned to gender.

From this preliminary reading of Campbell we can see that it does have some "feminist" undertones. Particularly his assertion that patriarchal suppression of goddess worship in fact took place. Furthermore, Campbell's assertion that both gendered qualities were essential for understanding a spiritual tradition contains an implicitly criticism of patriarchal bias towards male-oriented spiritual traditions. On the other hand, some scholars argue that the image of the goddess and the feminine in Campbell's theory is problematic because it is based upon a limited notion of the feminine as passive, sexual and nourishing - a stereotypically patriarchal image of the feminine (Lefkowitz 1990: 434).

The symbol of the feminine that Campbell presents is from the perspective of a male psyche. Campbell, therefore, focuses on one image of the goddess, as represented in a patriarchal context. Accordingly, the goddess, and by implication women, are represented as purely physical entities to be enjoyed, conquered and then hated by the male hero of the myth. According to Mary Lefkowitz (1990: 434), Campbell's theory has no room for a female hero, other than to be a suitable bride by virtue of "her qualities" (Campbell 1949: 199), namely, "her beauty or her yearning" (Campbell 1949: 199). Campbell fails to ascribe any qualities other than a sexualized or nurturing nature to feminine images found in myth. According to Mary Lefkowitz, while Campbell may argue that patriarchy reduces women to the status of objects, it is "his own (mythology), and not Greek Mythology, that tends to strip women of all but their most elemental sexual characteristics, and emphasize their role as brides or mothers" (1990: 434). This is not to say that Campbell's image of women is not an accurate portrayal of the feminine within *some* myth. Patriarchal notions of the feminine do exist within mythology and thus are valid and worthy of study as any image. Campbell's model is limited, however, in that it often fails to incorporate other images of the feminine beyond the preconceived patriarchal one. As Lefkowitz argues, Joseph Campbell describes a universal goddess without personality whose role is simply maternal (1990: 434). This perspective is particularly troublesome when juxtaposed to Campbell's own expressed views of modern-day women.

In an article Campbell wrote on women and the Goddess, he notes that, for women historically, "Her biological assigned role was to give birth to and to rear

children. The male role was to support and protect. Both roles are biologically and psychologically archetypical" (Campbell 1980: 74). Now, however, through the masculine invention of the vacuum cleaner, women are free to engage in the quest of individualization, but for which there are no models given in myth (Campbell 1980: 74). He claims that today, "the challenge (for women) is to flower as individuals, neither as biological archetypes, nor as personalities imitative of the male" (Campbell 1980: 74). For Campbell, therefore, archetypes of the "modern woman" do not exist in mythology. Yet as Downing points out, Campbell's assumption in this regard may simply be the result of his own failure to perceive in mythic portrayals of the feminine anything beyond the patriarchal bias. While Campbell recognized a patriarchal bias in ancient myths, he fails to transcend this bias in his own analysis of myth (Downing 1990:107). As a result, Campbell's theory raises the question: is the masculine-oriented monomyth really a universal pattern or just another engine of patriarchy?

Campbell's interpretation of the goddess and the feminine in myth seems to be based upon an infantile fragment of the masculine psyche. Campbell argues that through the resolution of dualities –female and male, life giving and destroying- the hero is freed from the immature sentiments and resentments associated with mother and world (Campbell 1949:114). To this end he often interprets the male hero's negative reactions to the feminine as a means to symbolically project the base egotistical nature of their humanity outside of the male body. In regard to this she is an implement to assist the hero's psyche and the female characters will change depending on his own personal growth. To be fair, Campbell demonstrates much the same approach with his treatment

of the father figure, as the father is representative of the hero's own struggle with the utilization of force, either to destroy or protect. However, Campbell's description of this process is still from a "male" perspective (Downing 1990:104). Where Campbell describes the goddess in myth, it is only as she is experienced by men, rather than how she might understand or experience herself (Downing 1990:104). Campbell, therefore, sees the goddess only as an expression of mystery, of the "other", rather than as embodying kinship or familiarity (Downing 1990:104). Mythologies that present alternative models of the feminine, therefore, serve as a challenge to this patriarchal emphasis in Campbell's theory.

Accordingly, there are several important factors that we must take into consideration when plotting the monomyth against X/1999. First and foremost, the symbolic use of gender in a particular myth must be able to speak for itself. The symbolic content must be interpreted first on its own terms, rather than subsuming it under the interpretive lense of myth. That said, the deviations from the monomyth carry their own meaning. Campbell once described the feminine in myth as reaction formations to women by patriarchal society. It would then be safe to suggest that the differences in X/1999 from the monomyth may be similar in kind to those reaction formations, thereby, creating new symbolic content to understand and engage the audience on issues of femininity and motherhood in Japanese society.

Additionally, if the authors are stylizing their narrative according to the mythic narrative of a religious hero, one who must overcome his patriarchal restrictions, the question of how they use gender as a means to infer that men are controlled and shamed

by patriarchy becomes relevant? By using Campbell's model of a mythic journey, which is a series of revelations and changes in perspective for the hero, the authors can guide the audience's change in perspective on issues regarding gender, but also on issues concerning modern humanity informed by feminist spirituality.

Last, gender is a personal social construction affected by time, culture, and political identification, and placing it within gender relations in Japanese society must be in the forefront of our analysis. Therefore, this thesis will use Campbell's model as a means to contextualize the journey of the male ego through mythic narrative. It will pose questions such as how does the image of the feminine change? How does the hero's perception of the world change? Similarly, it will draw upon the cultural description of feminism and Japanese society to understand the semiotics of the *anime*. It will compare and contrast traditional examples of myth to their modern adaptations by Clamp to propose a gendered analysis of X/1999's symbolic intent.

Description of Primary Data and Process of Analysis

Although there is both a *Manga* and film version of the X/1999 plot, this thesis will focus on the animated television series in its analysis. A comparative analysis of all three forms of the X/1999 story in relation to each other exceeds the scope of the current project. The X/1999 television series, comprising 25 episodes, each running approximately 23 minutes an episode, will therefore be the main focus of study. As the original dialogue accompanying the visual text is in Japanese, English subtitles will be used as a means to transcribe dialogue.

In-depth analysis of both dialogue and visual cues will be important in identifying the semiotic meaning of the images presented in the series. As discussed previously, Well's book, Understanding Animation, will act as a guide to identify important elements of animation that can act in both conservative and innovative manners. The symbols, themes and narrative techniques of the series will be plotted against Campbell's pattern of the hero monomyth, as outlined in The Hero with a Thousand Faces (1949). Elements of the series that fit Campbell's model will be identified, and those elements that depart from Campbell's model, namely the issue of gender, will be explored in depth. As a fan of *Anime*, Clamp Inc., and X/1999 in particular, I already have more than a passing familiarity with the visual text. As such, my analysis will begin with a clear description of the visual imagery in each episode and a transcription of dialogue for the entire series, noting moments of both mythic and gendered importance. The cosmological analysis of X/1999 in the thesis will follow the pattern identified by Campbell, beginning with the theme of "the call to adventure" for example, and progressing through each step identified by Campbell, although maintaining the narrative flow of the plot as much as possible. The gender analysis, on the other hand, will be structured according to subgroups of characters and what each set of interactions have to say about gender and its effect on the mythic qualities of the text.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has explored the theoretical framework in which X/1999 will be studied. Foremost, it has provided a preliminary understanding of the model to aid in the

depth analysis that will commence in Chapter Four. Moreover, it has attempted to highlight the work of Joseph Campbell, largely by examining the academic influences that shaped the monomyth. It has taken into consideration many of the feminist and sociological critiques of Campbell as a means to attenuate the model's short comings, by grounding the analysis in the particular experience of the Clamp artists and the culture from which the narrative arose. By applying the model to the narrative, Chapters Four and Five, will demonstrate the mythic qualities of X/1999, demonstrate the strengths and weaknesses of Campbell's model in regard to gendered archetypes, and lastly, contextualize the gendered subtext of the narrative within the existential and spiritual framework of Campbell's monomyth.

Chapter 4: A depth analysis of X/1999 According to Campbell's model - Part 1

The screen fades to black. "The future isn't decided yet, is it?" a young female voice says as a single white feather drops in a pool of water (Episode 24 "Legend", 2002). This final scene in X/1999 carries the most ideological weight in regard to the themes and philosophies expressed throughout the narrative. If X/1999 is about nothing else it is about the future of human existence. It challenges us to question how we define ourselves as humans, the nature of suffering, the existence of life after death, and most importantly, how our behaviours and attitudes shape them. Moreover, it invites us to contemplate changing our behaviours to create a better world. These topics will be explored through an in-depth analysis of X/1999. Accordingly, Chapters Four and Five will explore the spiritual, philosophical and gendered themes communicated throughout the animated narrative. Chapter Four will focus on the *departure* and the *return* stage of Campbell's model, while Chapter Five will discuss the final *initiation* stage of Campbell's Journey.

The intent of these chapters is to discuss what X/1999 has to say in the context of feminist and pro-feminist spirituality. They will argue that the narrative problematizes the patriarchal system within Japanese society, and by extension, the world. They will accomplish this through examining the main character's confrontation with patriarchal masculinity, namely, competition, aggression and violence. They will argue that the narrative explores masculinity through the deconstruction of the male ego. It demonstrates how patriarchal masculinity is imposed on and limits men much the same way that patriarchal femininity once and still hinders women. These chapters will ask

such questions as ‘what was the author’s intent in writing this text?’ ‘who was the intended audience?’ ‘what message was the author attempting to convey?’ ‘what sources does this text draw upon (what are its historical and literary antecedents?).

In X/1999 the narrative structure of the *anime* series fits Joseph Campbell's model almost flawlessly. Is this because the mythic storyline is modeled on any particular religious text? Or is it because the mythic themes identified by Campbell really are universal? Do the themes present in X/1999 really mirror in terms of meaning and implication the themes found in the world’s religious traditions? Or, were the writers of Clamp familiar with Campbell’s work, and consciously drew upon Campbell’s monomyth to structure the X/1999 plot? Did the authors contextualize their discussion of gender constraints, concepts and conventions as found not only in Japan but in human nature itself deliberately within a mythic structure, or is the theme of gender an unintentional thread woven through the mythic storyline? Are the creators of X/1999 deliberately presenting a critical appreciation of Campbell’s work in order to discuss gender as a modern spiritual/human crisis? In what way does gender effect issues of free will, destiny, and self-sacrifice, and how do these portrayals of gender communicate something about Japanese gender roles and constraints? In interpreting the semiotic implications of such elements of the *anime*, the thesis will place the mythic storyline in a cultural context. This chapter will proceed to explore these questions by plotting the narrative of X/1999 against Joseph Campbell’s monomyth exploring its numerous similarities but also its departures.

Joseph Campbell’s monomyth is broken down into three different subsections,

two of which we discuss in chapter Four, the *departure* and the *return*. First, the hero is called by destiny to go on adventure in a different world. This Campbell calls *the departure* stage. In this section the main character struggles with his new found identity as the hero. Once the hero has accepted this role he then is swallowed whole by a greater power, whereby, he goes through an “inner journey” that explores his psyche.

Sometimes this inner journey can take the form of a fantastical adventure filled with archetypal gods and goddesses which transform the hero’s perception of the world at large. This stage Campbell calls *the initiation* stage. The hero then through a series of trials is transformed into a god like figure, referred to as his Apotheosis, otherwise, he gains a treasure or some life altering wisdom which he is destined to bring back to the real world, what Campbell calls *the ultimate boon*. Once he has acquired this boon, knowledge, or elixir he must return to the world. The third stage Campbell fittingly calls *the return* stage. The hero must face the task of manifesting the ultimate boon in the real world.

This generalized plot schema will be mapped against X/1999 to demonstrate the mythic structural qualities of the narrative. It will also be used as a means to analyze the series sequentially through the hero’s journey. Close attention will be paid to how goddess or female figures are addressed. Moreover, the feminist and pro-feminist perspectives in the narrative are evident in the use of the sacrificial mother image in Japanese society. One could look at the brief synopsis of X/1999’s narrative and argue that the hero’s journey is a standard religious romp in mythic narrative, the hero following the prescribed paradigms, accumulating in what we often see in many religions

as a passive, dying, sacrificial hero and Joseph Campbell's monomyth. However, by examining this narrative within the context of Japanese society we can begin to demonstrate the narrative treatment and role of women in feminist and pro-feminist spirituality. In the narrative the seemingly patriarchal and limiting role of motherhood is reshaped as a feminist image of power, love and sacrifice, equal to the power of social engagement. As we discussed in Chapter Two on motherhood and spirituality, Carol Ochs said, "Mothering teaches us about love: its physical-caring aspects, its knowing aspects, and its capacity to let go. It teaches us how to relate to our mistakes and to the mistakes of those to whom we are connected" (Ochs 1997: 31). The experiences of motherhood such as protecting a child and mediating the child's environment can act as a context for spirituality as seen in the relationship between Kamui and his mother in X/1999. Accordingly, through this process of caring for another, the self is changed. Throughout this analysis we will then examine how the narrative uses this image of motherhood as a means for the hero to question patriarchal and valorized masculinity, and how the series seeks to overcome it as a means to a new gender awareness for both men and women alike. This change of perspective will be plotted throughout the narrative. It will begin with Kamui's infantile and egocentric limitations in the first stage and end with the final selfless sacrifice at the climax of the series. This chapter will begin its in-depth analysis by looking at those episodes of the series that could be considered representative of the *departure* stage of Campbell monomyth. Having briefly described the structure of Campbell's model, a brief description of the entire series is in order. This will begin to contextualize the main plot sequences essential to the analysis.

X/1999 takes place over a series of 24 episodes. The first 12 episodes could be considered the *departure* stage of Campbell's model. These episodes include all scenes that first indicate that the main character, Kamui, is important in the coming apocalypse. This section will describe the nature of his power and his reservations about becoming involved in the apocalypse. To set the scene Kamui is a young sixteen year old Japanese boy who lives alone with his mother Toru. Kamui is a slender youth, shorter than average, and medium length black hair. He is often sullen and introspective throughout most of the series. Kamui also has psychic powers which have marked him as the essential player in the impending apocalypse.

Departure

The series begins when Kamui returns to Tokyo after having been gone for six years. When he returns to Tokyo he is reunited with his childhood friends, Kotori and Fuma. However, this reunion is not a welcomed one, as Kamui refuses to acknowledge their past and belittles their childhood friendship. We learn over the course of the first 12 episodes that Kamui returned to Tokyo to fulfill his mother's dying request. Kamui's mother urges him to protect Kotori and Fuma and to fulfill his destiny. Kamui, however, wishes to have nothing to do with the apocalypse; furthermore, he feels his friends are better served by distancing himself from them, so that they would not attract the same fate as his mother. Accordingly, Kamui has returned to Tokyo not to participate in the apocalypse but to retrieve and leave with the holy sword, denying his foreordained future by refusing to participate. While in Tokyo key figures on both sides of the apocalypse

make themselves known to Kamui, the seven seals led by the blind shaman and seer named Princess Hinoto, and the seven angels led by Kanoe, the less favoured sister of Princess Hinoto.

Despite Kamui's best efforts he is unable to prevent the apocalypse. Through a series of events the holy sword is stolen by the seven angels, Kotori and Fuma's father, Kyogo Monou, dies protecting the holy sword, and last but not least, a second holy sword is born from his aunt Magami Tokiko on a full moon. These harrowing events push at Kamui and force him to realize that he really has no choice but to involve himself for Kotori and Fuma's sake. Ultimately, these events lead his childhood friend Kotori into an hysteria-induced coma. However, this turn of events is not without prophetic import as it is through this that she comes to realize that she is a powerful seer. Like Hinoto, Kotori has her own role to play in the unfolding apocalypse.

Kamui, saddened by Kotori's illness, chooses to accept his role as saviour of the world. He admits his motivations are not due to any specific moral imperative, he simply wishes to protect the foundation of Kotori and Fuma's happiness, and therefore, will fight for the world. Kamui finds that destiny has a plan of its own, however, and that things are never as simple as black and white, or good and evil. As Kamui chooses to become the dragon of heaven, Fuma, his near-brother and childhood friend, is revealed as his "Gemini." Fuma's destiny is to become Kamui's opposite. If Kamui had chosen to destroy the world Fuma would have protected it. However, Kamui has chosen to protect it, and therefore, Fuma is transformed into the dragon of earth, a personification of each human's desire for entropy. Fuma overpowers Kamui as he fully awakens as the dragon

of earth; Kamui, however, has only begun his journey and has no real comprehension of what it means to be the dragon of heaven. Fuma takes possession of Kotori's unconscious body and kills her in front of Kamui. He is about to kill Kamui when the seven seals arrive in time to save him.

Meanwhile, the comatose Kotori enters the dreamscape, a vast expanse of space that can be used to recreate any memory or any desired environment. There Kotori realizes that although untrained, she has the power of a dream-gazer. We also learn she has seen the impending future and the coming battle between her beloved friend and brother. Through her interactions with another dream-gazer, Kakyo, she reveals that she has actually chosen to remain unconscious and, knowing the future, is allowing herself to be sacrificed. There she waits for her coming death with Kakyo. Before Kotori dies she asks Kakyo to deliver a message to Fuma and Kamui. She says, even though everything seems dire and Kamui will suffer greatly, she believes that he is the only one that can save her brother and this world. Moreover, even though all other seers say the world will end, she places her faith in Kamui and wants them to know that the future is still yet to be decided. This ends the first stage of Campbell's journey, which will be discussed in more depth below, and begins the onset of the next stage of Campbell's monomyth. After watching Kotori die Kamui falls into a coma and the seven seals are left with few options but to enter his unconscious mind to retrieve him. So ends the *Departure* and *Return* stages in X/1999.

To begin, certain key structural differences between X/1999 and Campbell's model demonstrate that the authors are engaging in feminist spirituality. The authors

alter the structure of the narrative so that the transformative initiation of Campbell's journey occurs in the real world rather than the inner world of his mind. This change gives a primacy to experience and the physical world. One of the defining characteristics of feminist spirituality discussed in the previous chapter, according to scholars such as Carol Ochs, Ann Carr and Sandra Schneiders, has been a reunification between the spiritual and the physical. Where patriarchal spirituality often saw the physical world as lesser and without spiritual importance, feminist spirituality saw the experience of life and the physical as an excellent source of spiritual insight. Normally for the typical mythic narrative the hero will gain the saving or redeeming boon as part of internal or otherworldly journey, whereupon he must return to the real world and struggle to embody it. However, while Kamui is in the internal or spiritual world of his mind he does not gain the boon. He learns that saving the world and his beloved friends is far more important than hiding from the pain he left behind in the real world. Yes, this is a significant leap in his role as the dragon of heaven, however, it is not until he goes through the *initiation* stage in the real world that he is able to actually understand and manifest the boon. Instead the *initiation* stage and the acquisition of the boon are accomplished through the real life events leading up to the final apocalyptic battle and the state of ecstasy Kamui enters to prevent the apocalypse. According to Ochs, she describes Ecstasy as "standing outside of oneself (ex stasis)...[A] means [in which] the normal self, which includes our usual ways of thinking, judging, and evaluating, is displaced... Whether ecstasy is brought on by grief, suffering, joy, or love, it is an experience equally authentic and significant for coming to understand reality and our

relationship to it" (Ochs 1997:8). As an important characteristic of feminist spirituality, personal real life experiences of joy and sorrow are a transformative context from which spirituality can grow. Following this, Campbell's inner stage of initiation is played out structurally in Kamui's waking life. It is through Kamui's experiences such as suffering, joy and love that he is able to transform and transcend the limits of patriarchal masculinity. Thereby, the narrative makes it so that the boon is something that must become manifested imminently and shows the primacy in the narrative of real life, experience, feelings and perspectives. From this technical discussion let us turn to the actual portrayal of Campbell's monomythic pattern evident in the X/1999 narrative.

Every mythic journey begins with a single step. Often those steps are unsure and measured with a great deal of trepidation and insecurity. It marks a period where the unruly hero or heroine of any tale may strike out on a bold new adventure. Some myths tell the story of a hero who goes on a physical journey far from his home. In other cases the hero may not travel but take on a whole new world of responsibilities. In either case the first stage is marked by a *departure* from the world of childhood and adolescents. According to Joseph Campbell this is the stage when the unrecognized and untapped energies awaken in the hero (Campbell 1949: 52). The first marker of this stage is the *call to adventure*. In this stage a frightening herald or fortuitous blunder may reveal the destiny of the hero. The hero can then either choose to accept his destiny and therefore be assisted by *supernatural aids* or he can reject it, otherwise known as *the refusal of the call*. In the latter case he is summarily undone and is forced to accept the circumstances of destiny. Once either stage is complete the hero *crosses a threshold* that marks the

acceptance of his new found power. As this stage climaxes, the hero is engulfed into a foreign world and often is totally unprepared for what he must face. This stage Campbell calls *the belly of the whale*. As much as the hero would rather stay within the safe confines of adolescence, his journey must continue into the unknown world that awaits him.

In discussing the *Departure* stage we will examine Campbell's *call to adventure* stage, as evident in Episode 2 "A nightmare" (2001) - Kotori recalls Kamui saving her life as a child; Episode 11 "Border" (2001) - Kamui recollects an event when he confronted a bully with his powers; and episode 12 "Alternative" (2001) - how the death of Saya and the birth of the holy sword changed their lives and signaled the coming of the final apocalyptic battle.

Following this discussion we will discuss the *refusal of the call* stage of Campbell's model, as evident in episode 1, "A reunion" (2001) - Kamui tries to take the holy sword by force and flee the coming apocalypse; episode 2 "A nightmare" (2001) - Kamui refuses to listen to the prophecy from the Buddhist monk Sorata - and episode 3 "Pledge" (2001) - a consequence of ignoring the prophecy leads to death and the shrine guardian, Kyogo Monou, and theft of the holy sword by the dragons of earth. In this discussion, we will address how the father's death is symbolic of parental guardians which is mirrored by the death of Kamui's mother, in episode 11 "Border" (2001). Lastly, we will address how his aunt Tokiko, acts as a final horrifying messenger of the apocalypse as seen in Episode 4 "A Sacrifice" (2001) and Episode 11 "Border" (2001) - when her body is destroyed under the light of a full moon and the second sword of the

apocalypse is brought into creation.

The following stage is entitled *supernatural aids*. This stage concerns the guides and guardians who assist Kamui in his journey. Although this stage resembles Campbell's model in many ways, it also departs from it in regard to the gendered symbolism. Campbell's model suggests that when in myth a female guide is present she is usually a flat character while male guides are combination of both masculine and feminine aspects. This is reversed in X/1999. In episode 12 "Alternative" (2001) - we meet a flat male character who acts as a guide to Kamui and in episode 5 "A Destiny" (2001) - we are introduced to Princess Hinoto - dreamer of the future and guide to the seven seals.

After Kamui has accepted his role as hero he *crosses a threshold* in accordance with Campbell's model. This begins in Episode 12 "Alternative" (2001) - Kotori awakens from her sleep to discover the blood of her aunt and the second holy sword. She recalls the violent death of her mother and the birth of the holy sword and becomes aware of her own role to play in the apocalypse as a dream-gazer. Kotori falls into a coma and Kamui is forced to pick which side of the apocalypse he will lead, the dragon of heaven or the dragon of earth.

Once the hero decides to become the dragon of heaven, he enters Campbell's next stage of the journey, *the belly of the whale*. In episode 12 "Alternative" (2001), Fuma becomes the dragon of earth as a result of Kamui's choice to become the dragon of heaven. He binds Kamui and forces him to watch as he kills Kotori, he is prepared to kill Kamui but Kotori allows a dream-gazer to enter her body through her death dream and

distracts Fuma long enough for the seven seals to protect him. Kamui falls into a coma after he discovers her body and refuses to awaken. Meanwhile, as Kotori dies she tells her own prophecy, that the future has still yet to be decided.

The second main stage evident in the series is actually the third stage in Campbell's monomyth, *the return*. In this stage the community of the real world must enter into the hero's mind to return him to life. Without Kamui the apocalypse can neither begin nor end. In this section of the narrative Subaru, one of the seven seals, attempts a dangerous journey into Kamui's mind. With Subaru's assistance Kamui begins to confront his demons and emerges with a renewed resolve to protect the world and save his friend Fuma, restoring his childhood friend to his protective and kind nature. These series of events take place over episodes 13 "Return" (2002) and episode 14 "Gathering" (2002).

Kamui portrays Campbell's *refusal of the return* stage in episode 13 "Return" (2002) - Kamui enters a coma and the seven seals are unable to wake him and fear the worse. It also demonstrates the theme of *rescue from without* in the same episode, Subaru enters Kamui's unconscious mind with the intent of making Kamui return to the world of the living and lastly; *Crossing the return threshold* - Subaru convinces Kamui that through his desire to protect his friends he can actually return and fight to create a world in which they are safe, despite the suffering and pain that he feels. The final chapter will discuss the trials of the main character Kamui as he enters the initiation stage. It will analyze the series as a whole and will provide solutions to many of the problems and questions posed by X/1999 in the *departure* and *return* stage.

Call to Adventure

The *call to adventure* stage is the first indication in a narrative that the main character is either different, special, or has the characteristics of becoming a hero. Drawing upon the psychoanalytic discipline, Campbell explains that the untapped energies awaken themselves from the depths of the hero's sense of self and identity. These events are usually expressed through either a coincidental turn of events or a blunder made by the hero. As Campbell says, these are not actually coincidences but are actually a product of the unconscious mind; all the blunders and turns of chance amount to the repressed desires and conflicts within the hero's psyche as the hero begins to examine them (Campbell 1949: 52). The hero begins to challenge the conventions and patterns of thought on which his existence up until this point has been based (Campbell 1949: 60). For Campbell what may appear as a chance or mistake is actually the revelation of a hidden world to the hero, one which he is unable to fully comprehend (Campbell 1949: 51). Campbell associates this with a rite of passage in which patterns, goals, ideals and ways of thought or life are called into question. There are three such events within the plot of X/1999 that could be considered blunders or circumstances of chance. These events are: first; a heroic act - Kotori falls from a tree and Kamui saves her; second, a misuse of power in self defence - a bully threatens Kamui when he refuses to show him his psychic powers, and third; the birth of the first holy sword - destiny is altered due to the circumstances of Kamui's childhood.

The earliest indication of Kamui's special nature occurs in Kamui and Kotori's

childhood. This scene is told through a series of flashbacks that Kotori has about Kamui when they were children. In these flashbacks she convinces Kamui to help a baby bird in trouble. While trying to climb the tree to help the baby bird, Kotori falls but Kamui grabs hold of her, thereby saving her life. In Episode 2 “A Nightmare” (2001), Kamui has just returned to his childhood community. However, Kamui is no longer the childhood friend that Kotori and Fuma remember. His character is dark and brooding, he even goes as far as ignoring his childhood friends and when approached by them he tells them to move on with their lives. In episode 1 “Reunion” (2001), Kotori follows Kamui to the roof of the school and confronts Kamui. She asks, “You wouldn’t happen to be Kamui, right? I am Kotori from the shrine... it’s really you, it’s been such a long time... I had a dream that you would come back. What’s wrong? Something’s not right?” Kamui replies, “Don’t bother me. I don’t want you talking to me anymore...I am not the same person as I was.” Also in Episode 2 - “A Nightmare”, Fuma discovers Kamui has been injured in a fight, he tries to help but Kamui shrugs it off. Fuma responds, “Nonsense, I can’t leave you like this? Don’t be shy..”. Kamui responds, “Don’t get involved with me.” Fuma insists, “What’s the matter Kamui? Are you serious? You are up to something.” Kamui answers him, “Yeah I am up to something. So don’t get involved with me” (Episode 2 “A nightmare”, 2001). Kotori and Fuma have always thought of Kamui as a very close friend so they find this behaviour confusing. This strange behaviour preoccupies Kotori as she is walking home from school after confronting Kamui. While walking home she passes a large tree that reminds her of when Kamui once saved her life.

The image of the tree in this scene is significant within the model of Campbell’s

monomyth. A typical characteristic of the *call to adventure* is the symbolic association with the world navel (Campbell 1949: 52). Campbell says, "the world navel is the symbol of the continuous creation: the mystery of the maintenance of the world through that continuous miracle of vivification which dwells within all things" (1949: 41). As our analysis continues I would like to point out that there is a continuous association between tree imagery, Kotori, Kamui and Fuma's relationship, this just being the first instance. As such, this scene makes for a good place to begin, for the relationship between this trio is a fundamental inspiration for Kamui's journey and his final revelation at the end of the series.

In the flashback sequence Kamui and Kotori are young children and are climbing a tree. Kotori is higher up the tree and is encouraging Kamui along. We can see that Kotori is the instigator in this plan as she beckons Kamui to climb higher and faster. In episode 2 "A nightmare" (2001), Kotori urges him onward, "Just a little bit more...It's only a little bit, so try your best, Kamui-chan". Kamui replies saying, "I'm a little scared to move." Kotori tells him, "It's alright! You're a boy, aren't you?! Look it's right there." Finally, Kamui and Kotori reach one of the highest branches in the tree where they find a bird's nest and return a small fledgling that has fallen. As they return the bird to the safety of the mother's nest they hear a crack and both children begin to fall. Kamui reaches out and grabs Kotori's hand as he grasps the branch saving them both. Kotori is very frightened but Kamui implores her to hold on tight. Kamui says, "Hold on tight, Kotori-Chan, because I will never let go...I will never let go...ever..." (Episode 2 "A Nightmare", 2001). The image fades to indicate the passage of time. The screen pans in

close up on Kotori's face, she is no longer upset but Kamui on the other hand seems unconscious, however, still holding on to her and the tree. Kotori asks Kamui, "Are you dead"? Eventually help arrives and the parents rescue the children. Fuma congratulates Kamui for protecting Kotori. Fuma says, "Well done Kamui, you protected Kotori! I promise that if anything happens to you I will protect you, I promise"! (Episode 2 "A Nightmare", 2001).

The scene is significant as it indicates that Kamui has some supernatural abilities, it binds his figure as a protector to the symbolic aspect of the world navel and, lastly, it draws together the two central figures of Kamui's life, Kotori and Fuma. Campbell says, "the hero as the incarnation of God is himself the navel of the world, the umbilical point through which the energies of eternity break into time" (Campbell 1949; 41). This scene makes this symbolic point as Kamui grabs hold of both the tree, symbolic of the world navel, and Kotori's hand, in this instance a symbolic image of love and kinship. Even more pertinent is Kamui's determination. He tells her that if she can hold on to him then he will never let her go. In this accident several elements are revealed. First; Kamui has some superhuman characteristics, seeing that he is able to hold onto Kotori for so long. This ability to hold on, beyond his true physical capacity, is rooted in a deep care and concern for Kotori. Although Kamui does not die in this scene, the aspect of death is presented through Kotori's question, symbolically suggesting that he could hold on even beyond death. In this scene we can also see a foreshadowing of Kotori and Fuma's characters. Second, Kotori as the instigator that goaded Kamui to continue and she is the person who wants to return the bird to its home in the trees. The bird returning to the nest

is symbolic of supporting social engagement and maintaining society through the family unit. The imagery associated with Kotori in this scene, a bird and eggs, is commonly associated with fertility and mother-goddess imagery in world myth (Waida: 1987; Stein 1987), suggesting a relationship between Kotori and the goddess imagery in the series. Furthermore, the events in this scene bond Kamui and Fuma together through Fuma's pledge to always care for and protect Kamui. This provides an early indicator of Fuma's role as the protective father figure.

This flash back scene also lends insight into the gendered dynamic of the series. Kotori is not the passive figure in this scene. She is rebellious; she goads Kamui to climb higher in order to return the bird to the nest. Fuma is passive in that he only appears afterwards and then holds Kamui and makes a pledge to him. Furthermore, Fuma's character is responsible for guiding, protecting and teaching in the *Sempai/Kohai* relationship established between the two young boys. A *Sempai/Kohai* relationship is a common quasi-military age based hierarchy in Japan. The *Sempai* is an older student who the *Kohai*, the junior student, pays respect, obedience and subservience. In return the *Sempai* acts as a guide, protector and mentor to their *Kohai* (Sugimoto 1997: 123). Lastly, Kamui, shows a combination of both stereotypically gendered characteristics, he demonstrates active "masculine" characteristics in that he saves Kotori, yet passive, "feminine" characteristics in that he does so simply by holding on and waiting for help to arrive. Moreover, Kamui passes out while holding her hand and yet still holds on, which could be interpreted as a combination of both active [endurance] and passive [unconsciousness] behaviour. In the earliest moments of childhood, the elements and

factors of this cosmological play are already at hand, the nature of their characters is revealed in an accident that binds all three of them unequivocally together. This however, is only the first and slightest suggestion of the *call to adventure*. In this scene we see the symbolic significance of Kamui's power, the strength to hold on beyond "death"; however, in subsequent flashback scenes we also see that Kamui's power has a dangerous counterpoint. The following flashback scenes are not revealed until almost the end of the *departure* stage, but for the purposes of the understanding the structure of the narrative will be analyzed sequentially according to Campbell's model.

The next scene that demonstrates Kamui's supernatural abilities revolves around a blunder involving Kamui and a bully. In Episode 11 "Border" (2001), Fuma confronts Kamui about his aloof and distant behaviour. In this scene Fuma asks Kamui about the last several years of his life. This confrontation occurs because Fuma is having confusing dreams where he is fighting Kamui to the death. After their father's funeral, Kotori is sleeping and dreams of a confrontation that will occur between Fuma and Kamui. Fuma awakens her and she tells him of her dream. At the time he does not tell her he has been having similar dreams. As Fuma begins to ponder the significance of these dreams he looks out the window to find Kamui waiting in a circle of stones underneath a large tree. Fuma goes to speak with Kamui and Kamui begins to share the experiences of the last six years with Fuma.

After Fuma's and Kotori's mother Saya died, Kamui's mother decides that it is in Kamui's best interest to move away. They move and start a new life. Kamui enters a new school, far from the familiar home and friends he has known. On his first day of

school Kamui is stopped by two boys while walking home. The older boy is holding a metal bar. He looks at Kamui in disbelief and asks if he is truly as strong as the younger boy has told him. Rumour has it that Kamui bent iron bars at school. The older boy does not believe the rumour, even though the younger boy insists. So the older boy demands that Kamui bend the bar. Kamui demurs and says that he can not bend it because his mother told him not to and if he does then she will punish him. The older boy does not believe him and strikes Kamui with the bar; the younger boy asks the older boy to stop and the older boy hits him with the bar. Kamui then in turn tries to push the older boy but his efforts are futile and the older boy kicks him. The older boy then turns to hit Kamui with the bar again, at which point, Kamui responds in fear and uses his power to prevent the pipe from hitting him. Unfortunately, by Kamui using his psychic abilities to deflect the bar he accidentally hits the older boy in the head. The older boy cowers in fear and calls him a “monster” and runs away. Now that the older boy is gone, Kamui asks if the younger boy is okay, however, the younger boy also cowers in fear of Kamui and yells, “Don’t touch me!...I’m fine” (Episode 11 “Border”, 2001).

At this moment two things are suggested, one, that Kamui is once again different; he is dehumanized not only by the mean and cruel older boy, but even by the boy he hoped to protect. Kamui uses his power in self defense but causes violence to occur. To be clear the retaliation is based in fear and is redirected to the one who was acting both in a domineering and violent manner, very characteristic of the negative aspects of patriarchal masculinity. He does not outwardly act against the boy; however, the boy’s own violent behaviour is directed back towards himself in Kamui’s act of self defence.

The use of his power to protect is very futile and is only evoked through fear. Here we see what is evident in the blunder, that Kamui accidentally hurts someone by using his power in fear which is not justified in either his admission of his mother's warning or in the rejection by the younger boy he protected. Both boys have power and both boys can induce violence. This is a scene where Kamui begins to confront the consequences of power and how violence is a response to fear. What is indicated in this scene is that violence alienates us, even towards the people we attempt to protect.

The third and last element that marks the *call to adventure* is the appearance of a herald figure. Campbell says, "the herald or announcer of the adventure, therefore, is often dark, loathly, or terrifying, judged evil by the world" (1949: 53). This fearful and sometimes mysterious character marks the end of an old period and the beginning of a new one. As such the mysterious herald represents the unknown (Campbell 1949: 53). Campbell suggests that this moment of transfiguration or spiritual passage is equated to a dying and a rebirth, a moment in which the patterns of the previous life are at an end and a new stage begins. This stage for Kamui begins with the death of Kotori and Fuma's mother, Saya.

It is revealed in episode 11 "Border" (2001), that Saya died in place of Kamui's mother because Kamui was too young to survive on his own. Kamui's Aunt Tokiko explains in episode 11 "Border" (2001), "...Six years ago, the sword that was stolen was supposed to be born from my sister, Toru [Kamui's Mother], but you were still young and couldn't survive on your own just yet. So it was switched so that it would be born here at the temple from Saya, your mother, Fuma, on that day six years ago, the day the sword

was born from Saya, she died" (Episode 11 "Border", 2001). The first sword is switched by divine intervention from Kamui's Mother to Kotori and Fuma's mother, Saya. As we can see through several flash backs in the series, it's birth and her subsequent death is a violent and terrifying event for Kotori and Fuma, which haunts them into their adulthood. Kotori and Fuma's father, Kyogo, recalls the events of Saya's death in Episode 3 "A Pledge" (2001). As Campbell says this is a spiritual passage equated with dying and rebirth, therefore, this is symbolically expressed through the birth of the sword through her body but also in the sacrifice of her life. It is at this moment that Kamui's mother takes him away from their childhood home. His blissful time as a youth is at an end, marking a new time in which he feels alienated and unsure about himself or his place in the world. This event will mirror the birth of a second holy sword later in the series and another herald who guards the threshold to greater power. Saya's death acts as the dark and horrible herald figure in Campbell's model in that with the birth of the holy sword their young lives are torn apart.

The *call to adventure* stage is significant in Campbell's model as it gives us the preliminary indications of the hero's special qualities. Two significant elements are made evident about his special abilities. The first element has to do with his powers of endurance and his ability to protect the people he loves. As we can see from the tree event the hero is able to use his powers to protect the people he loves even beyond his own death. Also the hero's life is drastically changed through a sacrifice of a mother figure in the series, in bringing about the apocalypse life, death and sacrifice are intrinsically drawn together in the creation of the sword. Lastly, Kamui is presented with

the tempting and darker side of his power to use it towards violent ends in the confrontation with the bully. Next we will examine the section of Campbell's model titled the *refusal of the call of destiny*, where Kamui as a self involved young man attempts to deny the apocalypse but is thwarted by the powers of destiny.

Refusal of the Call

The next event described in Joseph Campbell's *departure* stage is the *refusal the call of destiny*. Sometimes the hero would rather not pay attention to the miraculous events around him. Sometimes he'd rather rationally and logically explain them away, as coincidence and circumstance. Sometimes the hero would rather not be a hero and would rather return to the normal, familiar, everyday life to which he is accustomed. However, according to Campbell the signs of destiny do not bend to the dictates of the young and defiant. Often his ordinary world will become unfruitful, or the signs come with an ever increasing force that cannot be denied nor dismissed (Campbell 1949: 56). Furthermore, walled in this former life, the hero loses the power to take action and instead becomes a victim to be saved. He creates more problems for himself; by his own hands his undoing is imminent as the tides of life overtake him whether or not he is prepared (Campbell 1949, 59). According to Campbell, "the refusal is essentially a refusal to give up what one takes to be one's own interest...the future is regarded, not in terms of an unremitting series of deaths and births, but as though one's present system of ideals, virtues, goals, and advantages were to be fixed and made secure" (Campbell 1949: 60). Campbell continues saying that, "if one is oneself one's god, then god himself, the will of god, the

power that would destroy one's egocentric system, becomes a monster" (Campbell 1949: 61). What Campbell describes here is a series of events where the hero's self involvement and egotistical behaviour is turned against him. Kamui's preliminary journey and arrival in Tokyo is characterized by his refusal to accept the call. The *refusal of the call* stage is seen in three different scenes, first; illustrating Campbell's pattern of the hero attempting to deny destiny, Kamui attempts to take the sword and flee Tokyo, second; illustrating Campbell's model wherein the hero ignores prophecies, Kamui's refusal to listen to the prophecy of a Buddhist Astrologer told to him by Sorata, and last and consequential to the series; illustrating Campbell's pattern of a predicament resulting from the hero's obstinate refusal of the call of destiny, the death of the Togakushi shrine guardian, Kotori and Fuma's father Kyogo, is killed when one of the dragons of earth comes to steal the holy sword. In regard to gender, this stage presents several symbolic images of masculinity which do battle for Kamui's attention; expresses the boundaries of the real world through the "threshold guardians" representative of parental figures in Campbell's model and incidentally by the parents in Kamui's life; and demonstrates the significance of choice, fate and feminist spirituality through the image of sacrificial motherhood. Our analysis will begin with Kamui's arrival in Tokyo.

When Kamui first arrives in Tokyo his plan is to take the holy sword, leave Tokyo, and deny the events of destiny by refusing to participate. In episode 1, "A Reunion" (2001), Kamui goes to the Togakushi shrine to retrieve the sword, yet finds the sword protected by Fuma and Kotori's father. As we will find out later, these events take place shortly after the death of Kamui's mother. Fuma and Kotori's father says to

Kamui, "So it's already begun since six years ago, I have kept and protected it ever since your mother Toru told me to. I know that it is truly yours, but I will not return it to you now...I am to make sure you are truly able to wield it? (Episode 1 "A Reunion", 2001). The shrine guardian has been protecting the sword since the time Kamui's mother left six years ago. Kamui says, "Don't be so selfish, I will take it and leave Tokyo immediately" (Episode 1 "A Reunion", 2001). Fuma and Kotori's father tells Kamui that he cannot allow Kamui to take the sword. Kamui says, "Oh well. Don't treat me like a child. I will not take orders from anyone. Why don't you just give back what's mine? Are you serious, are you saying you want to fight me? I'm warning you I won't hold back. Do you really want to die that bad?" (Episode 1 "A Reunion" 2001). Kamui easily dominates the father, using his psychic powers to move swiftly enough to grab hold of his wrist. The scene fades to black and the confrontation is not resolved. Later in the episode we learn the sword remains with the father, the father's arm has a bandage around his wrist where Kamui grabbed him, but no other signs of violence or the theft of the sword is evident.

More than evident in this scene is Kamui's descent into violent and brutal tendencies, very characteristic of the dragon of Earth. As the series progresses he seems to waver between two different personas: one, cold and indifferent, prone to violence and isolation, the other, quiet and passive, emotionally confused, struggling to protect those he loves. This has to do with Kamui's role in the apocalypse, namely, having the ability to choose between two possible futures, either to become the dragon of heaven or the dragon of earth. At the beginning of the series, he is very cold, violent and

indifferent. He rejects everyone he cares for, afraid that he may draw them into his struggle against destiny, the same way his mother found her death. Furthermore, anyone who should begin to press him on the matter is met with violent retribution by a young man who although strong has not yet learned to control the destructive aspects of his power. Yet the more he pushes himself away from these relationships the more he brings himself towards becoming the very thing he is fighting against. As mentioned in the previous chapter, men too can play a role in resisting the patriarchy. According to Schacht and Ewing (2004), they must first begin to realize how they are agents of patriarchy and consequently realize how their own lives are restricted by the patriarchal norms. Kamui must first discover how he is an agent of the patriarchy, as for example when he chooses to be cold and distant as a means to solve his problems. Accordingly, his choice to protect the people he cares for and his eventual decision to give up violence and embrace self-sacrifice symbolizes his realization that the norms and expectations of the patriarchal system within himself are the barriers to his success as the dragon of heaven. In the context of Campbell's monomyth, the hero, unable to put off his infantile ego and expectations, refuses the call of destiny. We will see in Episode 2 that Kamui does not listen to those who are trying to help him and misses an important message that Sorata, one of the seven seals, was sent to give him.

It is in episode 2 "A Nightmare" (2001), that Kamui is first approached by those who represent the dragons of heaven. Although not one of the seven seals, the young guardian of Princess Hinoto, Saiki, has the ability to control the power of the wind, he is also nephew of one of the seals, Aoki. He tells Kamui that he has been sent to observe

him and make sure he is the right person. Kamui takes this as a challenge and strikes out at him. Saiki, messenger of Hinoto, says, "Wait! Consider what would happen if you start a fight in a place like this! Stop it! Are you trying to get all these people involved?" Kamui's response is, "Why should I care?" (Episode 2 "A Nightmare", 2001). Kamui chases him until he can not run any longer and the young guardian is forced to attack him, dealing a formidable blow to the would-be saviour. Saiki questions Kamui's lack of control and the selfish extension of his powers. He says that the Kamui they are looking for could never act this way. This angers Kamui and he attacks harder till he has overpowered Saiki. Kamui wants to know who has been spying on him and why. Arashi, one of the seven seals, appears and prevents Kamui from hurting Saiki further. As she departs with the wounded Saiki, Kamui discovers that he is also wounded.

Kamui slowly limps home, passing by a basketball court where Fuma is playing late in the night. Fuma, hearing someone, asks who it is and is startled when he discovers it's Kamui. Fuma tries to help him but Kamui pushes him off. Fuma says this is unlike Kamui, that he must be up to something. Kamui agrees and admits he is up to something so it would be in Fuma's best interest to stay out of it. Kamui continues to limp along but Fuma follows behind on his bike. Meanwhile, back at Kamui's apartment Sorata is waiting to deliver an important message to Kamui.

Arisugawa Sorata is one of the seven seals, with the power to produce large balls of electricity. Sorata is also a Buddhist Monk from the Koyou monastery (Episode 3 "A Pledge" 2001). Sorata had been waiting for an opportunity to deliver an important message to Kamui; however, the preceding events with Saiki, Arashi and Fuma have

delayed him. As he wonders how to approach Kamui he notices a man standing on a nearby treetop. Both men want to speak with Kamui and recognize each other as participants in the apocalypse. During their battle they introduce themselves. Sorata says, "I'm just a violent pacifist. We shouldn't bother any innocent people...I am Arisugawa Sorata. As you can see, I am a playful and cute high school Junior" (Episode 2 "A Nightmare", 2001). His opponent is Kigai Yuto, a self described, "ordinary government official working in a local ward office". Both characters begin to do battle but both are laughing and not entirely taking it seriously. Sorata is surprised that Yuto is a government official, if anything he thinks he looks like "someone who would work in a bar...A gigalo-looking guy" (Episode 2 "A Nightmare", 2001). Yuto agrees and says he often has that impression on people. They continue to battle until the barrier is broken and Fuma enters. Both Sorata and Yuto are surprised that anyone would be able to enter the barrier. They decide to end this fight for now and Yuto allows Sorata to meet Kamui first. Sorata and Fuma meet at the door of the apartment and discover Kamui is injured.

One can see gendered elements arising in the conflict between Yuto and Sorata. Sorata describes himself as a cute high school junior, Sorata's character represents the impetuous young male, he thinks about pretty girls, shows exaggerated bravado, and is known for his inappropriate or misplaced humour. If nothing else despite his eventual destiny and what he represents for Kamui he could be any young Japanese male entering adolescence and is one of the seven seals alongside the dragon of heaven. Yuto on the other hand is older, a government official, but as Sorata, said he looks like a "gigalo." Yuto's character is often pragmatic in how he uses people or how he cares for them. His

element to call is water. Kanoe describes his character in episode 21 "Current" - "No strings attached. Just following the current" (2002). For Yuto everything is transient and superficial therefore he represents the dragon of earth. He represents consumerism at its best, high paying salary, inclined towards violent behaviour, sexually ambivalent in his exchanges with woman. He represents the alienating nature of contemporary society.

The next episode - "A Pledge" (2001) - picks up the next day where the previous episode left off. Sorata and Fuma tend to Kamui's wounds and awake to find him almost fully healed. Fuma must leave but tells Kamui that both he and Kotori are worried about him. Once Fuma has left Kamui turns to Sorata and aggressively demands to know who he is and why he is here. Sorata says, "Mt. Kouya is the head quarters of the Shingon Sector. Recently, because of the many tourists around, its mysterious aura faded away. But hidden within the divine mountain is an astrologist. A user of *Shukuyoudou*, an estoeric Buddhist astrology. And that old astrologist said to me recently, the star indicating Kamui's destiny has moved...I am to help Kamui by protecting him with my life. The old man also said, Kamui is returning to Tokyo. Death separated him from his only blood-relative; his destiny guided him to Tokyo. Well Kamui, is the reason you came back to Tokyo is because one of your relatives died?" Kamui gets upset and says, "You! Did you come here to seek death?" Sorata apologizes for bringing up such harsh memories but there is more he needs to tell him (Episode 3 "A Pledge", 2001). Kamui threatens Sorata, striking out with his power and sending him across the room in a violent display of psychic power. This prevents Sorata from revealing a pivotal piece of information, which is discovered too late during the climax of episode three, that the

sword guarded by the shrine guardian would be stolen.

Both Kamui and Sorata rush to the shrine but they are too late. They find Kotori and Fuma's father severely injured. If Kamui had listened to Sorata and the prophecy then he might have been able to prevent these events. As it is, because of his selfish denial of the call of adventure the hero has been undone. Campbell also says, "sometimes the predicament following an obstinate refusal of the call proves to be the occasion of a providential revelation of some unsuspected principle of release" (Campbell 1949: 64). This is evident later in the series when Kotori and Fuma's father dies from these injuries but before he dies he tells Fuma that he is Kamui's Gemini or double. Fuma does not fully comprehend what he means by this but before his father can explain he dies (Episode 8 "Gemini" 2001).

According to Campbell the hero who rejects the call of destiny is visited by figures that represent the parental guardians. The shrine guardian can be seen as one of these figures and his death a consequence of the hero's inability to give up his childish self interest. Another figure that symbolically represents these guardians is Kamui's mother. Accordingly, part of the reason why Kamui rejects the call to destiny is his inability to comprehend and deal with his mother's death. At the beginning of Episode 2 "A Pledge" (2001) this is made evident in a dream sequence where he is running through flames towards a woman in a burning house. At this point in our analysis we will discuss the significance of her role in Kamui's life. There are three important scenes in the episode eleven "Border" that describe what happened to Kamui before he came to Tokyo: The first, Kamui's mother explaining fate to him after the confrontation with the bully;

the second, Kamui using his powers to violently protect people; and third, the death of Kamui's mother.

The first scene of significance takes place in a flashback shortly after the confrontation with the bully. In this scene Kamui's mother will explain what she means by fate. There will also be several symbolic associations that will tie her imagery in with goddess imagery and will have relation to the meeting of the goddess stage to be discussed later in Campbell's monomyth. In this scene, Kamui is crying on the beach. His mother appears carrying a parasol. She asks why he is crying and he explains that he misses Kotori and Fuma. She explains that he can not see them just yet, she says "you have to become stronger, so that when I am gone, you will be strong enough to survive on your own" (Episode 11 "Border", 2001). He asks what she means, where is she going and begs her not to leave. She responds to this with a question and asks "if there was anybody he wants to protect? Even if he is unhappy is there anyone he would like to bring happiness"? He answers yes, he would like to protect Kotori and Fuma. She says, "that's right, then everything will be fine. You will not be led off of your path" (Episode 11 "Border", 2001). He says he wants her to be happy too. She stands, looking towards the water as the screen shows an image of her profile against a shimmering blue lake, she says, my fate has already been decided.

At this point in the episode his mother explains what she means by fate. She explains that fate is when your future has already been decided. She says, "My fate has already been decided". Kamui responds saying, "That doesn't make sense, nothing can possibly decide your future"! Toru says, "Maybe you are right, it might be possible for

you to change your future. Because you are Kamui, grow strong Kamui, so that you will be able to protect Kotori and Fuma. To protect the ones you love..." (Episode 11 "Border", 2001).

The next scene in these series of flash backs involves a fight that Kamui provokes with a gang of boys on motor cycles. The scene opens with several men riding on motorcycles holding metal bars as they race towards the silhouette of a man. As they get closer we see that it is Kamui, now several years older. The motor-cyclists are surprised to find him standing in the middle of the road and swerve to avoid him. Kamui doesn't move an inch. They ask him what his problem is and if he wants to die? Kamui asks them if they were the ones who beat up two young men standing behind him. The two young men cringe from the biker gang and are covered in bandages. They admit to it and ask him why it matters to him? Kamui says in a nonchalant manner, "Oh nothing, I just want to introduce myself". The biker gang decides to teach Kamui a lesson and starts speeding toward him. The image then fades to an image of a plane flying over head. Then we see the biker speed towards him and Kamui jumps and kicks the lead biker from his bike. They use a freeze frame technique showing the bikers falling away while moans of pain are heard. Horizontal lines are placed over their figures to allude to the quickness of movement. The next frame shows Kamui holding one by the neck and knocking down another while you can hear them cry in pain.

There is then a cut to a scene where Kamui is standing outside a large building while his mother is speaking with someone. This cuts to a scene where Kamui is talking to his mother. She says "Kamui, the incredible power that you have developed is yours

alone. And how you use that power is up to you. But I know that you know, that it shouldn't be used to start fights. Isn't that right...Kamui" (Episode 11 "Border", 2001)? The camera focuses in on her face while she stares forward as if now she doubts how he will use his power.

The last and most significant scene in this series of events is his mother's death. In this scene Kamui is walking home. He can see the sun setting on the ocean in the distance. Note the connection to earlier part of the episode on the beach. As Kamui approaches his home he sees the glow of fire in the distance and begins to run. As he gets closer he can see his mother burning in the fire. She is depicted amongst the flames and although Kamui's urgency indicates she is in danger she appears unharmed. In fact she is able to talk to him and in one shot holds up her fist in a gesture of empowerment. He reaches for her but a protective barrier prevents him from interfering and he is thrown to the ground. He calls out to her, asking why she's doing this. She says, "this is my fate, go back to Tokyo, Kamui your destiny awaits you, grow stronger, protect the ones you love. When the time comes for you to wield the sword and fight do not veer from your path!" (Episode 11 "Border", 2001). The scene fades to Kamui pounding at the dirt amongst the burnt wreckage, crying and calling "*Kasa! Kasa!*" - "Mother! Mother!".

There are several significant points made in these series of events. Obviously, as they are connected together in Kamui's recollection they make up the sum of his experiences. Kamui's mother acts as the first threshold guardian. She explains to him about destiny, she reveals to him that by protecting Kotori and Fuma he may actually be able to decide his own future. Last, it is her death which sends him to Tokyo and begins

the turn of events that will lead to the apocalypse.

Kamui's mother wants him to grow strong and protect the ones he loves. Kamui responds to this by protecting people by using violence, obviously something she did not intend. When Kamui is young and is primarily concerned with protecting people she has faith he will not waver from his path. When he uses violence she is concerned and her faith wavers in this. Where these events happen sequentially in the flashback and the following event is his mother's death one can assume there is a measure of guilt over her death. He does not fully comprehend what's going on but he feels that by her connection to him she has died. From Carol Ochs discussion we can see how motherhood can act as a context for spirituality. According to Ochs "Mothering teaches us about love: its physical-caring aspects, its knowing aspects, and its capacity to let go. It teaches us how to relate to our mistakes and to the mistakes of those to whom we are connected" (Ochs 1997:31). The experiences of motherhood such as protecting a child and mediating the child's environment can also act as a context for spirituality. Through this process of caring for another the self is changed. For as Ochs describes, motherhood involves a natural sacrifice of selfimportance in order to mediate the experiences of the infants budding sense of self (1997: 30). These aspects are self evident in the complex relationship between Kamui and his mother. We see the knowing and physical care aspects on the beach when she explains fate to Kamui, that it is when someone or something else controls one's destiny. Fate in this sense can be interpreted as the social forces of the patriarchal system. As a mother and a woman her fate is controlled within the realm of strict patriarchal norms. Kamui, however, can choose, this we can interpret

that he can find a path beyond the patriarchal violence that he is intrinsically a part of as a male, and the expectations the patriarchy has of men. Her mediation of his mistakes, her faith in him to remember to protect his loved ones and her eventual self-sacrifice all demonstrate (how women even in limiting patriarchal system are able to use self-sacrifice towards a positive end).

Also significant to these scenes are the use of goddess symbolism with sun and light imagery. In these scenes the animators use sun and light imagery in connection with goddess imagery. In the Japanese state religion of Shinto, the chief *kami* or divinity is the sun goddess Ameratarasu, from which the emperors of Japanese royal family are said to be descended. Clamp draws upon this image of the sun goddess in how they render Kamui's mother's character. In the scene on the beach Kamui's mother is carrying a parasol. The corners of the umbrella have designs that resemble half of a sun. As we will see later, this connects Kamui's mother to Kotori as she fully embodies the Mother/Goddess Archetype in the "*Meeting with the Goddess*" section of Campbell's monomyth. Last, her death amongst the flames could be considered an extension of the sun goddess imagery. Her final sacrifice becomes a model from which Kamui will discover a means to win the final apocalyptic battle; however, these are not things that Kamui can fully understand at this point. The final response to Kamui's refusal of destiny happens through his encounter with his aunt Magami Tokiko. It is through her body he witnesses the birth of the second sword and the undeniable truth of what is coming.

Campbell says, "The literature of psychoanalysis abounds in examples of such

desperate fixations. What they represent is an impotence to put off the infantile ego, with its sphere of emotional relationships and ideals. One is bound in by the walls of childhood; the father and mother stand as threshold guardians, and the timorous soul, fearful of punishment, fails to make passage through the door and come to birth in the world without" (Campbell 1949: 62). Both the image of his dying mother and the death of the Kotori and Fuma's father represent just such a parental threshold described in the *refusal of the call* of destiny. They are the ones who held back the circumstances of destiny till he is grown enough to fully deal with them, heralded by his mother's death but put into motion by Kyogo Monou's death. Ironically enough, it is because of Kamui's refusal to accept his destiny that the shrine guardian dies. If he had listened there may have been a way to alter it. Yet perhaps when speaking of destiny the lessons learned and consequence gained are all a matter of course for the journey, the denial being just as relevant as the call, both bringing the hero to his climatic journey into the unknown.

In episode 4 "A Sacrifice" (2001), Kamui is confronted by what Joseph Campbell describes as the herald. The herald is sometimes depicted in myth as a horrifying and monstrous incarnation of the destiny we refuse to accept. This role in her own way is played by Kamui's Aunt, his mother's younger sister, Magami Tokiko. At first she startles Kamui, directly suggesting to him that she looks like his mother. A fade between their two faces reveals their similarity in appearance. She reveals to him that she knows of the coming apocalypse and has more information for him. Tokiko, like Kamui's mother, Saya and Kyogo Monou, is aware of the pivotal points in the apocalypse. An

interesting point to be made about the analysis of the series is that all the adult or parental figures in the story seem to know more than Kamui, even if not exactly all of what is happening. The means by which the information is known to them is never revealed. Instead they are the bearer of knowledge, yet cannot do anything about the situation. The message conveyed is that although the previous generation knows the issues, it is not something for them to confront or decide. The future of the world lies solely on the young people. This is further reflected by the knowledge that several of the seals and angels have, some are older and therefore have knowledge they can impart on their younger friends but are unable to change or do anything about it.

In this scene Tokiko, Sorata and Kamui get in Tokiko's car and go for a drive. Tokiko asks Kamui if he knew his mother's maiden name was Magami. He says no, she is surprised and guesses that she never got a chance to tell him that much before she died. Tokiko explains that her death is the very reason she is here, at this point she pulls off to the side of the road. She says she knows Kamui's mother died surrounded by flames, sacrificing her life. Kamui's immediate response is to ask whether or not it was suicide. Tokiko explains that it was not suicide as such; she explains that Kamui's mother switched places with someone else, a common practice for people in her family. It is at this point that Sorata realizes why the name Magami is significant. He says, "Shin" as in truth, and "Kami" as in God. (That traditionally the Magami families act as sacrificial doubles). He explains to Kamui that it is an ancient practice in which dolls would take on all your bad luck and misfortunes of their doubles. Sacrificial doubles are living incarnations of those dolls. They exist as doubles for people of high social status or those

in political families. He continues to explain that the form of the doubles is generally kept secret, but that in the past it was rumoured that half the former prime ministers had doubles. Kamui, startled by this revelation asks for whom had she been sacrificed? Magami explains that she moved out in high school and said that "she will bear the child of a man, and that the child will hold the key to the future of this world" (Episode 5 "A Destiny" 2001). She continues to explain her sacrifice as Kamui looks onward in shock, "she took on all of your misfortunes that may have befallen you by becoming your double" (Episode 5 "A Destiny", 2001). Kamui says that this is stupid. Tokiko says yes, understandable, but you still don't know who you really are yet.

Although Kamui doesn't believe her, she says there is yet one more thing she needs to reveal to him concerning the holy sword. She says she does not know where it is, and in fact it will not find its way to him any time soon, for there is another sword that is destined to be his. Sorata says this is similar to the astrologers prophecy, that the holy sword will be stolen but that it will have changed forms when it returns to Kamui. When he asks where it is, she explains that it does not yet exist in this world. Kamui, overwhelmed by the information as he reflects on her story, says that its full of holes and impossible to believe. Tokiko, as bearer of the news, is very representative of the herald figure. Yet even though her news is troubling, it will not be until the eleventh episode that she will dawn her full aspect of the terrifying monstrous herald, when her body is horribly torn apart to give birth to the second sword, setting destiny into motion. We will continue this discussion of her role as herald in the following section on passing the threshold, for it is the events between her death and Kotori's that will determine the rest

of the series.

In episode 11 entitled "Border" (2001), Kamui relays to Fuma the details of his life: the past several years, his pain at leaving, the loneliness, his new found psychic powers, his mother's death, and his arrival in Tokyo. He explains to Fuma this is why he didn't want them involved for he fears that they would get hurt if they were. Fuma understands, embraces Kamui and reassures him that if there is anything he can do both Fuma and Kotori will be there for him, that the promise they made as children was still valid. It is at this point that Kamui does surpass a threshold, and allows someone to protect and care for him. However, as they embrace Kamui hears someone inside the temple. They investigate and are attacked by several dark figures in suits. Kamui defeats them to find Tokiko wounded on the floor. She explains, "I told you before that there would be another sword for you to retrieve that hadn't existed yet. It will now be born here from my body. On a full moon. It was the same way six years ago. The sword that was stolen was supposed to be born from my sister, Toru" (Episode 11 "Border", 2001). The same way as it was when Fuma's mother Saya had died, giving birth to the first sword.

She closes her eyes and as her body rises in the air. Her clothing burst into shreds around her, her hands cover her breast and groin curving around her stomach. She says, "You will believe me this time, right? My sister's death, Saya's death, everything is fate. It is the same with me. This is my fate, this sword..." (Episode 11 "Border", 2001). As she finishes speaking, a light consumes her body, blood covers the room, and the holy sword appears in the middle of the room while green orbs of light dissipate. The episode

ends with Kamui and Fuma standing framed by a golden sun symbol of Amaterasu designed into the hilt of the sword.

In this sequence of events we have a gender relevant context, where the image of the sacrificial mother and the unalterable chain of destiny are bound together. Specifically, Toru, Saya and Tokiko are all examples of sacrificial motherhood, furthermore, this symbol is connected with the concept of fate. They cannot prevent their own deaths but they can see to it that their deaths have meaning. By their sacrifice they give Kamui the opportunity to change the future. As well the act of birth and consequently motherhood allows for the creation of both holy swords. From a feminist perspective this is indicative of the powerful symbol of motherhood and sacrifice in Japanese society. However, it provides an innovative source of empowerment in that they give up their lives in hope that Kamui may be able to change the future and protect human society. Hence the sacrifice is not a passive event. They have no choice in the circumstances and roles of destiny, but the purpose and intent that defines them is more than that of a victim. They embody the power of sacrifice when done to protect those you love. Tokiko, juxtaposed to Saya and Toru, and Kotori and Fuma's father, Kyogo Monou act as guardians on the threshold to greater power.

To recap, the *Refusal of the Call* stage of Campbell's journey served to demonstrate Kamui's resistance to the valorized norms and behaviour of patriarchal masculinity. Furthermore, it demonstrated how his resistance to change, and propensity for violence was born out of pain and fear, similar to his confrontation with the bully in the previous section. It demonstrated several significant examples of masculinity in Yuto

and Sorata's characters. These symbolic images battle each other as opposing examples of masculinity for Kamui. As well this section demonstrated Clamp's use of parental guardians to express the boundaries, expectations and limitations of life within the patriarchal order. Despite his resistance, Kamui is unable to refuse them nor the harsh realities they represent. It touched upon the meaning of fate, the limitations of choice in regard to destiny and the power of self-sacrifice contextualized through both goddess and mother imagery thereby demonstrating some of the early and significant feminist elements of the text. The next stage will return to the theme of motherhood as a guide for the hero in the supernatural aid she offers him.

Supernatural Aid

The next stage that Campbell describes is the extension of supernatural aid to the hero, a "protective figure (often an old crone or old man) who provides the adventurer with amulets against the dragon forces he is about to pass" (Campbell 1949: 69). Campbell describes these figures in both masculine and feminine forms. The feminine figure Campbell describes as the protective power of the cosmic mother and destiny, a continuation of the reassurance associated with the bliss of the womb, whose amulets and charms aid the hero in his journey (Campbell 1949: 71-72). Similarly, this guide can take the form of a masculine figure, Campbell says, "the higher mythologies develop the role in the great figure of the guide, the teacher, the ferryman" (Campbell 1949: 72). He continues, both "protective and dangerous, motherly and fatherly at the same time, this supernatural principle of guardianship and direction unites in itself all the ambiguities of

the unconscious - thus signifying the support of our conscious personality by that other, larger system, but also the inscrutability of the guide that we are following, to the peril of all our rational ends" (Campbell 1949: 73). Campbell, furthermore, says that the call to adventure was in the first place the announcement of this "initatory priest" (1949: 73). As set out by Campbell the feminine aspects of the guide are remote and depersonalized, while the father figure has much more of a dynamic role to play in the hero's journey. In X/1999 Kamui's guides and protectors are various, and do not simply conform to Joseph Campbell's monomythic structure. These guides could be seen as the seven seals that surround and affect Kamui's decision-making process, however, the most dominant figure of them all is the seer and Princess Hinoto.

The seven seals act as guides on Kamui's journey. Sorata is a brotherly guide and eventual example of self-sacrifice. Subaru, the *Onmyou* adept, is also another example, their commiseration over losing a loved one and having to kill someone they love for the common good ties them together through their shared experiences. Arashi embodies the inability to be open to love and care, the grief and guilt of someone dying to protect them, and feeling the pressure to use violence as the only means to protect. Karen acts a model for sacrifice, that although you yourself might die, our lives have significance and endurance if they are spent protecting the people they love. Aoki, the father figure, leaves his wife and children to spare them from being attacked by the dragons of earth, similar to Kamui's initial rejection of Fuma and Kotori. His inability to protect Karen as she makes the ultimate sacrifice to protect him mirrors the murder of Kotori by Fuma when Kamui was left helpless to watch. Finally, and most significant, the young girl

Yuzuriha acts as the absolute model of endurance in the face of suffering, when all ability to defend herself have been torn away, when the one she loves the most has died to protect her, she refuses to give in to despair and rejuvenates her powers to protect herself and the memory of those loved ones and their sacrifice. Each of the seals consequently offers something to Kamui's perspective and his inevitable confrontation at the end of the series. In this manner, his guides, the seven seals, are mirrors of the final decision. In a way they each are making the same decision, by example and practice. However, for the purposes of this discussion the role of the seven seals as supernatural guides will be discussed in relation to Kamui's trials as each holds a lesson that is important to Kamui's final revelation and *apotheosis*.

Despite the significant role the seven seals represent, it is important to point out that the narrative departs from some of the stereotypical rendering of the guide or the character representing supernatural aid. Campbell suggests that the feminine guide usually represents the security of the womb, while in the "higher mythologies" the male version is an assimilation of both masculine and feminine principles. This is reversed in the X/1999 narrative. A male guide presents himself at the beginning of episode 12 "Alternative" (2001), he acts as a guide to lead Kamui to the heart of divine protection, an institution designed by Hinoto for the apocalypse. He is never given a name, nor does his role offer much more than a guide from point A to point B, where other more significant players reveal the pivotal and initiatory information of the journey. He is a representative of Clamp company but otherwise there is not much else to be said about his character. In this present section, Hinoto's role will be our major focus.

In X/1999, it is Princess Hinoto, who represents the dynamic example of what Campbell describes as the masculine guide in traditional myth. Hinoto represents the modernized feminine and the layers, dichotomies, and pluralities that exist in characterizing it. In Episode 5 "A Destiny" Sorata describes Hinoto as "the princess dream-gazer who controls the Japanese politics in the shadows" (2001). Princess Hinoto's body is paralyzed. She is unable to see, hear, talk, or walk; she is, however, a powerful psychic who is able to provide "answers from within the heart if you speak normally to her" (Episode 5 - A Destiny). Although she looks like a young girl, she is in fact very old, although her exact age is never revealed. After the death of Kotori and Fuma's father, Kamui approaches Hinoto to learn more of the apocalypse.

First he confronts her for spying on him, and demands that she explain his role in the apocalypse. Hinoto offers her hand to him which he promptly takes. In a splash of color and light the scene fades away and Hinoto shows Kamui a vision of the earth coming closer and closer until they are just above Tokyo. Hinoto explains,

Tokyo is a wedge that holds the earth together. There exists a variety of *Kekkai*. In the center of Koko in order to protect Tokyo, there is a route that is drawn in the shape of a pentagram that symbolizes the thread of *Kekkai*. The Yamato line, in Shinjuku, there is a high rise building that contains an enormous *Kekkai* of a red army. And that is where society holds the unsettled foundation. This power of *Kekkai* is called the dragon of heaven. And then this is the dragon of the underworld. It shatters the *Kekkai* and has the power to destroy the world. The guides of this power are called the seven angels. And those who rival them, are the dragon of heaven and the seven seals who are the only ones who can protect us. The dragon of heaven and the seven seals are to fight. That is the battle for the outcome of the end of the world. If the dragon of heaven were to be defeated by the dragon of the underworld, then the world will be destroyed. This is the vision of the future that I saw. Kamui you are capable of changing this future. With the help of the seven seals, you can save this world (Episode 5 "A Destiny", 2001).

At this point she shows Kamui an image of the world utterly destroyed. She explains that he is capable of changing this future with the help of the seven seals.

She continues by explaining that when he was a child his mother left Tokyo with him and waited for him to grow up. She sacrificed herself so that in the future, a sin which was intended for him would be taken away. She says she understands his pain but that he must understand that his mother did not die in vain. Later in the series, we discover that had Kamui chosen to become the dragon of earth he would have killed Kotori. Instead, he has chosen to suffer and watch her die rather than become the implement of her death. It can be inferred that his mother died as a means to prevent him from becoming the dragon of earth and having to kill Kotori. Her death inspires him to protect the people he loves and consequently inspires him to become the dragon of heaven.

As Hinoto continues the image fades to darkness, giant gears move slowly above them while an elaborate divine spell glows in bright blue writing on the floor. She says, that his mother's intent was revealed in her choice of a name. She says that Kamui means "The person who takes the place of the gods with their strength and power. It means you carry the power and the will of the gods in order to save the world" (Episode 5 "A Destiny", 2001). As she finishes explaining this to Kamui, Kanoe, Hinoto's sister and guide to the dragon of earth enters her dreamscape. Kanoe says, although she doesn't believe her sister would mislead anyone, she is still unsure of Kamui's future. This is but a reflection of a future Hinoto wants you to see. The name Kamui also means "the will of

the gods to hunt" (Episode 5 "A Destiny", 2001) and, therefore, Kamui has a choice, two futures ahead of him. Hinoto begins to cover her ears as if not wanting to hear. There is another dream, one that Kanoe offers to show Kamui. At this point Hinoto intervenes as she yells Kanoe's name and shatters the dreamscape. When Kamui asks why she interrupted the conversation, she turns away, and he grabs her chin, trying to force an answer from her. She explains that he is indeed Kamui and therefore it is his choice, for the world to continue or for it to end.

The role that Hinoto plays in Kamui's journey is a far more significant development of the feminine guide, she offers more than just charms of protection and her guidance. In fact we discover through the course of the narrative that she has been possessed by a demon and this betrayal will strike at the heart of Kamui's journey (Episode 22 "Betrayal", 2002). As with the seven seals so too does Hinoto's decision press her into the depths of the apocalyptic series of events.

As a seer and Shinto Princess, Hinoto is open to the possibility of demonic possession as has been documented in the Shinto tradition. The demon is personified as her ambitions and desires. The demon takes the form of Hinoto in her dreamscape, we can see the real Hinoto trapped in the reflection cowering beneath her. The demon says, "You will be the one who will help my wish come true. So that I may continue to live as the dream-gazer" and later in the episode the demon says, "the dragon of heaven will die. The future will be as the dream has shown. I will continue to be the dream-gazer. The future, there can only be one future!" (Episode 22 "Betrayal", 2002). The demon plays off her pride in being the dream-gazer, whose visions were always correct, and that she

would only continue to live up to this reputation by being correct, even up to the end of the world, even though it went against her very desire to protect this world. Accordingly, as the characters discover later in the series, her charms appear as the violent, darkly dressed men, who attack the seven seals or prevent them from helping their comrades (Episode 22 "Betrayal", 2002). As Campbell describes, "protective and dangerous, motherly and fatherly at the same time, this supernatural principle of guardianship and direction unites in itself all the ambiguities of the unconscious - thus signifying the support of our conscious personality by that other, larger system, but also the inscrutability of the guide that we are following, to the peril of all our rational ends" (Campbell 1949: 73). Her associations as a seer who can see the future by reading dreams further associates her with the unconscious mind.

The abyss of dreams and the soul is often represented in the series as water. Hinoto often sits atop a mirror like water surface in the dreamscape, in which the white feathers associated with their destiny often fall and ripple away. Similarly, when Kamui retreats into his unconsciousness, or when Kotori eventually descends into her unconscious, both are characteristic of drowning and entering another world. It is this same imagery of water that surrounds Hinoto. As such Hinoto represents both the preserving life energy and the destroying energy. In much the same way Kamui must resolve the forces of aggression and preservation that take place within him. The finer points of her betrayal I will discuss as apart of the trials in the initiation section later to come in the series.

For Kamui, Hinoto is the initiatory "priest" in his ascension to the dragon of

heaven. Even though she ultimately betrays him it is through her actions that he learns by direct example how self-sacrifice can change the future. To begin Hinoto has a classic association with the “charms or amulets”, the wards of protection as Campbell describes them. Hinoto’s divine spell and charms are just such intervening aspects of myth. Furthermore, she reveals to Kamui his destiny and his choice. It is also Hinoto who built the institution that according to divine planning can bind the sword that Kamui will bear in the final conflict, the heart of divine protection. Hinoto sees that Kamui is unable to fully awaken as the dragon of heaven, so she seals the sword to delay the end of the apocalypse. By binding one sword she is able to bind its twin. The sword is comparable to the protective amulet. Yet the charms and amulets of Hinoto serve to undo Kamui as we learn that Hinoto has been possessed all this time by a demon, using her dream of the future to direct the seven seals to their deaths.

In a feminist spiritual context we see a problematization of patriarchal characteristics within society and how they affect women in regard to their own identity. On one hand Hinoto draws upon feminist traits that the world can be saved through human wisdom. It is her wish for the world to continue. Yet the concepts of patriarchal aggression, pride, competition and violence corrupt her. The demon plays upon this aspect of her identity. The demons she creates are men in black business suits. One could interpret this in either one of two ways, as them representative of either government powers or business associates. One will also note these figures are entirely male. The message connotated in the image is of a male dominated aggressive culture that supports a competitive and individual patriarchy. Most pertinent to this discussion,

patriarchal society is not solely contextualized around masculinity, moreover, modern women feel the pull of patriarchal valorized masculinity.

The Crossing of the Threshold

As in many myths, there comes a point where the hero must pass through the threshold, which may be guarded by a "threshold guardian", "the entrance to the zone of magnified power" as Campbell put it (1949: 77). According to Campbell this threshold is bound in four directions, up and down, representing the hero's present world (1949: 77). Beyond these borders lie the unknown, "just as beyond the parental watch is danger to the infant and beyond the protection of his society danger to the member of the tribe" (Campbell 1949: 77). These parental guardians were alluded to earlier in the model and were represented by the characters Saya, Toru, Tokiko, Kyogo. Through them Kamui learned of realities of life beyond childhood. The true threshold for Kamui is his decision to either become the dragon of heaven or the dragon of earth, and once indeed he makes this decision the unfolding of trials and events that have been foreseen for him begins. As Campbell says, "The pairs of opposites (being and not being, life and death, beauty and ugliness, good and evil, and all the other polarities that bind the faculties to hope and fear, and link the organs of action to deeds of defense and acquisition) are the clashing rocks that crush the traveler, but between which the hero always passes" (Campbell 1949: 89). This *crossing of the threshold* begins in Episode 12 "Alternative" (2001).

Episode 12 "Alternative" (2001) begins as a single feather falls and lands on a pool of water, sending ripples outward. Kotori is awoken, leaves her bed and calls out

her brother's name as she begins to look for him. As she makes her way towards the shrine where Fuma, Kamui and the holy sword are, a voice calls out her name telling her, "Don't go, you will know, when the time for the alternative will come, you will know" (Episode 12 "Alternative", 2001). She continues forward, slowly opening the door and walking in, her feet stepping in an extensive pool of blood which now fills the room. At first she looks like she does not understand what the blood is, looking at her hands, saying that there was so much blood, "her mother's blood" (Episode "Alternative", 2001). She begins to remember the death of her mother. Fuma holds her and tries to cover her eyes to no avail; she pushes past him trying to touch the sword. Kamui tries desperately to prevent her but once again to no avail as her eyes glaze over in horror, screaming the word "no" and blindly reaching towards the sword. Feathers overlay the scene, everyone except Kotori, Kamui, the blood and the sword disappear as a voice begins to say "There is only one future, there can be only one future. And no one can change it. It can't be changed" (Episode "Alternative", 2001). The scene fades out as a helicopter with military personnel approaches. A middle aged man enters saying that they are indeed too late. Kamui threatens the man. The strange figure explains that he is the chief director of the CLAMP institution and has arrived on the request of Kamui's aunt who has directed him to seal the sword until the time it is needed. Begrudgingly Kamui allows him to take Kamui, Fuma and Kotori back to the institution. On the way Kamui blames himself, that if he had never been there this would never have happened to Kotori. The scene changes to show a panoramic view of their destination, the institute known as the heart of divine protection, a complex of buildings whose lights form a five

pointed star pattern within a circle. The heart of divine protection could be taken to represent the five elements, whose cardinal associations are consistent with Joseph Campbell's description of the threshold enfolding the directions of the world while the dragons of heaven and earth binding his sphere of knowledge both up and down. As alluded to earlier in this section on the hero's departure, the *crossing of the threshold* has its preliminary beginning as the second holy sword comes into existence.

As they land the screen fades to an image of Kotori slowly sinking in a vast body of water. Her arms outstretched. The screen fades to black again and Kotori enters a strange world filled with horizontal and vertical panels. In the centre there is a bed, with wires connected to it, curtains drawn, hiding the occupant's identity. The person in the bed beckons to her. He explains that he's a person who can travel in dreams and that she is inside her dreams. Kakyō says, "You are inside your dream and it is a dream from which you will never wake up. It's because you've refused to wake up from your dream. You have done so for you knew what is to happen soon. You have done it of your own will. At that time when you saw the sword being born for the second time. You realized it, that the future is now close at hand" (Episode 12 "Alternative", 2001). He continues, "You have been linked to the battle of the apocalypse like myself. Both of us know what will happen from here on. With your beloved brother...and Kamui's future. Which is why for that purpose you sacrificed yourself. For only this one wish..." (Episode 12 "Alternative", 2001).

As Kotori waits for the end in Kakyō's dreamscape, the director of the Clamp institute takes Kamui upstairs and explains that Tokiko left a message for Kamui in a

short video. Tokiko reveals to him that the time of the alternative is here, that there is no time left to decide, she says,

Will you become the dragon of heaven and side with the seals, or the dragon of earth and side with the angels? Once that is decided the destiny of the earth will change drastically. Become the dragon of heaven and accept the fate you have now or become the dragon of earth and change that fate. If you accept now, humans will continue to shower the earth with filth and through human wisdom, you will avoid the breakdown of the world and it's destruction of earth. If you change then the *Kekkai* will be no more, civilization will collapse but earth will restore itself in time. Will you accept or change, Kamui, you must decide your future, your own future (Episode 12 "Alternative", 2001).

As Tokiko describes his alternatives, several significant images are presented

corresponding with her description of Kamui's choice: the emblem of the dragon of heaven, the emblem of the dragon of earth, and the resulting consequences of his decisions.

In the first image, there are seven cloaked figures standing around a green orb of light, in the back ground seven green dragons intertwine in concentric pattern with a circle in the centre. This is representative of the seven seals and the dragon of heaven, along the base there are two dragons facing outwards but the rest face inwards. One of the figures is holding up a sword, the blade facing downwards. In the second image, representing the dragon of earth, seven red dragons intertwine each other but are all facing outwards. Instead of a circle in the centre the body of the main dragon takes up most of the image. In front of the emblem there are seven dragons yet instead of forming a circle they are separate, there is no holy sword in the image yet the main figure is holding something very much like a scythe. The figures also have angelic wings where the former did not. This creates an interesting and striking iconography of the dragons of

heaven and earth. The former emblem is turned inwards toward the glowing light and holding the sword upwards suggesting more communal aspects, compared to the aggressive or isolated imagery associated with the dragon of Earth. The dragon of earth's imagery if anything represents isolation, even someone blocking a path, and possibly even death, considering the association with the scythe. One image clearly demonstrates a feeling of comradery towards some essential good, while the other represents isolation and death. The next two images describe the possible outcomes for the end of the world. In the first, shown while she describes his present future as dragon of heaven, shows the future that Hinoto had shown Kamui earlier in the series. As Tokiko tells us, humans will continue to shower the world in filth yet through human wisdom the world can be saved. As such the future that Hinoto shows Kamui isn't the future if the dragons of earth destroy the world, but the future that will come about if the world is saved and humans eventually destroy the earth, through war and pollution. Accordingly, "good" and "evil" are not black and white in the series. If human civilization survives what will it cost humanity and the earth? This premonition of the future comes with a warning for humanity. The second image shows what would happen to the earth if he were to choose the dragon of earth. In the second image, there are several buildings that have been destroyed, yet the waters have risen, the plants have grown over them, and although next to vacant of human life, the earth is healthy and strong. This places the second image into context in that if he chooses the dragon of earth, the *Kekkai* will disappear, civilization will be destroyed, however the world will grow and be saved. Therefore, the cosmological question presented within Kamui's decision is whether human wisdom can

prevent human cruelty from destroying the Earth, or whether the only ethical alternative is for some other benevolent power to step in and save the earth from the corruption of humanity. Thus the lines between good and evil are not clearly cut in a dualistic pattern. In either way both sides can be seen as “good” yet employing their own means for the salvation of either humanity or the earth. The former associated with wisdom and community, the other with death and the revival of nature. These associated images further develop the argument for community associated with the emblem of the dragon of heaven and the notion of death and guardianship with the dragon of earth. Accept or change?

As Kamui returns to the room in which Fuma is watching over Kotori he contemplates his situation. He remembers as a child his mother telling him what fate was, that maybe it would be possible for him to change his future, he remembers his mother telling him to grow strong to protect the ones he loves. Kamui admits he doesn't know how the world should be and it does not matter. He remembers the promise that Fuma made him as a child to always protect him, the ambition of Kotori to become a instructor and take up the task of creating a single dye that could take twenty years. We hear his thoughts in a voice over saying, "I don't know how the world should be, the dragon of heaven or the dragon of earth, it doesn't matter to me. I just want Kotori and Fuma to find happiness. I want to protect their foundation of happiness" (Episode 12 “Alternative”, 2001). As he thinks this he reaches for the door handle of the room and opens it. Not so ironically, Kamui finally decides, parallel with turning the handle and entering the room, it ultimately becomes the very threshold from which the hero must

cross over. However, according to Campbell's model, even "Though the terrors will recede before a genuine psychological readiness, the overbold adventurer beyond his depth may be shamelessly undone" (Campbell 1949: 83-84). Indeed this is what happens to Kamui only moments after accepting the role he has chosen for himself. These events lead up to Campbell's next section regarding *the belly of the whale*. After the traumatic events to come Kamui retreats into his unconsciousness as a means to cope.

The Belly of the Whale

Joseph Campbell says that the passage of the threshold in myth leads to a form self annihilation, a turning inwards to be reborn, which he dubs *the belly of the whale* (Campbell 1949: 91). According to Joseph Campbell, "The idea that the passage of the magical threshold is a transit into a sphere of rebirth is symbolized in the world wide womb image of the belly of the whale. The hero, instead of conquering or conciliating the power of the threshold, is swallowed into the unknown, and would appear to have died" (Campbell 1949: 90). This scenario is self evident in X/1999 after Kamui passes the threshold described in the previous section. Once Kamui accepts his role as the dragon of heaven, Fuma awakens as his counterpoint, the dragon of earth, killing his own sister Kotori and causing Kamui to pull away from the world by entering a deep coma.

The scene begins as Kamui returns to Kotori's room. Fuma turns to him and acknowledges that finally he has decided his fate. He has chosen to accept the role as defender of the human race rather than change and bring about its destruction. Kamui has chosen to be the dragon of heaven, in which case, Fuma will become the dragon of

earth, all of which he reveals to Kamui. His voice is hard and so unlike the gentle and protecting Fuma of his childhood. Fuma has become the ogre-father image as described by Campbell, the once loving figure becoming the ogre who the hero must pass to attain his true power. As Fuma says before grasping the sword from Kamui and throwing him across the room, “two swords, two futures, I am your Gemini, I am the other Kamui” (Episode 12 “Alternative”, 2001). Fuma then proceeds to take Kotori’s body with sword in hand and head for roof of the institution. Kamui, now unconscious, offers no resistance. Upon the roof, the dragon of earth uses his powers to destroy his surroundings, re-forming them to suit his needs. Kamui awakes to find Kotori missing and follows them to the roof. There she is bound to pieces of the building with wires forming the shape of the cross. A large full moon hangs in the background.

The image of a cross in Japanese *anime* is not necessarily Christian in context nor does it necessarily have anything to do with the sacrificial meaning it has in Christianity (Drazen 2003: 149-151). However, from looking at the contextual material in the series it is apparent that the authors are aware of Christian culture and religious imagery. The narrative then suggests an allegoric comparison with the theme of religious sacrifice by using the cross imagery. To begin, Christian material is used throughout the series not only in symbolic form but also in literal and philosophical context. One such example is Karen Kasumi’s character, she wears a cross pendent and as will be seen subsequently, her character goes through ritualistic Christian behaviour. Characteristics such as her name, Karen, the only instance of a non Japanese name within the series, and also her red hair mark her as distinct amongst the characters. In Episode 19 “Inferno” (2001), she

goes to a church, prays in front of a large cross, speaks to a man who dressed almost entirely in black and wears a white collar. Karen even goes as far as quoting the Christian Book of Revelations in the same episode. Furthermore, in an interview with the creators of Clamp they do admit that the meaning of the name X indeed has Christian significance as the crucifixion of Christ (Asuka: 1993). The use of the X is also a reference to another symbolic connotation, being an indefinable variable or an unknown (Asuka: 1993). In this instance it is important to point out the relevance of the image and what could be ascertained by a Japanese audience in doing so.

It can be argued that crosses in Japan merely represent suffering, seeing that crucifixion is indeed an excruciating manner of execution. However, it was already revealed earlier in the episode that her death, even though committed by another, was a part of her destiny and done so by her own will. Furthermore, the point of her death was as a sacrifice for a greater good. In episode twelve "Alternative" (2001), Kakyō the dragon of earth's dream-gazer says to her as she enters the dreamscape, "You are in your dream and it is a dream you will never wake up from. It's because you've refused to wake up from your dream. You have done so for you knew what is to happen soon. You have done it for your own will...we are both linked to the apocalypse, and this is why you have sacrificed yourself, for only this one wish..." (Episode 12 "Alternative", 2001). He continues that when she saw the birth of the second sword she knew the future that she had foreseen was at hand. For all of the above reasons the imagery presented is not merely about suffering, but a further extrapolation of her character as a passive yet self-sacrificial victim. In this instance the authors of X/1999 are re-contextualising the image,

drawing on its predominant meaning of suffering and self-sacrifice, yet not necessarily carrying the dogmatic and historical associations that could be carried with such an image in a Christian context. It is not proselytizing Christianity as much as it is drawing an allegoric comparison between the role that Kotori plays in relation to the Christ figure in Christianity. In the mythologies and gospels of the Christian tradition, Christ died so that humanity would not suffer for its sins and would attain eternal life. Similarly, Kotori knew that her sacrifice would play an important role in the coming apocalypse and in the attainment of eternal life for all. Kotori becomes a pivotal character in Kamui's journey, both by the events which spur Kamui forward but also as a powerful example of self-sacrifice. Furthermore, what imagery can be gleamed from this scene? The full moon behind the cross imagery is not relevant in Christianity, but has been a common symbol for femininity or motherhood in myth. What we have then is a compound symbol of both the cross and the full moon to signify that although Kotori is not a mother she stands for the same image of sacrificial motherhood or femininity as found throughout the series.

Before Kamui is able to do anything to save Kotori, wires spring up and bind him to a slab of concrete. The dragon of earth arises out of nowhere stabbing Kamui in the hand, pinning him to the rock. Kamui screams. Fuma comments, "such a nice voice...Kamui". Fuma explains, "The world wants change. It is the change the humans want to prevent. And for that purpose, I will become the dragon of earth and destroy everything that is the dragon of heaven. I will eliminate the filth of the Earth. This is our fate" (Episode 12 "Alternative", 2001). At this point the sexual innuendo increases as Fuma begins to lick the blood that is trickling down Kamui's neck in an almost intimate

gesture. This is consistent with the description of this stage of Campbell's model.

According to Campbell, "The regions of the unknown are free field for the projection of unconscious content. Incestuous libido and patricidal destrudo are thence reflected back against the individual and his society in forms suggesting threats of violence and fancied dangerous delight" (Campbell 1949: 79). In this scene you can see the gendered dynamic that exists between Kamui and Fuma, Fuma is obviously the dominating aggressive force. He has bound Kamui and his body is twice the height and breadth of Kamui. He goes as far as sexually dominating him, licking the blood from Kamui neck. In this image there is a sexual dynamic between the two friends where the dragon of earth embodies many of the dynamics of sex, dominance and power, while Kamui is unable to do anything to withstand him. Accordingly, Fuma turns towards Kotori with the sword poised and strikes her in the heart as Kamui watches. Fuma pulls the sword from her but Kakyo the dreamer holds on to the sword and possesses her body. He says that this girl does not wish the death of Kamui. This causes the dragon of earth to pause long enough to consider this new dream-gazer. As a result of the distraction the seven seals arrive in time enough to protect Kamui. The seals rush in to find Kamui protecting Kotori's dead body. The scene fades to black.

The scene opens up again with Kotori and Kakyo standing on a beach in the dreamscape. He reassures her that it was only because her skills as a dreamer were so strong that he could reach her in her dream. She wonders if she will be able to dream from the moment of her death? This question is never answered. He feels bad, he knew this would happen yet he could do nothing about it, in the end he was helpless. Kakyo

pities both her and Kamui, surely he will face sorrow because of her death and not choose his own. He will have to fight a person who he considers a brother. However, Kotori says, "But Shiro came to save me. That was good enough for me. I knew about the dream with Shiro and my brother trying to kill each other but I couldn't do anything about it. I believe in him. No matter what pain he goes through he will not fail. And Shiro will be the only one to save my brother. Thank you, Kakyo. I have to go. Kakyo, if you ever meet my brother or Kamui, can you tell them something for me? Tell them that I love them both. And that the future is still undecided" (Episode 12 "Alternative", 2001). She turns ready to depart. As she does, angel wings sprout from her back and she begins to float away, feathers fall from her wings filling the air. With her death and departure she leaves this message for Kamui and her brother.

This final scene is significant for several reasons. To begin, Kotori's death, her prophecy, her assuming the angelic wings, the discussion of Kamui's future, all take root in the events that send Kamui into the belly of the beast. Upon her death Kakyo and Kotori both state that Kamui will suffer from losing her and from having to fight his beloved friend Fuma. Yet despite all this suffering she still believes in Kamui, she knows that he will not fail and that he is the only one that can save her brother. Beyond this she is able to discern through her abilities as a dreamer in her death dream that the future is undecided. A prophecy which up to now has never occurred. All seers point to one unalterable end. Kotori's ascent into the goddess image is the first sign of the goddess image akin to Campbell's description of her, we will revisit this in the initiation stage of Kamui's journey.

The next section of Campbell's model reflects a series of events where the hero gathers an internal boon within the hidden world he has just been swallowed by. However, as Campbell says the model can be restructured and some aspects can be focused upon or ignored depending on the narrative. The next section of the series reflects Campbell's third section of the monomyth and the hero's return from *the belly of the whale*. Where the series left off Kamui has slipped into the depths of his own psyche. Kamui must return to the outside world for anything to begin or end.

Return

In the series *the return stage* of Campbell's journey takes place over two episodes incidentally entitled "Return" (2001) and "Gathering" (2001). In "Return", Kamui has retreated deep into his unconscious mind and Subaru, the *Onmyou* adept, has to enter his dreamscape in order to retrieve him. In the second episode "Gathering", all the dragons of heaven and earth begin to gather together. This marks the prelude to the battle of the apocalypse. The dragons of heaven follow Hinoto's instruction and seal the sword of destiny within the shrine of divine protection. As Kamui and Fuma are twins by destiny so are the swords, when one is bound then so is the other.

Although Campbell suggests an order of *departure, initiation and return*, the format these occur in X/1999 is altered. From the departure stage, he enters *the belly of the whale*, the very seed of the boon is gained, and then he returns to the outside world, immediately afterwards. The initiation stage, the trials and encountering the archetypes happen in the outside world. Accordingly, what was once before destiny, power and

hidden potential becomes fully manifested in the real world of adult decision and responsibility. Campbell says that the common theme evident in this stage of the monomyth is that the boon and lesson learned are not easily translated into real world experience. Accordingly, the boon in X/1999 is not the inner abstract philosophies gained about life and death, but the actual experience of suffering in the real world, how it is faced and then ultimately, the boon, how it is overcome and the future formed. The sections of the *return* stage that will be addressed in this section are the: *Refusal of the return* - Kamui refuses to wake up; *Rescue from without* - Subaru enters Kamui's mind to bring him back to the real world and; *Crossing the return threshold* - Kamui's new found inspiration and intent to go on.

Refusal of the Return

Campbell describes a stage when the hero refuses to return to the world of the living after passing the threshold into the inner world or realm of greater power. The whole point of the hero's journey is to enter into the inner realm and return with a "boon" to renew his community (1949: 193). However, for various reasons the hero might refuse to return to the real world. In some myths this might be because the message is not easily communicated to the world. In other myths, there is an emotional or ethical consideration on whether the hero will return. These are based upon his own biases. For example, if in the idealized world the hero should find attainment and bliss, what might motivate him to return to world of the living where cruelty and suffering still exist? This stage is evident in the X/1999 anime series in an episode appropriately entitled "Return".

In this episode Kamui, following the initial confrontation with Fuma, and subsequent death of Kotori, has slipped into a trauma-induced coma.

As the episode begins, Kotori's body is being led away on a gurney and is covered in a white sheet. We infer from this that she has been pronounced dead. Kamui is in a coma similar to the coma Kotori herself entered upon seeing Tokiko perish. In Episode 13 "Return" (2002), Kamui's eyes are open but they are a dull golden color and he shows no response. The group of seven seals is obviously upset by these turn of events. The dragon of earth has awakened and their hero and supposed leader has been neutralized. The group of seals deliberate on what they will do but nobody has a ready answer. They all understand why he would go into shock, having watched someone he cared about murdered by a beloved friend, yet none of them know of a way to bring him back. In this scene Subaru is standing beside a window listening to the conversation. At this time he takes the initiative and enters Kamui's room, placing his hands on his face and begins to chant. Subaru is using his powers as an *Onmyou* Monk to enter into Kamui's mind and attempt to retrieve him. Arashi is dubious, stating how dangerous it is for Subaru to try something like this. Subaru insists that because everything depends on Kamui, he must at the very least try.

While the dragons of heaven attempt to return Kamui to life, Hinoto and Kanoe are having an important conversation about the nature of Kamui and the dragons of heaven and earth. Kanoe is both the sister to Hinoto and Leader of the dragons of earth, and also a secretary for an influential government figure. She has figured out what her sister's dreams have meant. Kanoe has no ability to dream the future like her sister,

however, she can enter the dreams of others. Kanoe explains to Hinoto that no matter what side the real Kamui chooses, his Gemini would become the opposing dragon. During Kanoe's explanation the image of Fuma standing behind and dwarfing Kamui appears. They are both surrounded by angel wings and a red flowing cloth which encircles them. Fuma has his hand in front of Kamui's eyes preventing him from seeing. What can literally be transcribed in this image are the two figures joined in the apocalypse and that Kamui's role as the dragon of heaven is compromised by Fuma's role. In other words, part of Fuma's role as the "Gemini" is to blind Kamui through their personal relationship. By design, Fuma's role as the dragon of earth is no accident, it is meant to debilitate the hero. Kamui will be preoccupied by the question of whether Fuma is friend or foe for the remainder of the series. Where Kamui has chosen to become the dragon of heaven, he has unwittingly chosen to suffer this uncertainty and anguish. The task for Kamui is to learn to draw empowerment from his suffering and to continue onward with the decision he has made. Therefore, in these scenes we see both of Campbell's mythical devices employed, the *refusal of the return* and attaining the *ultimate boon*. On one hand Kamui cowers in his subconscious because he is unable to tolerate the pain that his loved ones have gone through in order to see him through this far in his apocalyptic journey. Secondly, although he has chosen to protect the foundation of earth and has embraced his nature as the dragon of heaven, Kamui has the problem of now living that role in the real world. The next two stages and episodes will expand upon what bolsters his spirit and allows him the ability to return to the real world.

In the next section Campbell describes two possible responses to the Hero's

Refusal of the return: either he can try to leave and in so doing cause a *Magical Flight* or whimsical escape to occur; or his freedom can be won but only through help from the outside world. Kamui has retreated into his subconscious because the pain is too much for him to handle, therefore, the next section of discussion will focus on his assistance from the outside world.

The Rescue from Without

Campbell describes a stage where the society of the hero's origin tries to rescue the hero from the inner world (1949: 207). This, Campbell explains, is a continuation of the universal pattern supporting the hero. According to Campbell, "His consciousness having succumbed, the unconscious nevertheless supplies its own balance, and he is born back in the world from which he came. Instead of holding to and saving his ego, he loses it, and yet through grace, it is returned" (Campbell 1949: 186). What Campbell implies in this statement is that the hero is returned to his sense of identity only when he can give up his egotistical ways and see that he is needed in the real world. This scene of events and *the rescue from without* is evident in Episode 13 "Return" (2002). It is in this episodes that Subaru enters Kamui's mind to bring him back to the real world.

In Episode 13 "Return" (2001), Subaru enters into Kamui's heart and mind. As his chant begins to pick up pace, Subaru places both hands on Kamui's head and enters into his subconscious mind. The first barrier we see is water as Subaru slowly descends. As he goes deeper into Kamui's mind, Kamui's consciousness prevents Subaru from entering by creating a tidal pool that cuts at him. He endures this assault and then is

plunged into a deeper and seemingly separate portion of the subconscious. In this new section of Kamui's mind several images replay in a bubble for Subaru. They replay the last moments of Kotori's life, where Fuma pins Kamui to the rock and then kills Kotori. Subaru calls out to Kamui and tells him not to watch anymore. As Kotori dies Subaru is assaulted again and this attack causes him to bleed in the real world. However, Subaru triumphs over this attempt of Kamui's psyche to deny him passage. In the next level there is a pool of light. In the pool of light Kamui is kneeling with his hands covering his ears. The holy sword is sticking out of the ground towering over him. Kamui is crying and saying Kotori and Fuma's name over and over again. Subaru asks if he can approach but the young Kamui does not want him to come near him. Kamui says "Don't...Kill...Kotori and Fuma...please..."(Episode 13 "Return" 2002). Subaru kneels next to him and asks Kamui to talk to him. He tells Kamui that whatever happens, Kamui cannot stay like this forever. Kamui continues to cry and tells him to go away, then the young Kamui screams at Subaru as a blast of psychic energy destroys Subaru's dreamscape body. In the real world, Subaru is suffering again but Sorata notices that Kamui has begun to shed a single tear; Subaru is slowly getting through to Kamui as he tries to access his grief. The scene opens again to many feathers flying through the dreamscape, Subaru is hurt and lying on the ground and Kamui is standing next to the holy sword watching.

Subaru explains to Kamui, "Kamui, listen carefully, if you do not come out of this dream nothing can begin and nothing can end. You are now within your heart. You are just running away from the pain you feel. The situation is getting worse, just like me"

(Episode 13 "Return", 2002). Subaru admits he had done the same thing when he was younger. Subaru explains that Kamui is not alone in his feelings and shares with Kamui the memory of his sister's death.

We then see these events unfold. We see a cherry blossom tree appear and a woman dressed in white comes out of the darkness walking towards a figure dressed in black. He stands underneath the tree but we cannot see his face. Subaru explains that these were people who were precious to him. They continue to watch as the camera closes in on the image of a hand, a splash of blood and then the shocked look of his sister's face. Kamui reaches out to help her but Subaru holds him back saying it is only a memory. She falls back dying and the image changes. Subaru explains to Kamui that he could not at the time do anything to help because he was deep inside himself just like Kamui. This he explains is why he has entered Kamui's mind. Subaru says, "Kamui it's alright if you want to stay here, if you feel that will make you happy. But if you do not come out, nothing will begin and nothing will end. Like me...at such an important time I could do nothing but watch. An important person in my life had killed my precious sister. However, I had to return to reality through the pain in my heart. It is so that I can make the future I hope for into a reality. Although it caused suffering to the ones I love...I could not let my hope fade away" (Episode 13 "Return", 2002). Subaru begins to fade and asks Kamui if he has any hope at all to please return as he disappears and returns to the real world. The group despairs thinking Kamui has been lost and Subaru has been harmed in vain. Then Yurhiza begins to cry as Kamui wakes. As Kamui awakes, his eyes return to normal and he thanks Subaru for what he did. He wasn't able to save

Kotori but he can save Fuma. This is what he is now pledged towards.

The Crossing of the Return Threshold

In this stage the hero must return to the world with the insight that he has gained. According to Campbell this insight is actually the realization that the world inside and out are actually one (1949: 217). Here lies the real hero's challenge - to represent what he has learned inside his own heart and mind outside in the real world. Often the principles and values of the inner world are not practical in day to day life. It is one thing to believe in something, it is another to represent and apply that ideal to the real world. This can be seen later in the series through Kamui's initiation as the dragon of heaven. According to Campbell, "There must always remain, however, from the standpoint of normal waking consciousness, a certain baffling inconsistency between the wisdom brought forth from the deep, and the prudence usually found to be effective in the light world. Hence the common divorce of opportunism from virtue and the resultant degradation of human existence" (1949: 218). First the hero must begin to accept what is real after experiencing the inner world. As Campbell says, "the first problem of the returning hero is to accept as real, after an experience of the soul-satisfying vision of fulfillment, the passing joys and sorrows, banalities and noisy obscenities of life. Why re-enter such a world?" (1949: 218). Once he has re-entered that world he then must strive to maintain the "cosmic stand point in the face of an immediate earthly pain or joy" (Campbell 1949: 219).

As Subaru's strength is depleted he awakens in the real world. Subaru has passed

out on top of his body but Kamui in a supportive manner places his hand on his shoulder. Kamui admits that he might not have been able to protect Kotori but that he will hope and continue to find some way to bring back his beloved friend Fuma. While in his inner world Kamui began to realize the ideals of both friendship and love. His inner child must overcome the fear and worry that accompanies truly caring for people and realize that it is only through hope and courage that he might be able to shape a world where his loved ones are both safe and happy. In a Campbellian way, the childish ego must overcome its self involvement and become fully self actualized. In other words, suffering is useless if it debilitates us, however, if the intent is true, then it can motivate us to be better people.

Chapter Summary

X/1999 deals with the fundamental questions of pain, suffering, and the ability of humanity to deal with it. It poses two potential outcomes: we can prevent human suffering through wisdom, or, we can be part of the cause of that suffering, not only for ourselves but the entire planet and thus the very solution to this suffering is our utter destruction. However, the rules of engagement are not as simple as such. For Kamui to protect the world he needs to be able to have a deep and emotional intent to protect something most precious to him. Without this precious thing, or the realization of its loss, the heart of a seal dies and so too does their ability to form the *Kekkai*. If the individual is striking out at someone they love this *Kekkai* is also broken, yet not as a result of the uncontrollable utter despair the individual feels, but by the loss of all hope or

belief in the human world. This happens to the seals at various times through the series. In fact, by the end of the series most of the seals are either dead, injured or have lost all ability to form the *Kekkai*. Kamui is the only one left who has yet to create a *Kekkai* because the person he seeks to protect is the dragon of earth, Fuma.

On one hand the dragon of earth is cruel and destructive, he will not relent, his intent on destroying the earth by killing Kamui and everyone he loves is undeniable. The dragon of Earth, represents in many ways an image of suffering and despair associated with death itself, but also a cold and uncompromising peace in that death ends despair, no human life, no suffering. It makes this specific point, that humanity causes suffering and that nature by the same token does not create intentional suffering. The dragon of earth succeeds if human beings are unable to end their pattern of violence and destruction. For the dragons of heaven to succeed, they must demonstrate the value of humanity, that there are other means beyond violence, war, and pollution they are able to succeed. The *Kekkai* of the dragon of heaven are based on the will to protect those they love; their ability to create them is through channeling this power of protection. The paradox: how can Kamui prevent the cruel and destructive dragon of earth from destroying the world if he cannot become the full dragon of heaven through violence. The dragon of earth is ruthless, direct and unwavering. How is Kamui able to save the world from the violent other if he is unable to use violence to stop him?

From what we have seen the first initiation stage fits rather well with Campbell's model. To paraphrase we have a young man who has the difficult task of saving the human race from their own aggressive and destructive nature. The hero refuses to accept

his role to play in it but is rather caught up in his own suffering and self interest, no matter what altruistic elements justifies his feelings. Once the hero sees the meaning behind the events such as his mother's death he is able to see how, through his personal dedication to protecting the foundation of Fuma and Kotori's happiness, he can find the inspiration to fight for the world and become the dragon of heaven.

Accordingly, by analyzing the episodes in relation to Campbell's model we can see many similarities to Campbell's mythic pattern. Themes such as the *call to adventure*, Kamui's special supernatural nature, the frightening herald embodied as his aunt Tokiko and Fuma and Kotori's mother Saya, the *supernatural aids* embodied as the seven seals, and more importantly Hinoto; *the refusal of the call* and the blunder resulting in the death of the shrine guardian, Kyogo Monou; the *crossing of a threshold* demonstrated in Kamui's choice to become the dragon of earth and the transformation of Fuma into the dragon of earth; and lastly, *the belly of the whale*, when Kamui is undone by the dragon of earth's possession of Fuma, the death of Kotori and the coma that Kamui enters.

However, as discussed in previous chapters there are some points where the narrative is inconsistent with Campbell's model. One of those is the portrayal of the feminine heralds, guides and figures. According to Campbell, the higher [read patriarchal] mythologies define this character in one dimensional terms, reflecting the associations the hero has for the peace of womb. In the case of Saya, Hinoto, Kotori, and Tokiko in X/1999, these women are far from the passive one-dimensional image that Campbell describes. Their characters have a tremendous amount of ideological impact

on the *anime*'s narrative in their archetypal portrayal of goddess figures in Campbell's model and the insight that can be gained through an understanding of feminist spirituality and the personal experience of motherhood.

Furthermore, there is a symbolic connection between motherhood, birth, and sacrifice within the series. Whether the characters are giving birth to heroic figures, talismans of great power or the means to a symbolic rebirth of the hero they give their lives to accomplish it. Furthermore, the series portrays these characters as strong and empowered yet driven by destiny with an inability to change the overwhelming system in place. The giant clock gears winding down in the dreamscape could be seen as a symbol of this larger, older system which we are unable to change. However, the characters draw empowerment from their persecution, find their own means to affect the future through the chosen one of the gods, "Kamui". The symbol of motherhood within Japanese history is further compounded with the power of social engagement and the dragon of heaven. The dragon of earth is the personification of all that makes humanity destructive and the reciprocal of the dragon of heaven, the patriarchal valorized nature of our age. Furthermore the message that is evident in the series does suggest it is meant for both men and women, as both struggle with the masculine and feminine norms valorized in society. In accordance with this emphasis the series uses a mixture of Christian, Buddhist, and Chinese figures and religious elements, making it relevant for Eastern and Western audiences alike. In this sense the narrative as an example of modern myth is acting in a similar way to how Nancy Bonvillian addressed ideological constructs of religion and gender. She writes,

Ideological constructs are powerfully incorporated into religious beliefs. Consequently, through enactment of ritual and recitations of religious narratives, ideological foundations of a culture are transmitted and reinforced...because attributes and relationships of women and men are basic features of social life, religions offer people explanations for and justifications of prevailing cultural constructs of gender...by examining religious narratives and ritual practice, we can attempt to understand these symbols and to learn how people conceive of themselves and how they organize their lives (1995: 221).

The ideological constructs of feminist and pro-feminist spirituality are incorporated into the narrative, and as gender is a basic feature of social life the narrative offers explanations for modern suffering and tantamount to our present discussion, how their interpersonal relationships and choices affect and shape the future.

Chapter 5 will continue this discussion through the personal trials of the seven seals as they begin the apocalyptic battle. We will analyze the specific themes that characterize human suffering and examine how the characters and the narrative proposes solutions to them. It will further engage in the gendered dynamics of goddess imagery embodied by Kotori and the *god/ogre* figure personified by Fuma, highlighting both their similarities and departures from Campbell's model, and what that means for understanding X/1999 in terms of feminist and pro-feminist spiritual emphases.

Chapter 5: A depth analysis of X/1999 According to Campbell's model - Part 2

Chapter Four discussed the context in which the series X/1999 has a similar structure to Joseph Campbell's monomyth. Our discussion demonstrated how Kamui acts as a mono-mythic hero, struggling to realize his identity as a heroic figure despite the obstacles of his own self involvement and maturity. Furthermore, it not only examined how X/1999 fit Campbell's model, but also how it departed from it. These departures largely concerned the image of the feminine or goddess-like figures and allowed the narrative to express both feminist and pro-feminist spirituality, not only in how the hero struggled with patriarchal norms but also in that it demonstrated that motherhood can be a context for spirituality.

The third portion of the series could then be considered the initiation stage of Campbell's pattern, where the hero Kamui and his seven seals or, dragons of heaven, do battle with the dragons of the earth. Through his trials the hero begins to make manifest the boon he has realized through his quest in the real world. The apocalypse looms closer as many of the seven seals rise and fall in battle with the dragons of earth. In each battle Kamui gains in perspective, however, he is yet to fully attain his power as the dragon of heaven. He is unable to fully awaken. If the dragon of heaven cannot awaken then the dragon of earth shall consume and destroy humanity.

Left with fewer and fewer options, Kamui begins to believe that there is no way to bring Fuma back and decides to take up sword and do battle with him at Tokyo tower. Both men enter into a violent battle over the fate of the earth. Despite his better sense Kamui summons the resolve he needs to strike Fuma down and save the world.

However, the holy sword shatters when Kamui uses it to strike out at Fuma. In pitying tones Fuma explains to Kamui that he cannot be the dragon of heaven if he uses the holy sword in violence. Taking advantage of the moment Fuma stabs Kamui with his sword. As he pierces Kamui's chest the world begins to shake and descend into fire.

However, before all is lost, Subaru arrives on the scene, erecting his protective barrier to delay the apocalypse. Subaru reminds Kamui of his dedication to his friends, his memory of Kotori and his intent to save Fuma. He asks him, despite everything that has happened, despite all the friends who have died, despite all the suffering, has his intent ever changed? Kamui answers no and begins to realize why the sword shatters. Kamui only begins to triumph when he gives up attacking Fuma. Kamui makes a difficult decision, what to many is an impossible decision: to reach out with compassion in the face of unrelenting wrath, breaking the cycle of violence and destruction. He approaches Fuma and allows him to stab him through the heart. It is then that Kamui looks up and reveals that he has come to understand how he will save Fuma.

Kamui explains that although he will die, he knows he will endure in Fuma's heart, and will serve to inspire him, as so many others have sacrificed themselves to protect him and empower him to change the future. Kamui has done the unthinkable, and once he is able to give up aggression, despite the resilience of the aggressive other, he is able to awaken as the dragon of heaven. Through tapping this power a giant field called a *Kekkai* expands from his body and saves the world from destruction and removes the malevolent presence of the dragon of earth from Fuma's body.

According to the storyline of X/1999, society can be saved from destruction by

the acceptance of new models of behaviour, such as compassion and self-sacrifice, both of which have been culturally associated with the feminine. These models of behaviour are only limited by the constraints society places upon them. The presentation and critique of gender roles within X/1999 encourages viewers to perceive the human ideal in all of us. Through the deconstruction of these stereotypes, such as passivity and activity, feeling and will, emotion and logic, violence and compassion, the viewer can perceive that the saving power implied in the narrative through feminine imagery, lies in the intent behind the behaviour, rather than implications implied in the stereotypes. It subverts the patriarchal system without questioning already pre-existing norms by using the symbol of motherhood already inherent in society. Finally the series suggests society is saved as both men and women actualize how the patriarchal norms and expectations shame both genders releasing both so that all futures are made possible rather than set in stone.

Initiation

This chapter will begin to address the various stages of Campbell initiation stage. This stage begins with *the road of trials*, the tasks and obstacles presented to the hero that change his perspective and grant him the ability to acquire the boon or elixir that has been sought after through the course of the narrative. In this discussion we will look at how the personal experience of the seven seals as they confront the seven angels continually readdress the same themes that are important to Kamui's heroic journey. These themes will include: violence, competition and greed, human suffering, despair and choice, and lastly, passive Resistance and the power of self-sacrifice. We will discuss the theme of

violence, competition and greed by analyzing the confrontation between Yuzuriha and Satsuki concerning humanity's propensity to destroy in episodes 7 "Cipher" (2001) and 18 "New Born" (2002).

Next, this chapter will address the theme of human suffering, despair and choice by examining a number of the interactions amongst the dragon of heaven and earth. First, the relationship between Aoki and Karen will be closely examined in Episode 19 "Inferno", her childhood abuse, her religious behaviour and her dedication to Aoki (2002). Following this the Subaru and Seishiro confrontation will be discussed, namely, their relationship, Subaru's confrontation with Satsuki concerning his sister's murder. This discussion will focus on the paradox between loving someone who has killed someone you care about deeply and how those feelings are processed by the character. Next, this section will examine, how Arashi and Sorata struggle to make a relationship work and actualize their true feelings when Sorata reveals that it is destined that he will die to save her, in episode 6 "Kouya" (2001) and episode 20 "Ripple" (2002). We will then look at the androgynous clone Nataka as he struggles to uncover and make sense of his true identity in Episode 4 "Sacrifice" (2001), Episode 15 "Guardian" (2002) and Episode 19 "Inferno" (2002).

Lastly, we will look at the theme of choice, passive resistance and self-sacrifice. This theme we can see evident in Episode 15 "Guardian" (2002) when Saiki dies protecting both Kamui and the princess Hinoto who we learn he loves and has chosen to protect. Similarly this section will examine the conclusion of Subaru and Seishiro's relationship and the unexpected sacrifice Seishiro makes that saves Subaru's life.

Similarly, the theme of sacrifice and choice is evident in regard to Karen and Aoki in Episode 21 "Current" (2002) where Karen climatically kills herself and Yuto to save Aoki. This theme is also evident in the relationship between Yuzuriha and Inuki in Episode 18 "Newborn" where Yuzuriha discovers the answers to the difficult question of human nature posed to her earlier in the series. Lastly, Sorata will demonstrate self-sacrifice to save someone he loves, even though they have turned into villain, i.e., the betrayal of Arashi in Episode 23 "Earth".

Following this discussion we will begin to do an in-depth analysis of the most significant stages of Campbell's monomyth and gendered spirituality in the narrative, *meeting of the goddess*, and *confrontation with the god/ogre figure*. In discussing the "meeting with the goddess", we will examine her portrayal as "good and bad mother" embodied by Princess Hinoto throughout the series but focusing on her character in Episode 22 "Betrayal" (2002). We will discuss Kotori's role as goddess in the series, primarily in the vision that Kamui receives of her in Episode 17 "Wish" (2002). Furthermore, we will visit the theme of goddess as temptress embodied by Kanoe in Episodes 3 "Pledge" (2001), Episode 8 "Gemini" (2001), and Episode 22 "Betrayal" (2002). Once the lessons of the goddess have been embodied in Kamui and he has confronted the ogre figure, we will discuss Kamui's *Apotheosis* whereby he becomes the gender neutral god that Campbell describes in mythology, whereby he surpasses the patriarchal norms of gender and creates a third alternative, the boon. The confrontation with the ogre, his *apotheosis* and his acceptance of *the ultimate boon* and its manifestation of it in the world will be drawn from the final episode in the series, episode

The Road of Trials

According to Campbell the journey that the hero embarks on is full of trials and tests which will both challenge and develop him as the mythic hero. Campbell says, "if anyone - in whatever society - undertakes for himself the perilous journey into the darkness by descending, either intentionally or unintentionally, into the crooked lanes of his own spiritual labyrinth, he soon finds himself in a landscape of symbolical figures (any one of which may swallow him)" (1949: 101). In this stage the hero goes through the "process of dissolving, transcending, or transmuting the infantile images of [his] personal past" (Campbell 1949: 101). Campbell quotes a series of dreams from psychoanalysts depicting the symbolic limits and challenges that preoccupy the psyche of the dreamer. According to Campbell, the dreamer engages with these images that are representative of their psychological struggle and the root of their particular ailment (1949: 101-104). In this process the hero must also begin to assimilate his opposite. This is often the resolution of the conflict with his primary antagonist. Campbell says, "The hero, whether god or goddess, man or woman, the figure in a myth or the dreamer of a dream, discovers and assimilates his opposite (his own unsuspected self) either by swallowing it or being swallowed" (1949:108). Campbell suggests that the hero's hardest accomplishment will be to put aside all aspects of virtue, beauty and ego and submit himself to the "absolutely intolerable". There he finds that his nemesis or anti-thesis is not so different, in fact, they are very much the same (1949: 108). His ability to

assimilate these aspects allows him to transcend them and makes him ready to accept the final boon at the end of this stage.

The road of trials in X/1999 is a process whereby Kamui begins to put together who he needs to become to actually triumph as the dragon of heaven. As the apocalypse looms closer the dragons of earth begins targeting locations where strong *Kekkai* exist. Princess Hinoto is often the person who foresees these attacks and directs the dragon of heaven to anticipate the next assault. Anticipating the attacks through Hinoto's visions allows them to pre-emptively erect a protective barrier. That barrier sweeps out to encompass and protect the people and infrastructure in the area. Only those involved in the apocalypse are even aware that a conflict is taking place. However, if a seal should die or loose faith in their ability to produce the *Kekkai* then the destruction within the field will take effect within the real world. As said before the main feature of the dragons of heaven is that they work together in their ability to save the world. It is though their social engagement that they find the source of their power. Aoki explains this point in Episode 15 "Guardian" (2002) when explaining to Saiki that his powers are drawn from his desire to protect his loved ones. Saiki says, "Our powers are given in order to protect each other. Wind orbits in a path and it can be controlled, all our life, we will use its power for that one person...and we use it for that purpose alone. And the one who decides on that is yourself. To hope and protect, [it] will help strengthen our hearts and develop our powers even further"(Episode 15 "Guardian", 2002).

Accordingly, each time a seal fights with one of the dragons of earth their own personal experiences and identities are tested. Frequently it is a personal difficulty drawn

from their past that they must confront. Most importantly, their own personal experiences are all pre-destined to assist Kamui in his final role as the dragon of heaven. In essence, they are all making the same decision to save the world. In this *anime*, *the road of trials* is enacted through the struggles of all seven seals not just the main hero Kamui. They are all being affected by the same circumstances despite their personal semantics. It is through them that Kamui is able to make sense out of his own past, his mother's death, and finally, what he will do about the violent and ruthless dragon of earth, Fuma. In some ways, this element of many individual stories relating time and time again to Kamui's narrative resembles the synchronicity of themes expressed amongst mythic narrative but found to be similar world wide. This continual return to similar themes and archetypes shared amongst the personal narratives of all the characters is similar to the mythic dimension expressed through modern myth. The aforementioned themes will be expanded upon as we build our argument for the final transformation of Kamui at the end of the series. Furthermore, this analysis will address the solutions and models of behaviour that allow for Kamui to save the world. The *anime* responds to the suffering in the cosmological themes by pointing out that, despite suffering, humanity has the ability to grieve, and that it is in this grieving heart of humanity that things find an existence beyond death and destruction. Although we die there is an existence beyond, within the hearts of the living, where we serve to inspire and give hope. In this discussion we will demonstrate the power of hope and the discovery of a new future through the actions of a hero. Humanity's right to exist is proved by the enduring power of love.

This section will also address how these themes relate to feminist and pro-

feminist spirituality and how alternative forms of behaviour can lead to a better future.

These images are contextualized around the theme of motherhood in Japan. Accordingly, the authors are presenting symbols of motherhood that, although drawn from a limited and patriarchal system, can be a covert site of rebellion and source of empowerment for modern feminists and pro-feminist alike.

Humanity's Destructive Nature

The first theme suggests that humanity is a cause of suffering in the world due to violence, competition and greed. Needless to say humanity has treated the environment badly with the advent of modern industrialization. World history has demonstrated man's abuse of the environment through a misplaced sense of superiority and dominion over the earth. International organizations such as Green Peace suggest human actions have directly damaged our environments through deforestation, the dumping of toxic waste, increasing exhaust emissions, not to mention the abundance of garbage produced every day (Green Peace: 2010). As a result animal habitats have been affected due to the change or destruction of their ecosystems. Similarly, humanity has destroyed entire species of animals due to excessive hunting. Even endangered animals are still hunted to extinction for their fur and pelts (Green Peace: 2010). This does not even begin to address the crimes against humanity committed through endless wars nor for that matter the personal violence and degradation that some experience in their day to day lives.

In Episode 18 "New Born" (2002) this specific issue is addressed through a confrontation with one of the seven seals. Innuki and Yuzuriha face Satsuki, the

technocrat who can channel the powers of technology through “the beast” - a massive computer interface - specifically designed for her role in the apocalypse. Yuzuriha creates her *Kekkai* and protects the surrounding area. As a reminder a *Kekkai* is a physic field that emanates from one of the seven seals. This field effectively phases everything within into a different reality, such that if anything is destroyed in the process it does not take affect in the real world. This ability is created by the seal as they focus their powers into their desire to protect the ones they love. This is often drawn from the intense feelings they have for an individual person in their lives, a pet, a friend, or a lover. If a seal is killed, rendered unconscious or gives into despair they can lose the ability to create the *Kekkai*.

In this episode, with the assistance of “the beast” Satsuki uses her power to manipulate technology to attack Tokyo. Satsuki sits atop the beast in the basement of a government building far away. She uses the machine to cause the electrical cables to burst from the ground like snakes leaving destruction and havoc in her wake. In the Episode 7 “Cipher” (2001), we learn that Satsuki has had the power to control machines since she was a child. They would whisper to her about her role in the apocalypse. Her father having noticed this ability at a young age inducted her into a government project to control a large computer network. Satsuki’s father explains to her that because he is her father and he loves her he will decide what’s best for her. He says, “Satsuki, you may not realize it, but you have an amazing talent. The men at that laboratory will help you develop it. The first few times, you may feel some pain but once you get used to it you’ll enjoy it. You’ll cooperate, won’t you Satsuki” (Episode 7 “Cipher”, 2001)? Satsuki does

not understand why he gets to dictate her future. She enjoys being alone and communicating with the computer but has an increasing dislike for other people and does not want to return to the lab. He explains to her, "No, I've already decided on your future. They'll come pick you up tomorrow. Don't be selfish and go" (Episode 7 "Cipher", 2001). She doesn't understand why he should decide her future. He explains, "Because you are my precious daughter and because I love you" (Episode 7 "Cipher", 2001). Her resentment turns to murderous rage as she uses the technology at her disposal to kill her father and then the scientists who, like her father, attempts to control what she does with her power. She has been aware of the apocalypse from the time she was a young child and is fascinated by the concept of "Kamui" and wonders what exactly it is.

In her character we see several elements embodied, primarily the idea that technology cuts us off from human interaction. In Satsuki's case, she prefers computer interaction to human interaction. Secondly, we see a context for discussing gender and the concept of free will hampered by patriarchal norms. According to feminist scholar Iris Marion Young (1992) oppression is broken down into five different categories: exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence. In these scenes Satsuki experiences many of these because of her father's actions. To begin her father allows the scientists to exploit her abilities with machines through continual interaction with the machine, secondly, she is powerless to do anything against it as it is expected of her as an obedient daughter, third, the machine is invasive on a physical level. A relationship to sexual invasion could be implied in the invasive nature of the machine, and the contemptuous realization that he expects that she will learn to become

accustomed to it, maybe even enjoy it. Consequently, the product of Satsuki oppression unwittingly turns against her father and the scientists, as she uses the means which they oppressed her to lash out in murderous violence, resulting in a personality who has little need for humanity and feels compelled to use her abilities as she sees fits to fulfill her own needs. Accordingly, connected to little in this world, her interactions are limited to Yuzuriha, Yuto, Kanoe and “the beast”.

Her challenger is the youngest of the seven seals, Nekoi Yuzuriha, from Mitsumine Temple. She is fourteen years old and has the power to summon a wolf spirit called Inuki. Inuki can also transform into a sword which she is able to use in battle. Although innately capable of using her sword whenever necessary, her personality less resembles a sword-wielding warrior, and more readily resembles a stereotypical young, kind spirited, romantic, and energetic teenager. She is idealistic and noble in her sincerity. As a child Yuzuriha was very lonely because she was different. Only Yuzuriha and her grandmother could see Inuki. This made her sad and no one believed her. Kids at school would make fun of her and she was often drawn into conflict as a liar because she could see something no one else could (Episode 10 “Inuki”, 2001). Consequently, and albeit naively, anyone who can see Inuki is a friend to Yuzuriha. When Yuzuriha meets Satsuki on a bridge and Satsuki pets Inuki, they become acquainted, she is unaware at the time that they are on opposing sides of the apocalypse. Later in the episode, the battle between these opposing forces comes to an abrupt halt when Satsuki recognizes the young girl she is fighting. Yuzuriha yells at the forces behind the apocalypse to stop: “do they not realize they could hurt people?” (Episode 7

“Cipher”, 2001).

Satsuki finds this question puzzling and manifests herself by using the beast to bring a large computer screen before Yuzuriha. Satsuki asks her, “Why can’t you kill humans? People kill other species, is that justice? Is it because they can’t communicate with them? Is it because they aren’t as intelligent? Is it alright to kill things with low intelligence? But even you, even now you have been stealing the lives of other species. Eating, meat, eating vegetables, contaminating the forests and contaminating the oceans. You’ve been stealing the lives of others. Is it because humans are superior? Any species kills to survive, but humans are different. When they feel that [something is simply] inconvenient, they kill a species or even their own kind” (Episode 18 “Newborn”, 2002). Yurhihiza counters that not all humans are like that, most do not want to wipe out entire species or destroy the environment. Satsuki agrees that this is true but, “[even] the ones who are not like that, killing any living thing [just to survive] is also true. Well with that known, why is it we can’t kill humans? Is it because humans are stronger? Is it right for an even stronger species to kill humans?” (Episode 18 “Newborn”, 2002). What is presented here is a blurring of the lines of logic, the dragons of earth, although cruel and reckless, feel justified in their actions. Humanity is no more than a disease, it is not special nor set apart. It is destructive, so then why, Satsuki asks, should it make any difference if humans are killed or not? The world, according to Satsuki would be ultimately better off without them. Later she admits there are multiple answers to this question, logical, moral even practical but none are perfect (Episode 18 “Newborn”, 2002).

Unfortunately, Yuzuriha is unable to answer. She falters. In this moment of indecision Satsuki attacks her. Inuki her spirit and wolf companion jumps in front of the electrical cables before they are able to strike her. They strike him and before her eyes Inuki disappears in green smoke, presumably dead. Yuzuriha cries in horror, wondering why he would do something so reckless. This leaves her emotionally disabled and open to attack. Satsuki attacks again but before she can strike Kusanagi jumps in and saves Yuzuriha.

Although Kusanagi saves Yuzuriha he is actually one of the seven angels of the dragon of earth. In regard to this Kusanagi struggles through out the entire series. In principle he is one of the dragons of earth, he is a solider that has seen the consequences of man's destructive behaviour. These experiences have caused him to "hear the earth crying in pain" as he states in episode 22 "Betrayal" (2002), "can you hear it? The earth screams in pain, humans pollute the air and spoil the oceans. The earth strives to survive while they tear it to pieces", which is why he becomes a dragon of earth. However, on his way to Tokyo he meets Yuzuriha and his position on the topic changes and through knowing her is unsure of what to do. As someone involved in the apocalypse he is one of the few people who can see Inuki, Yuzuriha's animal spirit, because of this she makes quick friends with him, not knowing his identity. In her he sees the potential of humanity, its integrity, its ability to care and love the environment. Therefore, he saves her when Satsuki attacks, even though it is against the dragon of earth's wishes. As he tends to Yuzuriha's he tells her the answer to Satsuki's question. Why should we not kill humans? This topic we will pick up later as we discuss the power and purpose of

sacrifice.

In this first series of trials we see one major thematic group of questions posed. Why should humanity survive? Why should they not be killed and the earth given a chance to thrive and heal? One of the major themes of the series is humanity's treatment of the environment, each other and the consequences. This is consistent with one of characteristics of feminist spirituality. Feminist spirituality discusses oppression and exploitation of not only communities but also the environment (Schneiders 2004: 83-87). As mentioned briefly in chapter two on gendered spirituality one of the salient characteristic of feminist spirituality is concern for the physical world and non-human communities. Therefore, as Kamui begins to question his perspectives on human nature he begins to question the assumptions of the patriarchal system, that living creatures and the environment are valued purely for their political and economic gain. Therefore, ill-treatment is justified as the means justify the ends in the patriarchal system of dominance and control outlined by Iris Marion Young (1992). This is one of the major questions that Kamui had to first ask himself before he chooses to be the dragon of heaven. Admittedly, he said he did not know how the world should be. His main reason for choosing the dragon of heaven was to protect the foundation that would support the happiness of Kotori and Fuma. With her death and Fuma's transformation this prospective was compromised. Kamui could no longer fight this battle for simply personal reasons. He had to come closer to the ideologies that underlined these feelings. The hero could not just be limited to the scope of his personal desires. This brings us to the second theme in the series, namely the nature of grief. Simply, conscious human

existence is defined by suffering. We suffer because we are mortal and, therefore, the people we love will eventually die, leaving us alone. In this section another aspect of gendered spirituality will become evident - the importance of relationships.

Relationship, Suffering and Despair

It is the nature of human life that we die. Beyond that, we suffer because the people we love die. In X/1999 death and suffering become manifested as death wishes in which human beings lose the will to live because they have lost the people they love to death and cannot know for certain that they continue to exist. Although some kind of existence beyond bodily death is indicated in the series, it is not quite clear what form this existence takes. The first indication that there is life beyond death occurs when Kotori dies, Kakyo says that he is able to enter her body through their connection as dream-gazers, and therefore, he is able to enter her "death dream" to manipulate her body. Secondly, Kotori asks Kakyo if she will still be "able to dream after she dies" (Episode 13 "Alternative", 2001). He does not answer her directly and shortly afterwards she changes into an angel and flies away. Also, through conversations within the dreamscape, Kakyo states that the person he loves does not exist anymore. However, often these deceased individuals do appear in the dreamscapes of others and act independently of the conscious mind of the dreamer. For example Hokuto Subaru's sister appears in Kakyo's dreamscape. She appears in episode 17 "Wish" (2001), in this episode Kakyo reveals what he wishes for by recreating a memory of Hokuto. Hokuto says that she doesn't like his dream and wishes to go somewhere else, that place is the

ocean he reveals to Kotori in episode 12 "Alternative" (2001). In the dreamscape Kakyo and Hokuto have a conversation:

Hokuto: This place looks much better, but the real ocean looks much better. Since we are already well acquainted I would like to see you but not in a dream...the real you.

Kakyo: I want to see you too, but...

Hokuto: But?

Kakyo: I can't leave ever.

Hokuto: In this world, there is no such thing as "ever". I'll be alright, since you will be with me, Sumeragi Hokuto! Well, shall we go? Let's leave through there (Episode 12 "Alternative, 2001).

Hokuto offers Kakyo her hand and when he tries to take it his hand slips through and she fades away. At the end of the episode he has a conversation with Fuma as the dragon of earth and he explains that he understands his wish to die and his suffering. Fuma promises to fulfill this wish if Kakyo will act as the dream-gazer for the dragon of earth. What can we take from these discussion of life after death? First, there seems to be some form of life after death but it is not independent such as corporeal life. There are instances where the dead appear to people in their own dreamscapes. Their actions and words are not copies of their former life, they seem to have some independence but it is never fully explained whether this is their independent consciousness or the living person's consciousness taking the form of the dead. Although much about death is still a mystery, there is a form of existence after death, although it is tied to those who loved the dead. Therefore, understanding the nature of death and the continued existence of loved one within us is essential in overcoming the despair associated with the death wish and

the loss of the will to live.

Furthermore, what we will look at in this section is the significance of grief in the series, how it affects the characters and how it affects their ability to function. For the purposes of this discussion I will look at the exchanges between Aoki and Karen, two dragons of heaven, Subaru and Seishiro, reciprocal dragons of heaven and earth, the romantic relationship that developed between Arashi and Sorata, both dragons of heaven, one of which defected to the other side and lastly, the dragon of earth Nataka, the clone seeking an explanation for existence.

To begin Aoki and Karen have a difficult relationship. Aoki is a mild mannered copy editor living in Tokyo. He also has a wife and child but has left them to perform his role in the apocalypse (Episode 19 "Inferno", 2002). He believes that if he were still married to her then they could become targets for the dragons of earth. Aoki is also a magic user who can summon the powers of the wind to strike down the dragons of the earth. Aoki meets Karen while doing some further research as a copy editor. Karen is a comfort mistress; unlike Aoki she has no family or no lovers. When they first meet Aoki is interviewing her to find out more about her profession. She is taken with his polite nature and playfully attempts to seduce him but shrugs it off as a joke. He declines politely which seems to enamour her. Karen says, "I knew it. Your type is always taken....It seems you are very faithful to your wife and daughter." Aoki responds saying, "Yes, my family is the most important thing for me to protect." Karen says, "I envy you. you have a nice family. I don't have one" (Episode 19 "Inferno", 2002). Throughout the series she vows to protect him as she respects him as a loyal husband and also father.

Karen's role as a guide and how it contributes to our discussion of motherhood in the X/1999 narrative is better understood once discussed in relation to the character's past.

Karen's childhood was spent mostly alone. Karen and her mother lived within a convent, and her father is absent but we can assume may have been of Western decent due to her name, her red hair and possibly her Christian religious behaviour. These indicators place her in stark contrast with all other characters within the series, who are markedly Japanese. Karen's story begins one night when her mother discovers Karen in the church. Karen is using her psychic abilities to light candles in the church. Although Karen is delighted by the beautiful lights her mother reacts differently. She calls Karen a devil and calls her evil. A series of images flash across the screen. Karen cowers in the dark, a shadowed face of her mother, Karen crying in the light of a cross shaped light. Karen's mother yells, "Why? Why did I ever give birth to a devil? If you weren't born, I wouldn't have to hide in shame here! I won't be tricked by you anymore, devil! If you were gone, no one would mourn for you! That's right! No one would cry for you! No one will" (Episode 19 "Inferno", 2002)! We hear Karen's mother berating and punishing Karen, there is a loud noise of something falling over and Karen screams her mothers name. We learn that her mother dies, whether it is Karen's doing or an accident is unknown. Based on these experiences Karen has little sense of self worth. She does not care what happens to her, and therefore, is more reckless in what she will do to defeat opponents in the apocalypse. When she meets Aoki it becomes difficult. He is a good man, a good husband and a good parent. These are all things absent in Karen's life. When in Episode 19 "Inferno" (2002) Aoki sets up a battle between himself and Yuto of

the dragons of the earth, Karen actually drugs Aoki so that she can take his place. Karen thinks of herself as expendable because no one would grieve for her. Karen says, "No. You have a family. If something were to happen to you, many will mourn for you. I don't have anyone. There won't be anyone to cry for me. This is really why I wanted you here. You have someone waiting for you. You have a future with Kamui and the others. That's why, whenever there's any danger, it would be better for me to go because then there would be no one to mourn my death" (Episode 19 "Inferno", 2002). This upsets Aoki who, while mild mannered, becomes "enraged" by her flippant regard for her own life. He tells her that she is important to him and that he would grieve if anything happened to her.

To begin let's look at Karen's relationship with her mother. Karen's mother blames her for having to hide in a convent out of shame. These feelings are channelled from society by the pressures she feels onto Karen who internalizes it as self hatred, devaluing her sense of humanity throughout her entire life. Exploitation, powerlessness and violence are just several patriarchal values used by her mother to oppress and terrorize Karen. Aoki on the other hand plays a role as the missing father figure in Karen's life, he is someone who embodies both her real father's absence and the abuse she received from her mother. This said Karen's mother acts a contrasting symbol that we often receive of motherhood in the series. In these circumstances the nature of motherhood isn't essentialist to femininity as much as it is a constructed social norm, that anyone could arguable identity with. We will return to the nature of gendered spirituality concerning Karen and Aoki later in the series when we discuss self-sacrifice.

Another set of characters that reflect a similar theme is Subaru and Seishiro.

Subaru is an *Onmyou* priest with the ability to control illusion. As a child his twin sister is killed by a mysterious dark figure that exists in his life, Seishiro. We learn that this person is more intimately connected in Subaru's life and that they may actually love each other. The fact that the person that Subaru cared for the most attempted to kill him and then succeeded in killing his sister, Hokuto Sumeragi, causes him emotional trauma. We, however, learn through a series of dreamscapes that she intended this to happen and casts a spell to assist them both, she says, "You are the only one that can kill him. And he is the only one that can kill you. With my last strength, I will cast a spell. If you kill Subaru in the same way you have killed me, then that spell will be reflected upon you." He asks her "Why would you tell me the meaning of your spell when you have sacrificed your life?", she answers, "It would be meaningless if I didn't tell you. Let me trust you this last time. Don't ever invoke this technique." He believes it isn't wise for her to put her trust in him. She says, "I know that. But I believe in you...There is no one that doesn't have the opportunity to love another" (Episode 16 "Slaughter", 2002). If Hokuto had lived she would have been the dragon of heaven, but because she died, it passes on to Subaru. Subaru's sister says in her deathscape that she regrets that her death will cause Subaru suffering but she wants him to live, so it is a necessary evil. What we see evident in these scenes is the debilitating power that grief can have on a person, that love although the foundational aspect of humanity comes with a cost. Once again human nature is problematized in that by loving we create suffering. The difficult part of human interaction and fostering a community, is that just because one is to reach out in love it

does not account for the actions of the other, who in turn can act in violence. As before the dragon of earth represents the patriarchal violent response to such a predicament. Fuma, Dragon of Earth, says in Episode 18 "Newborn" (2002) , "If everyone dies, then all of the ones who mourn would also be dead, no one alive to continue the cycle of suffering". As before this story will continue as we discuss the power of love and the role of self-sacrifice.

Another character relevant to this theme is Arashi. As a young child Arashi was homeless. She had no parents and lived in the streets. In one scene, in Episode 20 - "Ripple" (2002) she asks herself, " why eat when you have to eat from the trash?" Later as she grows older she still refuses to eat, she says she has yet to decide whether to live or die. Arashi is a very sober and noble character throughout the series. She is a guardian of the Ise shrine, the most prominent shrine of the sun goddess, *Amaterasu*, and one of the dragons of heaven. Through the circumstances of the apocalypse she meets Sorata and eventually becomes romantically involved.

Arashi is very serious and distant while Sorata is very jovial and fun loving. When he meets her he decides that she is the woman spoken of in a prophecy concerning him. Sorata's destiny is to protect Kamui but if he should die he would do so, protecting the woman he loves. He makes this very clear to her. She on the other hand is baffled and uncomfortable with his attentions and his commitment to protect her. He explains that as a child he was taken away from his mother to enter the monastery. His only memory is of her crying as they took him away, since he has heard of the prophecy he has pledged himself to never cause the woman he is destined to love to cry (Episode 6

"Kouya", 2001).

One day while protecting the *Kekkai* Sorata is seriously injured while trying to protect her. After the battle Kamui tells Arashi that Sorata's right hand can't move anymore. He lies healing in a bed and awakens to find her looking over him. He says, "It's you, you look beautiful as always!" When he tries to move his hand his eyes flare open as if in shock. After several moments his eyes squint and he smiles, saying, "how stupid of me...I guess I still need some training". Arashi begins to cry, saying, "You did this to protect me." Sorata doesn't want her to cry, he says he can't stand to see a woman cry. If we remember from earlier this is because his only memory of his mother were of her crying as they took him away as a child. He reassures her that this kind of thing will heal soon. "So let me make you something good to eat while it heals. How about seafood spaghetti? My style is the real thing." She shakes her head no and he continues to make suggestions. We see almost a reversal of traditional patriarchal roles where the male seeks to comfort someone he cares about through house hold duties such as cooking. Becoming upset she interrupts him saying, "What about my feelings? You're ignoring my feelings, you got this injury...I" He interrupts her saying, "I know you don't have any feelings for me. I did it because of my own feelings...yours shouldn't matter." Arashi continues, "But they do! Do you really think that I'd be alright if you got injured or even died? I really love.." He touches her and says, "I guess I can understand it in my own way. Will you let me believe that you have feelings for me? A guy like me...". She nods her head. He says "Don't cry. I'm very happy." Arashi responds saying, I never cried in front of anyone before. He says he is the first to have it and asks if he may

kiss her and the scene ends.

When Sorata awakens she is gone and we are shown an image of her heading for the head quarters of the dragon of earth to join him (Episode 20 "Ripple", 2002). As in our previous section this is another topic about human nature that becomes problematized throughout the series (Episode 20 "Ripple", 2002). One of the salient aspects of feminist spirituality is the importance of interconnectedness or relationships. What these images present is a situation where this emphasis on relationships becomes harmful, when it turns into something akin to suffering. The endurance of love and its ability to give someone who has died life beyond death is hard to accept and often only comes with much thought and contemplation. Next this discussion will turn its focus to the cautionary tale of Natakku and what happens when technology replaces direct human connection similar to Satsuki. Furthermore, the role of his creator plays to demonstrate how technology fails to heal the emotion scars of loved one's dying.

Natakku is one of the angels and is sided with the dragon of earth. We learn in Episode 4 "A Sacrifice" (2001) that he is a clone from the Tojiyo pharmacy company. While a group of doctors monitor his vitals the chairman of the company explains, why he named him Natakku. He says, "The name comes from the soulless Chinese mythological god. He began as a mere lump of flesh which was molded into the form of a human body. However, no soul would reside within it. It is the same with Natakku. His body may be human, but he has no soul. No emotions. No sadness or pain. No love or hate. Nothing more than a living organism. This is all for the end of the world (Episode 4 "A Sacrifice", 2001). Natakku is used by both the company and the dragon of earth for

special missions. In fact Nataka is the thief that steals the holy sword from the *Togakushi* shrine and kills Kotori and Fuma's father. Through the entire series, Nataka is used by both sides and neither has much regard for him. He is an implement. The only one who incidentally shows him any affection or regard is the dragon of earth, Fuma. In episode 15 "Guardian" (2002), the dragon of earth explains that he is meant to be with the dragons of earth, but that doesn't mean they must stay together at all times, is there anything he wishes? Nataka says he doesn't know but feels like he should stay with Fuma and places his head on his knee. Fuma asks him why? He explains, "You look like my father". Fuma asks "what did your father used to call you"? Nataka replies, "Kazuki". Fuma responds, "then I will make your wish come true, and the wishes of the entire earth" as it zooms in on his eye in a menacing manner (Episode 15 "Guardian", 2002).

Fuma and Nataka go to the company to retrieve Nataka's life maintenance technology and after they retrieve it they destroy the facility as it was no longer useful. Nataka prepares to kill the chairman of the company when he says, "It would seem the soul in your body and the feelings within you were never there. It's too bad, Kasuki" (Episode 15 "Guardian"). This makes Nataka pause, however, Kamui arrives on the scene and draws Fuma's attention. We are left to wonder how the confrontation between the two ends. Through the entire series, he struggles to discover the purpose of his birth and the nature of his identity. This is discovered in Episode 19 "Inferno" (2002). Satsuki discovers his background through using "Beast" to hack the company's files. Satsuki says, "The chairman of Tojiyo pharmacy company had a granddaughter named Kazuki, she

died from an illness. After that her father committed suicide. At about the same time, the Tojiyo pharmaceutical company started researching clone genetics. In other words, the chairman of Tojiyo used his granddaughter's uterus and his father's corpse to create descendants from them in an attempt to bring them back" (Episode 19 "Inferno", 2002). His character and Karen's character are very similar in that they are both lost and neglected children. In Episode 19 "Inferno" she defeats him in battle and approaches him and looks him in the eyes and says, "Your eyes.. they're like those of a lost boy. That's right just like me" (Episode 19 "Inferno", 2002). Nataku continues to fight battle after battle throughout the series, but always struggles with his identity. In the last episode, "legend" (2002), he is sitting with the dragon of earth, his head laid on his knee. The dragon of earth has been mortally wounded in the previous episode and asks Kazuki/Nataku if he would restore his body. He answers saying, "If that is your wish...", the dragon of earth asks him directly, "what do you wish?" Nataku answer "to be with my father". He stands up and the dragon of earth destroys his clothing, seconds later his body is torn to pieces, with little struggle or even a cry of pain. The blood rejuvenates the dragon of earth.

In Nataku's character we see several themes. One is the suffering of the human condition over grief and the alienation of technology. On one hand the chairman creates Nataku as a replacement for his lost love ones, as a way to restore them. He fails as the creature he creates has no feelings or emotions, or so he describes. In fact, not feeling didn't solve the problem over despair of loved ones but rather led to more violence and suffering. Although he is not the most emotive character in the series, he does appear to

suffer and feel sadness as per his interaction with Karen. In this we show how technology can be a means to overcome grief and death, however, this solution is imperfect and only leads to more alienation and destruction.

In another way, Natakū also resembles some of the dynamics of gendered spirituality as compared to Kamui. Natakū creation symbolizes Freud's thoughts on the impulses of Thanos and Eros in the human psyche, in other words, an impulse towards both death and life respectively, a concept continually addressed in the series. These principles of birth and destruction can be further seen in Campbell's adaptation of Freud and Jung in his discussion of the mother goddess/temptress and god/ogre archetypes in the monomyth. However, the resolutions of opposites is imperfect in Natakū as he struggles in his identity, without gender, or identity he is nothing, as Karen says, "a lost boy". It is also significant to look at what the series presents as a critique of technology and its ability to mimic human nature and interactions, but ultimately fails by alienating people from each other. Instead of Natakū representing mythic synergy of genders in his creation, he becomes lost, a part of nothing and caring for no one. Finally, Natakū's life and his creation become of service to the dragon of earth as he consumes his body for his own personal gain. Natakū becomes subservient to the patriarchal system symbolized by the dragon of earth, which destroys him utterly. This being said he only finds purpose in the end by destroying himself for the person he loves, the father. This concept we will return to in the next section on choice between passive resistance and self-sacrifice.

Choice, Passive Resistance and Self-Sacrifice

Another significant theme in the series is how to deal with violence. A common response to violence is to respond with violence. This continues a chain of violent retribution. Even those who are acting in the defence of others become part of the violent world that is destroying humanity and the earth. How then are people able to respond to violence? This has been a common question in many conflicts throughout world history. There have also been many situations where pacifists use non violent means to protest corrupt governments. The seals of heaven are drawn into similar circumstances.

Yuzuriha for example loses her ability to defend herself when Inuki dies and she is unable to manifest her own holy sword. She is however still able to invoke the *Kekkai* to protect people. If she dies then so does the *Kekkai* (Episode 18 "Newborn", 2002). Subaru is drawn into a similar conflict with Seishiro. We learn that Seishiro planned to kill Subura when he was a child even though Subura loved him. We also learn that Seishiro killed his own mother, so he would become the next blossom star. In Episode 16 "Slaughter" (2002) the scene opens with snow softly falling. We see a flower and then a quick movement and the flower falls to the ground in pieces. The scene opens with Seishiro holding a woman dying on the ground. The woman says, "With this, you have now taken my place as the blossom star. And so, the next one to become this will be the person who kills you". He asks her, "Who will kill me?" and she answers him, "The one that cares for you the most", he says, "I can't have anyone that cares for me." She replies, "A long time ago I thought that way too, until the day I first met you. Goodbye Seishiro. He smells her hands and says, "Goodbye mother". (Episode 16 "Slaughter", 2002). Once

again in this scene there is a purposeful connection between interpersonal relationships and the transformative love that a mother experiences when she has a child.

Seishiro becomes a complex character in that his actions are continuously drawing the two men together in a final conflict. Subaru is then drawn into a difficult situation where he loves Seishiro but recognizes he is a violent force in his life. How is he able to stop him when he loves him and seeks to destroy him? We can see this same scenario presented in the conflict that Kamui must face. How is he able to prevent Fuma from destroying the world if he cannot kill him because he loves him?

Similarly, Arashi defects to the other side and joins the dragons of earth. When Arashi realizes that Sorata will die if their course remains true she becomes a part of the dragon of earth. She believes if she can kill Kamui then Sorata will not die protecting her as Sorata is charged with Kamui's protection. In Episode 23 "Earth" Fuma the dragon of the earth confronts Arashi as he feels that Kamui has awakened his sword, he says, "And a new member has filled in for the dragon of earth. Just as you wished, it is all for the man you love, it is for the man whose destiny is to protect and die for you. In order to change his destiny and protect him there's no choice but to kill Kamui the dragon of the heaven" (2002). She responds asking if she would be here if there was any other choice. Obviously the logic is not consistent because if she destroys Kamui then the world is destroyed and so is Sorata. In Episode 23 "Earth" Aoki offers Subaru an explanation that Karen had thought of, he says, "It could have been a form of love. You and Arashi have strong feeling for each other. That's why she has done this. In other words, Arashi did this to protect you...well for a man it's very complicated to understand how a woman

feels, making this very difficult to grasp. Just that we the seals possess special abilities. And it's a power to be used in order to protect the ones we love. That much is true" (Episode 23 "Earth", 2002). In this Arashi is drawn into a similar death wish, she loves Sorata but cannot live with the thought of him sacrificing himself for her. Sorata is then drawn into a difficult situation where he must defend Kamui to protect the world even if it means killing her.

The road of trials, acted out through the experiences of the seven seals as they confront the seven angels of the apocalypse, broadens our understanding of the quandary that faces Kamui in his final confrontation with the dragon of earth. Yuzuriha and Inuki represent the nature of suffering caused by humanity and the despair associated with death of loved ones. Through Karen and Subaru we see a despair and a death wish or the loss of the will to live when we cannot resolve the paradox between protecting ourselves and others and using violence as a means to accomplish this. Furthermore, Subaru mirrors the paradox that Kamui experiences as he is forced to confront and kill a violent aggressive other who he wishes to transform and save. Karen in a similar way embodies this theme as a child when her mother verbally abuses her. For the child Karen she is unable to resolve the violent verbally abusive mother and what she expects as a primary care giver. Her mother's resulting death ingrains in her a sense of worthlessness and a wish to die if someone should have to risk their lives. As well Sorata and Arashi are drawn into a violent confrontation with each other, which ironically stems from the same desire to protect yet feeling compelled to use violence as a means to end the conflict. Finally, Nataka embodies the dehumanization and alienation that has begun to

break down the social cohesion of humanity. He is a lost empty figure, who ultimately has feelings, but only of sadness. He becomes a non-thing, prone to violence, and acquiesces to the system of violence and destruction embodied by Fuma, the dragon of earth.

Accordingly, we can begin to see the apocalyptic question build upon the experiences of the seven seals. First, humanity has two natures, one is to destroy and the other to connect. Both natures are problematic in that they cause suffering. The former destroys while the latter suffers due to the destruction. This creates a paradox for human behaviour in that we continue to engage in destructive behaviour to protect ourselves from the violent and aggressive other, whose purpose is built on competition, isolation and greed. The challenge for Kamui as a mythic hero is to discover an answer and bring it to life in the real world. The solution that Kamui offers in the narrative is the power of self-sacrifice, whereby aggression is transformed by sacrifice into something that can protect the people we love. Furthermore, there is a solution to death in that by sacrificing ourselves we live on in memories to inspire those who loved us.

A discussion of sacrifice, violence and mercy is essential to the analysis of X/1999, particularly in regard to feminist and pro-feminist underpinnings of the text. This section will briefly outline Rene Girard's theory of violence and sacrifice as it applies to the narrative. It will then discuss feminist criticisms of sacrifice and utilize them to analyze the theme as found throughout the series and most importantly, at the end of the series, when Kamui sacrifices himself to save the world. Scholarly studies of sacrifice are central to anthropological understandings of human interaction, ritual and

social cohesion. As the sacrifice in this narrative is fictitious in nature and not based on any real life examples, this thesis will focus on the semiotics of physical sacrifice as a symbol for personal sacrifice in the life of Japanese women and mothers in particular. As feminist scholar Nancy Jay suggests, certain questions are central to our understanding of the relationship between gender, violence and sacrifice. For example, she asks "what role does sacrificing (in any particular tradition play) in indexing social groups and their boundaries? What kinds of social structures are so identified? Who is included? Who excluded? What is the relation of women, especially child bearing women, to sacrificial practices? How is inter-generational continuity between males maintained? Are there oppositions between sexual reproduction and social reproduction? What forms do they take?"(Jay 1992: 47). Furthermore, this section will touch upon the covert gendered context within the series that sublimates the patriarchal system of dominance as mediated by violence and whether the themes of sacrifice and enduring love actually challenge the patriarchal system.

Similar to myth, a clear and concise definition of sacrifice is difficult to define. According to Mary Condren, sacrifice is largely defined by those who have the power to perform it and then in turn interpret those events. Feminist scholar Mary Condren describes sacrifice as, "a self-referring contextually closed system in which the sacred is that which is made sacred by those with the hegemonic power to decide whatever is going to be made sacred" (Condren 1997: 46). For example, Rene Girard outlines a theory of myth whereby violence and the inevitable sacrifice are mitigated by imitation rather than scarcity of resources (Townesley: 2003). In Rene Girard theory of violence

and sacrifice, the scenario begins by the production of conflict between two individuals based on what he calls "acquisitive mimesis" (Girard 1979: 9). According to Girard, conflict begins when two individuals desire same thing, suggesting that scarcity of resources can be a factor in producing conflict and violence, but that it insufficiently accounts for violence in human and animal behaviour. In Girard's theory conflict occurs due to a second participant observing that the first participant desires an object. Consequently, it is the imitation of desire rather than the need for the object itself that creates the conflict (Girard 1979: 10). There then occurs a transition from "external mimesis", (where competition arises to attain said object), transforming into "internal mimesis", whereby the desire to compete and triumph over "the other" takes precedence over the acquisition of the object itself, which he calls "conflictual mimesis" (Girard 1965: 9). This conflict can then turn into aggression or violence depending on means used to resolve the conflict. One such means to end the conflict is the scapegoat or sacrificial other. In scapegoating, a third agent, usually an unwitting outsider is blamed for the resulting conflict and is summarily sacrificed bringing an end to the conflict (Girard 1977: 2). This said, the end of the conflict and resulting peace is only temporary in as much as the ritualistic repetition of sacrifice acts as a cathartic act to break growing tensions. Gender plays an integral role in sacrifice as women are often the scapegoat of patriarchal tensions and dichotomous gender associations in regard to spiritual principles suggest that sacrifice is a means in which the patriarchy asserts it's self over matriarchy.

Although gender isn't a common issue that scholars who study sacrifice address, feminist authors see implications in patriarchal sacrifice which both limit and condemn

women. As such the patriarchal separation of the genders as sacred/profane, spirit/body, clean/unclean make women in a patriarchal view "unfit" to participate in sacrifice. According to scholars such as Mary Condren, women are not permitted to perform sacrifice in most cultures (Condren 1995: 162). From a feminist perspective, sacrifice is a means for the patriarchal system to usurp the matriarchal social organizational role they carry through performing childbirth. According to Mary Condren on blood sacrifice in particular, "Blood sacrificial rites are a specific form of mediative reproductive labour enabling patri-centered forms of social organization to supersede the matri-centered world and generating patriarchal systems of representation" (Condren 1995: 162). Moreover, in sacrifice and through the classical representation of the feminine symbolizing the body, women are made responsible for keeping men from attaining immortality. One can even see this theme evident in Joseph Campbell's monomythic model, where in myth, women act as the symbol of the body, life and death, beyond which, they are blamed as a source of temptation and corruption. Theories of sacrifice are also problematic from a feminist perspective in that their description of human behaviour are focused on violence as the primary means to end conflict and moreover posit that aggression, violence and competition are seated at the center of human interaction and are the most influential. Mary Condren suggests that such understandings of violence don't account for alternative models of behaviour, such as mercy or what Mary Condren calls "womb-love" (Condren 1997: 34). Nancy Jay adds to these criticisms, focusing on Rene Girard's patriarchal model of sacrifice in particular, pointing out that within this model, "everything that arises from sociability of mothers and infants

or from an other affectionate relationship is irrelevant" (Jay 1992: 132). What then can these theories and criticisms of myth tell us about the sacrifice in *X/1999*, are all of them essentially the same or does the message change depending on the context?

As we have seen in the previous chapter on gendered spirituality, sacrifice has associations with motherhood in Japanese society. The sacrifice we are speaking of in Japanese society is obviously not a physical sacrifice of life. The sacrifices of motherhood, such as self-determination and self-need could be compared to a physical sacrifice, as they both require that a person dedicate their being to the preservation of the greater good. The greater good in this symbol of motherhood is the welfare of their children; however, the moral edict to be drawn from this is that we should all sacrifice of ourselves for the welfare of our loved ones and the society in which they may discover their happiness. Furthermore, the sacrifices which mothers have experienced in Japanese society have been socially and historically constructed as a rejuvenating force for the nation of Japan. This has been valorized into a formidable symbol. It suggests that mothers, and to a greater extent women, generally support their families and nation by giving up their personal ambitions and dreams. What is suggested in the narrative is that this sacrificial behaviour displayed by mothers and valorized in Japanese society is an example that is relevant for all people, men and woman alike. This theme of self-sacrifice is evident through several episodes in the series.

The first incident occurs between Saiki and Princess Hinoto. Saiki is the guardian of Princess Hinoto and wants to do anything possible to protect her. In Episode 15 "Guardian" (2002), the dragon of earth tries to kill Kamui. Kamui has built a resolve to

defeat Fuma despite the misgivings he has experienced. Kamui strikes Fuma and puts his fist through Fuma's shoulder but Fuma does not die. Fuma chuckles, saying it was Kamui's only chance, but before Fuma can attempt to kill Kamui, Saiki interferes trying to protect him. The dragon of earth approaches Saiki, asking him who is it he wants to protect? Saiki is embarrassed by his feelings for princess Hinoto but he wants to do everything to save her. Princess Hinoto, seeing this, sends charms to protect him and puts herself in harm's way. Fuma as dragon of earth breaks through her barriers and continues to attack them. Saiki stands and shouts, "Stop this, stop, I won't let that happen!" Fuma as the dragon of earth, looks into Saiki's death wish and says, "That's right, because that's the only reason why you go on. Your wish is to sacrifice your life in order to save Princess Hinoto. To save princess Hinoto and die, that wish I will grant!" (Episode 16 "Slaughter", 2002). Saiki stands to confront Fuma. Where Saiki is not a seal he does not last very long and dies in the episode before help arrives. This episode foreshadows the coming theme that emerges in Kamui's story arc, that if we should die protecting the people we love, then that death has meaning.

This theme is also evident in the next episode "Slaughter" (2002) where Subaru confront Sakurazuka Seishiro on the rainbow bridge spanning Tokyo Bay. At this time in the series Subaru has lost his eye in a fight with Fuma. From this conflict we learn (by means of Fuma's ability to read death wishes) that what Subaru wishes for is a death far different than Seishiro's. When Subaru first learns of his sister's death his entire existence is dedicated to avenging her and killing Seishiro, however, that desire changed over time. Enthralling Subaru, Fuma grants a part of his wish and removes his right eye.

We know from the series Tokyo Babylon that Seishiro lost his eye while protecting Subaru. Remember Subaru seemingly wants to destroy Seishiro because he killed his sister but this is called into question by Fuma's words. Subaru is unsure of how he will kill Seishiro but he is dedicated to create the *Kekkai* and prevent another seal from breaking, even if this should mean his own death (Episode 16 "Slaughter", 2002). This relationship can be compared to the conflict that Kamui will later have as he confronts Fuma as the protective father/ogre archetype. For the hero to fully grasp the boon of the initiation stage he must confront the ogre monster and transform him into a protective father image. This is accomplished by giving up egocentric conceptions of self and becoming fully actualized to take the place of the father. By comparison, both Subaru and Kamui are not violent individuals, yet here they find themselves in circumstances where they are being forced into becoming violent. By Subaru losing his eye it repays the debt between him and Seishiro, as Seishiro lost his eye protecting Subaru as a child; furthermore, symbolically Subaru is becoming similar in appearance to Seishiro, which can lead us to believe that he is preparing himself to become violent like him as well. Subaru and Kamui's struggle demonstrates the adaptation of the male ego to become violent as the patriarchal form of masculinity that also threatens them but coaxes them to become like it. It is their triumph over it and the recognition of a new option that is the boon that the hero brings about in real life.

Through the clairvoyant powers of Princess Hinoto, Subaru and Seishiro meet and are drawn into a long confrontation on the Rainbow bridge. The battle rages back and forth until in one final desperate act they both attack. When the final blow is made

Subaru is surprised to find he has won and has killed Seishiro. We are lead to assume that he did not attack in the final moment and allowed Seishiro to kill him. Subaru asks what has happened. Seishiro explains to Subaru that his sister had cast a spell that if he used the same technique to kill her brother then it would be turned on himself. Subaru cannot understand why he would do this knowing what would happen. Subaru reveals what his real wish was, he says, "You killed my sister and vanished in front of me. Deep inside me, I had the urge to kill you. I thought I'd erase all traces of your existence from my heart. But I couldn't do it. That's why, I thought I wanted you to kill me, to forget even when you would kill me" (Episode 16 "Slaughter", 2002). Seishiro explains, "'If you thought about it, you wouldn't have the guts to kill anyone. You..it's because you are very kind'" (Episode 16 "Slaughter", 2002). He whispers something to Subaru before dies that we never hear. Subaru cries holding Seishiro dead body, asking why he never said those words when he had expected them from him. The rest of the seven seals watch as Subaru holds him, the *Kekkai* begins to fade as his heart breaks and for the time being he is no longer able to produce the protective barrier.

In subsequent episodes he enters a comatose state and is unable to form the *Kekkai*, much like when his sister died. Before he becomes completely comatose, Kamui and Subaru talk about what happened, in their conversation Subaru says, "If he knew where I was, then why didn't he come to kill me? He believed that I was not up to the task of taking a life. That's why I wanted to grow stronger. To prove to him that my existence wasn't something to be underestimated, to become a person who could kill. But I had misunderstood. As a person dies, is what they say actually the truth? Even now, I

don't know, because I can't ask anymore. Kamui...don't let this bother you...You should only be thinking about what you wish for." Kamui asks, "Even if this wish causes someone unhappiness?". Subaru answers, "There is no way for everyone to have happiness" (Episode 16 "Slaughter" 2002). No matter what we do there will still be suffering. Kamui does not have an answer and the scene fades to black.

Several things are significant in regard to the gendered spirituality expressed in Subaru and Seishiro's sub-plot. To begin, their relationship could be considered *Yaoi* - or the expression of male to male romantic love in Japanese *anime*. This is significant not only in that it reflects the platonic relationship that exists between Fuma and Kamui but also that it explores the relationship between the expression of love amongst men and the theme of violent patriarchal masculinity. As mentioned previously Seishiro represents the confrontation of the protective father/ogre figure in Campbell's model of the monomyth. He is symbolic, much like Fuma, of violent patriarchal masculinity. Their relationship then ultimately becomes a struggle for Subaru about his own gendered identity and the moral repercussions. First, their relationship in the *anime Tokyo Babylon* begins much like many *Yaoi* titles with a larger more aggressive male (Seishiro) and a smaller more submissive male (Subaru) (Suzuki 1998: 253). As Subaru gets older their respective roles become equalized in that Subaru evens the score for Seishiro's sacrifice of an eye while protecting Subaru as a child. For Subaru the struggle in their "relationship" is the same struggle that Kamui experiences with patriarchal masculinity. When confronted with violence, how is someone able to respond? The general human experience of both compassion and love is specifically embodied in a romanticized

relationship. Subaru ultimately crumbles in regard to his question as he has given up trying to save Seishiro and wants Seishiro to kill him. Seishiro he is able to resolve the uncontrolled and violent passion within himself as he uses this violence to protect Subaru, using the spell that Subaru's sister has cast to protect Subaru and destroy himself. To draw further parallels to gendered spirituality it is worth noting that Seishiro gained his position as the dragon of earth by killing his mother and taking her place. This is similar to the way Subaru gained his position as the dragon of heaven as he took his sister's place after she died. We also see in a flashback sequence that after Seishiro has killed his mother and holds her while she is dying. She professes love for him and reveals that she has foreseen that he is capable of love, and in fact it is the person that he loves which will one day kill him. He says then it is impossible for anyone to kill him, although his mother's words makes him curious. His mother's revelation of these facts once again draws together the symbol of sacrificial motherhood to the overarching plot of the series. Lastly, Subaru's final confession before he enters the coma demonstrates the pull he feels as a male to respond to patriarchal violence by becoming violent in turn. His perception had changed that perhaps the violence he sought to counter really existed in him, that Seishiro never came for him not because he thought he was weak, but because he loved him. As this juncture in the series Subaru re-enters a coma, however, later in the series he will awaken and with his awakening he will assist Kamui in his final revelation as the dragon of heaven and in learning the power of self-sacrifice.

This theme can also be seen in Episode 21 "Current" (2002) which surrounds the characters Karen and Aoki. Karen has drawn herself into a conflict with one of the

dragons of the earth. In this battle Karen is trying to protect Aoki who has been bound with electrical wires by another dragon of the earth. During the sequence of the battle Karen is engulfed in a tower of water, the trident that Yuto carries poised to strike her. Yuto says, "I didn't want to cut your throat so I will have you drown to death. That's too bad. In the end, you weren't able to protect anyone" (Episode 21 "Current", 2002). The shot changes to close up on Karen's upper face, her eyes open wide as she realizes what he is telling her is the truth. Her face screws up in what resembles anger and determination and she takes her cross in her hand. A light grows and she bursts into a large explosion of fire. The cross begins to glow brightly and a large explosion emanates from her body, killing both herself and the dragon of earth, saving Aoki. In this episode Karen purportedly quotes from the Christian book of Revelations in her explanation for why she battles. "When one grain falls towards the earth and dies, its roots will grow to link with others. A verse from the Book of Revelations...It means that one should sacrifice your own life for someone precious so that they may be able to live on in the world" (Episode 21 "Current", 2002). Although this quote does not exist within the Book of Revelations it is however attributed to the gospel of John, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit" (John 12:24). This quote is consistent with her explanation that if someone dies in the service of protecting others then it allows the people they love to live on and grow strong. The power of self-sacrifice that Karen embodies is based in love, even if it should lead to the destruction of herself she is willing to go to those extremes to protect people. Aoki despairs over Karen's death, holding her as she dies. In

this scene we see both the significance of sacrifice in the series but also how it is problematized.

Certainly Karen dies heroically to protect the people she loves, however, she is unable to circumvent the other negative aspects of nature. She is unable to stop from using violence and she is unable to prevent grief in others, as with her death Aoki will grieve for her. Karen could be described as an unfulfilled mother character within the story. Her own experiences with motherhood through the eyes of a child are tainted by her mother's violence. Her mother's violence stems from her own frustrations with a patriarchal society, she becomes pregnant, abandoned and then had to hide within a convent to cover her "shame". These feelings are internalized in Karen as self loathing. Karen considers herself with disregard and idealizes Aoki as the perfect male companion, both as a strong father and husband. Her rationale for this behaviour stemmed from a priest who was kind to Karen after her mother's death. Karen tries to frighten the priest but he says all he sees is a frightened child and he tells her he does not think her powers are from the devil. He says, "'The person possessing such power is the one to determine whether or not it should be used for good or bad. I don't know the meaning of that power. However, I believe that's why you were born, god had given you this power. One day for certain he will show you it's meaning...Believe in yourself. And until god has given you an answer, you should keep it deep within your heart" (Episode 19 "Inferno", 2002). During this scene the camera pans upward to show a statue of a young woman holding a baby, we can assume that this would be an image of Mary as it is in a Christian church. Karen's character participates in an exaggerated form of the sacrificial

mother in that she gives up her own life and body to kill Yuto so that she may save Aoki. She finds peace in the end as her actions, although resulting in her death, saved Aoki. She is unable to circumvent the human condition of death and suffering unfortunately as Aoki grieves for her. Hers is an important example for Kamui and instrumental in his journey as it demonstrates that to become the dragon of heaven it is not enough to become strong, determined or powerful, violence can only perpetuate the cycle of suffering, Kamui must dig deeper.

Another scene that has significance to Kamui's ultimate trial and confrontation in the Episode 18 "New Born" (2002). As previously described, in this Episode 18 Inuki dies saving Yuzuriha . At the very last moment her friend Kusanagi saves her and brings her to a hospital. When she wakes up she grieves for the death of Inuki. She talks to Kusanagi and explains to him how horribly she failed.

Yuzuriha: Inuki is.... because I couldn't answer...and now Inuki is...Why can't we kill humans? I needed to answer but I didn't know it. Because I didn't say anything...I had to say something but I only hesitated even longer...and there is nothing I could do. Inuki just wanted to defend me. It's all my fault!

Kusanagi: It's not your fault.

Yuzuriha: It is my fault as I didn't know the answer!

Kusanagi: But you did know the answer, Miss. You knew the answer. You did. Look, this is your answer. [Kusanagi reaches out and touches her tears] Why can't we kill humans? That's because people who cry exist. And it's not just humans. When a living thing dies, there will always be others that are sad. Miss, you feel sad if someone dies right? Whether a stranger...or not even human. Even if it's someone they knew or didn't know, they will still mourn. That's why we shouldn't kill" (Episode 18 "Newborn", 2002).

He explains to her that it was why Inuki died to protect her. Kusanagi convinces her to

grow strong and to live to remember Inuki.

Later the next day Yuzuriha is walking down the street reflecting on the past few days and that she would do everything she could to protect the world as Inuki protected her. As she continues to walk down the street she meets Fuma, the dragon of earth who has been following her. Immediately, she creates her *Kekkai* which surprises the dragon of earth. The dragon of earth pursues her relentlessly and she is unable to protect herself as her powers were inherent in Inuki. He presses her till he draws her to a precipice and she can retreat no farther. The dragon of earth looks into her mind and can read her wishes. He taunts her. He says he can tell that she grieves and would rather die. She does not answer which only gives him an opening to bring about her previous failure.

Fuma: But, it feels like you suffered too much. I see. You've lost someone important. I know. You suffer so much that you would rather die. That's what you think, am I wrong? It seems you won't answer again. Why don't we find out? If...you truly wish not to die, then maybe you won't die.

Yuzuriha: Inuki sacrificed his life to save me, if I die, Inuki will be the one who would mourn the most.

Fuma: Maybe Inuki would be happier if you were with him?

Yuzuriha: No! If my *Kekkai* breaks, then many people will die...and many will mourn.

Fuma: If everyone dies, then all of the ones who mourn would also be dead (Episode 18 "Newborn" 2002).

She turns in defiance to the dragon of earth who is poised to kill her. She tells him that she will never give up. Yuzuriha wants to stay alive because she knows that Inuki would grieve for her and if she dies then her *Kekkai* will fade and many more will die and mourn. She says, "Inuki will mourn...[she knows he would mourn because] he's here,

right here in my heart...That's why I...will live on! I won't cry anymore. I don't want anyone else to be sad. To protect everyone! Always!" (Episode 18 "Newborn", 2001).

A light then emerges from her chest and from within Yuzuriha a ball of blue light emerges preventing the dragon of earth from attacking. The light lands in front of Yuzuriha and becomes a young wolf pup. The dragon of earth attempts to strike again and Yuzuriha takes the puppy in her arms defensively. The dragon of earth decides to call off his attack for now. As we can see when the screen pulls outwards Kusanagi has his palm extended and is prepared to attack the dragon of earth if he attacks Yuzuriha.

In this episode Yuzuriha becomes a perfect example for Kamui and his ultimate transformation. When she is faces the danger imposed on her by the dragon of earth, she acts differently than her counterpart, Satsuki, instead of lashing out in violence she embodies hope. Inuki appears as a force to protect her rather than destroy Fuma, the power that protects her in the end is the relationship she has fostered with Kusunagi. Where Satsuki gives up on the power of social engagement Yuzuriha embodies it, which empowers her to protect and in fact gives life to those she loves. This will be a significant example of humanity's ability to survive the apocalypse and motivate Kamui's final transformation into the dragon of heaven. This said, it is significant to point out that nearing the end of the series in episode 23 "Earth" (2002), Yuzuriha is unable to transform Inuki back into his dog form and he remains as a sword. Kusunagi has been injured and she is unable to create a *Kekkai*. This could suggest that although she is dedicated to protecting the ones she loves fear still causes her to act with violence. Therefore, she doesn't make the final transformative act that Kamui does at the end of the

series as she still uses the sword as a symbol of violence to protect herself.

A subsequent example of self-sacrifice would be between the characters Sorata and Arashi. In Episode 23, Sorata and Arashi are drawn into a conflict, Arashi has defected and become one of the dragons of earth and has pledged to kill Kamui. Sorata struggles with this and cannot understand why Arashi would make this choice. In Episode 23 Earth (2002), Sorata is contemplating these events when Aoki visits him. Sorata explains that he does not understand why she defects. Aoki explains to him that, "it's very complicated to understand how a woman feels, making this very difficult to grasp. Just that we the seals possess special abilities. And it's a power to be used in order to protect the ones we love" (Episode 23 "Earth", 2002). Sorata contemplates these words and finally comes to the realization that she has defected to the other side to protect him. If his destiny is to protect Kamui but to die protecting her then the only way she can alter his future is to join the dragon of earth and kill Kamui.

As Kamui pulls the sword, from the magic and technological complex referred to as the heart of divine protection, he is compelled to meet with Fuma and do battle. They meet one night near the docks in Tokyo harbour but instead of doing battle with Fuma it is Arashi he meets with the intent to kill him. However, Sorata arrives and will not let her destroy him. It is his destiny after all to protect Kamui. In a stand off they both compose their powers ready to strike but stop at the last minute and are unable to kill each other. Fuma the dragon of earth finds this unacceptable and causes an explosion. He takes Arashi by the throat and explains his disappointment, that even as a dragon of earth she has betrayed him. He poses to strike her down with the holy sword. This is

something she accepts and waits for the killing blow. The screen closes in on her face as we hear the sound of the sword strike and traces of blood to spatter on her face. She looks up shocked to find that Sorata has thrown himself in front of the sword and impaled himself. Sorata then takes hold of the sword and takes all his power and channels a large lighting bolt into the dragon of earth, withering half of his face and body in blue lightening. By doing this he has protected both Kamui and Arashi. Arashi holds Sorata while he lays dying and begs her to stay alive as living proof that he existed. He says, "Promise me Arashi, that you will live on for me. That will be the living proof I exist" (Episode 23 "Earth", 2002). In this scene we see some of the final hints of the ultimate question facing Kamui, that although we die and may cause people suffering we do so to protect the ones we love. Furthermore, in human love there is life beyond death, that we exist to inspire the hearts of the ones we love. It is through them we find true immortality.

Through the course of the trials in X/1999 we see several related themes that are contextualized through an exploration of gendered spirituality. First, the episode concerning Yuzuriha and Satsuki discuss the destructive nature of humanity in disregard to the preservation of both life and the environment. This is a theme also present in feminist spirituality in that the world has been pillaged and subjugated similar to the treatment of women in world history. Secondly, we see that the values and morals of patriarchal society such as violence, competition and greed are socialized in both men and women. Furthermore, this contemporary world has begun to alienate us through the use of technology. Examples of this include Karen's childhood abuse, Satsuki's

homicidal tendencies caused by the presence of technology and the absence of loving parental figures, and lastly, Nataka the clone, who by his very nature is predisposed to lack emotions and is human yet no more than a manufactured item. Moreover, this despair and suffering is healed in the series through social engagement and love, yet even this is debilitated by the grief felt when people die and the reality that we can't control the actions of people who still insist on acting violently. Further still, there is a sense of despair communicated through the series in that destiny is fixed and that we have no choices. This ultimately has a feminist and pro-feminist context in that women have been historically subjugated by patriarchal definitions of femininity, what now becomes the pivotal question for Kamui, is whether he can overcome the patriarchal definitions of masculinity and seek to shape his future and the future of the world. Finally, these situations are only resolved when people begin to stop acting outwards towards the violent other and rather act with compassion and love, even if it means it will destroy them. Later in the section entitled, Confrontation with the Ogre, this chapter will address Kamui's final revelation and self-sacrifice, applying it to the theories of sacrifice examined in this section. These circumstances, therefore, have a gendered spiritual context in that motherhood is a continual symbolic image drawn on through the series to discuss these themes. At every turn a mother figure is literally present to represent love, power and support of the community. Examples we have discussed so far are Seishiro's mother, Sorata's mother, the statue of the Christian figure of Mary. Furthermore, more than just a symbol it is an example whereby the life experience of a mother is useful in understanding human nature (Ochs 1997:31), i.e. Unconditional love for a child they

cannot always hope to control, the urge to protect and support a child so that they grow and become strong, giving up the needs of the self to help the child, and lastly, that mothers are not innately perfect and they too can equally participate in violence and exploitation of their child. Seeing as we have begun to touch on the concept of motherhood and how it acts as a context of spiritual discussion, this chapter will begin to appraise the role that motherhood plays in the series and how well adapted Campbell's model is in examining it.

Mother Archetype and the Physical World

Throughout our analysis of the television series X/1999 we have returned to the theme of the sacrificial mother figure. In this stage of Joseph Campbell's monomythic journey, the hero finally meets the embodiment of the goddess who at once is reminiscent of his mother, romantic love and the larger symbol of creation and love as a whole. In this section we will look at the importance that Joseph Campbell places on the goddess in the hero's psyche as embodiment of both the physical world, comfort and bliss. From there we will describe how the series treats the hero's *meeting with the goddess*, what she represents for the hero and what messages she communicates to him.

Campbell describes this mother goddess by using many well documented and traditional examples in myth. In these myths she embodies qualities such as the power of creativity, nature and love. According to Campbell, from a psychological perspective the goddess represents the "good mother" – the promise to the hero of all desire and bliss. She, as primary care giver symbolically represents all joy in life. The goddess also,

according to Campbell, represents the benign protective power of destiny, similar to the image presented of a child protected and peaceful within the womb. However, seeing that she is symbolic of the physical body she is also symbolic of its lesser favourable qualities. According to Campbell she embodies: death, aging, and sickness in myth. In this symbolic image Campbell refers to her as "the bad mother" (Campbell 1949: 111). Drawing on Freud, Campbell explains that the goddess represents a child's infantile response to the world (Campbell 1949: 5-7). Since mothers are the primary care givers and primary source of both nourishment and care, biology facilitates the representation of mothers as this cultural symbol universally. The goddess as representative of the mother can also present limits to the hero. This results from the mother's ability to restrict the child's environment and behaviour either due to practical concerns or socialization through obedience. Accordingly, she becomes at once life giving and destroying, beautiful or ugly, dependent on the egocentric mind of a child.

The goddess is also symbolic of the physical body and, subsequently, the physical senses. Therefore, she is often described as the guide to all those things that can be learned through the senses of the human body. According to Campbell, "she is the guide to the sublime acme of sensuous adventure" (1949: 116). She lures, she guides, "she bids him burst his fetters". Once again in this image we can see the reciprocal of the goddess representing the infantile mind of the child that is later personified in her divine presence of the goddess. Furthermore, characteristic of Campbell's work, the goddess is perceived only through the male perspective.

Various images of the motherhood and goddess imagery are tied together through

out the series. In this narrative gendered roles and expectations are set in opposition. On one side we have the patriarchal system of violence, competition, alienation and individualization. On the other we have a supposed matriarchal system that advocates for sacrifice of the self for others, communalism, emotional availability and protection. Although these philosophies are gendered, ultimately these systems have a root in all of human behaviour. It is through feminist consciousness-raising that spirituality is expressed through this narrative. Therefore, what we will begin to do is examine how the symbol of sacrificial love is contextualized in goddess and mother imagery and the significance that role plays for Kamui throughout the course of his journey. It will briefly reference parental figures we have already discussed leading to Kamui's *meeting with the goddess* in Episode 17 - "Wish" (2001).

To fully expand upon the mother goddess imagery we must begin with Kamui's own mother, Kamui's Aunt Tokiko, and Saya, the mother of Kotori and Fuma. These figures are associated with self-sacrifice and destiny throughout the series. They give up their lives so that Kamui might one day be able to come into his power and possibly save the world. Each woman is bound to this by their destiny. For themselves they have no choice, they sacrifice themselves so that he might be able to choose the fate of the world. As we discussed in the herald figure section, Kotori's mother is associated with self-sacrifice, in this we can see sun/light/fire imagery associated with her character, the sun motifs on the parasol, the setting sun on the water contextualized around her character, and lastly her dying in the fire to assist Kamui in the future and to prevent a sin from passing on to him. In this sense one could compare this sacrifice and the birth of the

sword as comparable to Marian imagery and the immaculate conception. However, the “sin” as it is described in the translation would differ in a Japanese context as compared to Christian context. In a Christian context the sin of the immaculate conception is prevented through Mary's mother abstaining from the sexual act and therefore the inheritance of original sin. In this context her sacrifice is drawn from the image of motherhood in Japanese society that presents for Kamui a means to transcend the violent forces compelling him to act. We can also see mother imagery and sacrifice in Tokiko and Saya's characters. Each brings their respective holy sword into the world through their bodies and each dies in the process. One could interpret that to give birth to the swords as symbols of violence and the patriarchy leaves women to blame for the patriarchy. However, this can be argued to be the ironic in the sense that women give birth to and largely socialize the men that persecute them. Furthermore, it is as significant that these women give birth to the children which can break the cycle of patriarchal violence through their behaviour. As such, I would not consider their role as being to blame for the patriarchy, as much as suggesting that women participate with men to perpetuate it, yet through socialization and social engagement can also produce the solution to it.

Even Hinoto's role draws upon this goddess imagery and represents both the good and bad mother. She guides the hero, gives him charms, reassures him of his destiny. She even plays a part in delaying the inevitable apocalypse by her power binding the sword. Yet she is also dangerous, we discover that she has betrayed Kamui. Hinoto has been possessed by an evil spirit who causes her to send the seven seals to their deaths. The

evil spirit plays upon Hinoto's ability as a dream-gazer, her power to see an accurate future. This demon plays on her pride and her identity as a seer. Although Hinoto wishes for the future to change and the world to be saved her identity as the perfect seer is compromised if Kamui should discover a way to overcome his destiny. As her demon says in Episode 22 "Betrayal" (2002), "The dragon of heaven will die. The future will be as the dream has shown. I will continue to be the dream-gazer. [Evil Laughter]".

There can only be one future. This can be seen in the Episode 22 "Betrayal" (2002) when Sorata and Subaru discover Hinoto's betrayal. Kamui says, "Something's different when you compare the spirit of this charm to the Hinoto that we see. Hinoto always seemed like water or air always transparent and weak. But the feeling I'm getting from this charm is heat like from fire or lava, it's so strong and intense" (Episode 22 "Betrayal", (2002). Subaru wonders if this could be an evil spirit, Kamui agrees. Watching from her dreamscape Hinoto's alter-ego reveals the truth of her identity. "It seems they have figured it out, however, it doesn't matter. No matter what they do, there's no more time. He will come here soon. What excuse will you give them for the things you have done? Let go. You've suffered enough. You have continued to live only as a dream-gazer. Now, let go of everything. I shall grant your wish. You won't have to feel sad or suffer any longer. Sleep and don't worry. After all, that's the path a dream-gazer takes. Sleep. Entrust yourself to me"(Episode 22 "Betrayal", 2002).

The symbolic imagery that surrounds this character takes several forms. Often she is associated with the full moon which is a very common symbol for mother goddess imagery. Furthermore, when she foresees the future it is often filled with white feathers.

Until Kotori's death we are only left to assume that the feathers are connected to Kamui as an angel. However, they are more clearly linked to Kotori as the loose feathers drift from her as she dies and departs. These white feathers in relation to Hinoto turn black when her actions become focus on her own self centered desires intensified by the evil spirit. As well, Hinoto is also connected to the theme of self-sacrifice.

Near the end of the series the evil spirit has fully possessed Hinoto. In previous scenes the spirit appeared as exact twin of Hinoto, often embracing her from behind. In this episode 22 "Betrayal" it has fully taken over. The evil Hinoto sits on the surface while the real Hinoto floats like a mirror reflection beneath her. As the evil spirit gloats over it's success, the real princess Hinoto trapped underneath awakens and takes matters into her own hands. We see her draw her dagger and kill herself. In doing so taking the evil spirit with her. Princess Hinoto knows that if she kills herself her powers will fade and the binding of the holy sword will fade, she worries that Kamui is still not yet ready but she has faith in him that he can change the future. Either way she knows she cannot continue harming the people or the world she cares about. In Episode 22 "Betrayal" she says,

I have wished for the future to change. My existence is meaningless...Kamui, just as you have doubted I am a sinner. My heart has wavered all of your destinies to be unsettled. There is not time for apology. I have wished for the future to change. I wanted you to change it. But the end is near. ... with my death the power to seal the sword will be broken with the seal. Broken the power of Kamui for the dragon of earth can't be stopped. That's why you must immediately retrieve the sword. But Kamui you haven't fully awakened as the dragon of heaven yet. You won't be able to use the sword to its fullest extent. But even so I want to believe in you. Will you let me, Kamui? (Episode 22 "Betrayal" 22).

Up until now these have been images of motherhood associated through the various scenes and proto-models of the goddess. However, the penultimate representation of the goddess in the series is Kotori who comes to Kamui in a dreamscape created by Kakyo and delivers to him the power he needs to change the future, although at the time he has not fully assimilated it and will not until the last scene on Tokyo Tower. We have already touched briefly on elements that associated Kotori with the mother goddess imagery in the series, therefore, the following section will begin our discussion of Kotori upon her death.

In Kotori's death scene we find similar goddess images associated with her death, her sacrifice and her destiny. Her death dream takes place upon a beach, the ocean prominently figuring in the back ground. It is a bright sunny day, and when she finally dies she gains wings. As she flies away her dream of the future is revealed, that the future is not decided. As she flies away white feathers fill the air, similar to the imagery of white feathers that fill all the dreams and prophecies throughout the series. The only time they depart from the feather imagery is in one scene where Subaru shows his memories in them, cherry blossoms replace the feathers, and cherry blossoms are once again associated with sacrifice and mother hood in Japanese society.

Kamui finally meets with Kotori as a full embodiment of Goddess imagery in his dreamscape. In Episode 17, Kamui is sitting in the tree that they buried Kotori beneath. This imagery of the tree is another symbol that connects the present events to the past scene connecting Kotori, the bird's nest and the world navel discussed previously in the *initiation* section. As he begins to fall asleep, the dragon of earth dreamer enters his

dreams. He explains to Kamui that the reason he suffers is because he hopes. If he continues to hope then he will suffer more. This is a ploy by the dragon of earth to undermine Kamui. Kamui opens his eyes to find himself hanging suspended by white wires, his body torn and bleeding, particularly in the image of him bleeding from his eyes, with demon wings sprouting from his back. Kakyo greets him saying, "You have suffered long enough, both your heart and your body. Will you let this end? Will you stop wishing...if you continue your wish, there will only be more suffering. You know things you don't want to know. See things that shouldn't be seen. Even still...will you continue to wish? I am Kakyo dream-gazer from the dragon of earth. I know both your past and future from my dreams. I know everything about you...everything has been repeated just as my dreams show. Now you can believe, even the things that you choose not to accept. All of the things you wish to forget (Episode 17 "Wish", 2002). This episode recaps the events of the series up until now, all the things that Kamui could not face, all his pain, all his suffering, all his mistakes. After tallying all his misdeeds and failed endeavours Kakyo asks him if he will still continue to hope even though there will be more suffering to come.

Kakyo: You have been defeated by Kamui from the dragon of earth [sometimes Fuma is referred to as Kamui as he is his twin or Gemini] you couldn't grasp the ability to create a *Kekkai*, and even lost some of your companions in the process, as you have suffered. Everything was exactly as my dreams have shown. Even now do you still wish? If all that awaits you is an even deeper sorrow. What will you do Kamui?

Kamui: Now, if Fuma and I are the same Kamui, then I am the only one who can stop him. I will not lose sight of my path.

Kakyo: And with that power...Do you intend to hurt him?

Kamui: Yes. I have already decided I will bring Fuma back.

Kakyo: The Kamui that causes you pain is also another part of yourself. If you know this, then maybe.

Kamui: But why? If you're the dream-gazer for the dragon of earth, then why are you telling me this?

Kakyo: I know how this battle will end. However, even if I know, it still can't be changed. That's why I want to believe in what the girl has said (Episode 17 "Wish", 2002).

The scene pulls back to show Kamui head hung low, arms suspended outward, almost a Christ like imagery. Kakyo looks to his right and a burst of radiant light fills the area. From it Kotori descends upon white wings, smaller orbs of light floating all around her. She approaches Kamui, healthy, alive, her arm posed with a sense of empowerment. Kamui tries to apologize, he feels bad because she has protected him when he was supposed to protect her. She says, "There's no need for you to apologize, it was after all what I was destined for. Don't cry I will always be with you inside your heart and I will always be wishing for the one I love who can save the brother that I love. I believe in you. Anything that tries to defeat you only makes you stronger and also... the future is still undecided. It's still not decided" (Episode 17 "Wish", 2002). At this Kamui's eyes open wider, the look of suffering on his face easing. His eyes well with tears and he repeats her words that he also believes. Kamui awakens to an image of the sun breaking through the leaves of the tree.

In these images the mother goddess image represents the love and bliss associated with motherhood, and the power of self-sacrifice associated with motherhood. It also

represents hope and empowerment in the face of death and suffering. Remaining steadfast in his desire to save Fuma rather than giving into despair and violence is the major way that Kamui embodies mother-goddess imagery. These aspects of goddess imagery will become increasingly important in his final confrontation with Fuma, the dragon of earth. This is a significant point within the series for the themes of suffering, self-sacrifice, the dead living on in the living are all tied together in the image of Kotori. What now becomes the task of the hero is to apply this principle to his confrontation with Fuma and to save the world.

In addition to images of the goddess as mother, Campbell's monomyth also associates the goddess with temptation. According to Campbell, (Campbell 1949: 122) once the Goddess has been attained, she must be left behind to confront the God. Campbell shows how patriarchy links the physical and incarnate world, represented as women, to the quality of sinfulness. Women become devilish sexual tempters. The feminine image becomes the object of hatred as a source of distraction from more sublime sentimentalities associated with the masculine image. According to Campbell "The seeker of the life beyond life must press beyond her, surpass the temptations of her call, and soar to the immaculate ether beyond" (Campbell 1949, 122). For Campbell, this process is symbolic of the real life realization that the world does not live up to our every expectation. Campbell (1949) writes,

Generally we refuse to admit within ourselves, or within our friends, the fullness of that pushing, self-protective, mal-odour, carnivorous, lecherous fever which is the very nature of the organic cell. Rather we tend to perfume, white-wash, and reinterpret; meanwhile imagining that all the flies in the ointment, all the hairs in the soup, are the fault of some unpleasant someone

else. But when it suddenly dawns on us, or is forced to our attention that everything we think or do is necessarily tainted with the odour of the flesh, then, not uncommonly, there is experienced a moment of revulsion: life, the acts of life, the organs of life, woman in particular as the great symbol of life, become intolerable to the pure, the pure, pure soul (Campbell 1949: 121-122).

For the hero to reach atonement with the father he comes to a stage of disgust for the physical body. The hero according to Campbell must leave behind the comfortable world of the “flesh and delight” and enter into peril to confront the father/ogre figure.

Seeing as these images of femininity are very patriarchal they are not reinforced in X/1999. Kotori's death leaves Kamui alone to face the dragon of earth. However, overcoming his suffering could be considered one form upon which Kamui pushes past the goddess image. Kotori as the goddess is never really characterized by temptation or sexuality. Yes, their relationship, although intimate and romanticized, is never actually consummated so to speak. Therefore, there is never any explicit associations between her and the rejection of the body. There are instances in the *manga* that do reflect on Kamui's suffering over Kotori's death, associating her with decaying or rotting skulls, but this discussion goes beyond the scope our analysis. Who does play a significant and sexualized and “temptress” role within the series is none other than the guide for the dragon of earth, Kanoe.

Kanoe's character is often portrayed in a very sexualized manner. Often she wears a revealing outfit that portrays considerable cleavage. Compared to her meekly drawn sister Hinoto, this makes Kanoe distinctive in this role. In several episodes she is noted to play games with Satsuki's crush on Yuto. She tempts Kamui into considering an alternative vision of the future that Hinoto does not reveal to him. Ultimately, this sway

becomes inconsequential to Kamui's character after he chooses to become the dragon of heaven, because Fuma then becomes the focus of her intentions. When Fuma arrives as the dragon of heaven she embraces him as a lover, however, her role as the guide of the dragon of heaven becomes less and less important as he now guides them.

Kanoe's character in and of itself is a moment of paradoxical images of gender in Japanese society. She is the secretary of a Japanese Governor, from scenes throughout the series she is seen drilling him on consequential topics, working in the background and guiding him. Her character comes as mixed bag of images, powerful yet subordinant. She takes none of the credit for herself. In Episode 8 "Gemini" (2001) she is reviewing his schedule when she notices that he looks tired and clears his schedule, asking him to rest. He comments that she is, "as considerate as ever. You're a life-saver" (Episode 8 "Gemini", 2001). However, she might consider her work with the Governor challenging she also treats it in disdain for example in Episode 3 "A Pledge" (2001) she tells Satsuki that she would find the work upstairs to be boring, "more boring than death". These characteristics are in direct opposition to her feelings towards Hinoto. She is jealous that Hinoto always got the attention as the child, her motivating factor in being the guide in the apocalypse, simply put, is to destroy anything her sister loves. When Hinoto is in the pits of despair Kanoe tells her,

You have lost hope. You are something sister, we were born as sisters, and everyone had treated you specially because you carried the ability to be a dream-gazer. I didn't have that power. I was always a hindrance, one who was always in the way. I despised you. If you suffered more and more it would have enlightened my heart. I've gathered all the members for the dragon of earth. I was the one who has made your dream a reality all so that you would suffer. But I want you to thank me. It is because of me that you

will exist as a dream-gazer from now on. It is meaningless to exist if you're unable to dream. Very soon you'll see the future of your dream. And you'll grieve struggle and mourn. I will be look forward to seeing you in that state (Episode 22 "Betrayal", 2002).

This sentiment is even spelled out in her psychic abilities, she cannot see into the future through dreams as her sister does, she can look into the dreams of others, but never through her own dreams can she see the future. When Hinoto dies in Episode 22 she is undone with grief and cannot understand why she killed herself. The choices that Hinoto has made and why are beyond her ability to understand. Afterwards, her character disappears from the series, undone by her grief. Kanoe's character represents just that "temptation", temptation by modern women to utilize the values of patriarchal masculinity to their own end.

We can compare Karen and Kanoe, both sexualized characters often in dress and stereotypically in profession created by a patriarchal society. For Karen she was socialized to believe that she was not worthy of love, her profession is out of necessity, often her character is presented as more meek while in lingerie and stronger in her normal clothing, Kanoe, on the other hand, always seems to have a sense of vanity about herself. Kanoe embodies the dangers of female empowerment when they become imbedded in the same values of egocentric pride and power that the patriarchal system has used to subjugate society.

One could also argue that Karen's character is similarly sexualized as she works at a brothel and is often dressed in lingerie. This said we can see that although Karen aspires towards a heroic role, she is ultimately flawed as she, like Kanoe, never

overcomes the patriarchal values and expectations that have shaped their lives, whether in Kanoe's case by living in the shadow of others than having her own dream and taking delight in her sister's suffering for a dream, or in Karen's case, as patriarchal society internalizes in her a sense of self loathing as her mother hated her because she was shamed for having a child out of wedlock and on her own. Kanoe's character, along with characters such as Karen's and the technocrat Satsuki are important to the narrative in that they express how the patriarchal system controls and subjugates women in society. Furthermore, they explore the struggles that women face in competing and attempting to thrive in modern society. They are flawed though in that each character ultimately fails in some way because they begin to use the values, behaviours and agents of patriarchy to further their own cause. Through Kamui's identification with these struggles they begin to open up Kamui's own discovery of identity, for to overcome his own internalized shame and violence he must depart with the behavioural models of patriarchal society and strive to become something that promotes a future for his entire community and the world at large. The analysis will turn now to the very embodiment of patriarchal masculinity in the series. Fuma, dragon of the Earth, the Ogre of Campbell's monomythic journey.

Confrontation with the Ogre

The final confrontation with the imposing father figure of Campbell's model. In Campbell's discussion of the father we see a balance in imagery. We see justice and wrath balanced with mercy and grace. At once the father is a protective figure but also an ogre. This is done according to Campbell to propel the heart through initiation rather

than destroy it. The child turns away from the pleasure associated with the mother and turns towards the world of specialized adult action. The father figure symbolizes his future self (Campbell 1949: 136-137).

Campbell explains the ogre aspect has a context from the infantile mind of the hero and is drawn from the "nursery scene" (129). Campbell says, "the fixating idolatry of that pedagogical non-thing" prevents the child from growing up. He continues, "As the original intruder in the paradise of the infant with its mother, the father is the archetypal enemy; hence, throughout life all enemies are symbolical (to the unconscious) of the father" (155). Thus the father enters into a situation resembling the Freudian Oedipus complex where the child/hero and the father/god come into competition.

According to Campbell the father initiates and tests the son. The *initiation* stage teaches the candidate the techniques, duties and prerogatives of the role he will eventually take upon himself. The father figure scares the hero into realizing that tragedies and ruthless nature all have their part to play in the cosmos. Accordingly, the hero transcends "his blind spot" of his own particular tragedies. The only person who can take over for the father is the hero who can overcome his own self absorption, personal preference and resentment.

If the hero can overcome this trial the ogre is transformed into the father figure. In this period of initiation the father and mother are reflected. The mother supports and aids the hero, the trials transform the hero's perception of the ogre aspect into the benevolent father aspect, and both mother and father work in tandem initiating the hero from his childlike misconceptions into adulthood. Following this the hero is able to

resolve his opposites. He no longer perceives things in dichotomies such as “good” versus “evil”. In fact he becomes the embodiment of opposites. According to Campbell, “good and evil, death and life, pain and pleasure, boons and deprivations. As the person of the sun door, he is the fountain head of all the pairs of opposites” (1949: 145).

To begin Campbell describes the imagery of the father as a balance between justice and wrath, mercy and grace. This can be seen in Fuma’s character. Fuma begins as the protective father figure. He watches over Kamui who has protected Kotori, his younger sister, and as a result promises to protect Kamui (Episode 3 “A Pledge”, 2001). He is then taken over by the Dragon of Earth and becomes cruel figure who is bent on destroying the world. As Kotori reflected those images associated with life, Fuma’s image reflects those desires associated with death. This is personified in one of his powers, the ability to see the death wishes of all people. Furthermore, he seeks to destroy the world not out of malice, but out of sympathy, that with civilization gone then humans would not suffer as they do, nor would they create suffering and destroy the earth. In episode 22 “Betrayal” (2001) Fuma as the dragon of earth says, “The end is near this might be the last time we see this place. If you tried to listen, you could hear the earth scream. You could see its tears. The world wished for change, there is no other option but complete destruction of human beings. The mourning of human beings is irrelevant compared to the mourning of the earth.” Similarly in Episode 18 “Newborn” (2002) he says, “If everyone dies, then all of the ones would mourn would also be dead”. As such his role is to embody the violent tendencies of humanity and turn them against the dragon of heaven, whose role it is to defend humanity. If Kamui is to lay a ground for why

humanity can be redeemed and survive then he must go through this initiation with Fuma. If he cannot discover a solution then he dies and with him the world, as has been foreseen by all but Kotori. With all his hope lost he turns to fight Fuma and intends to destroy him.

Yet when he does so his sword shatters, and Fuma's sword pierces his shoulder. In this defeat the world begins to end. Violence is not the answer. At this time Subaru returns from his coma and erects his *Kekkai* which was previously destroyed. He reminds Kamui of his desire to return and protect Fuma, that he pledged to do while deep in his subconscious mind. Subaru says, "Your strength. The strength of your wish is what brought me here. But this is as much as I could do, my power won't hold out any longer, it is up to you now... Kamui I have entered your consciousness and tried to take you back to reality, remember, and you returned by your own will. Do you regret that now? I see. Then that's enough, all that's left is for you to fulfill your own wish. Isn't that right?" (Episode 24 "Legend", 2002). It is then that Kamui begins to realize the sacrifices that many have made for him. He also realizes that Fuma is just another side of himself as they are both Kamui, that life and death, love and suffering, are not separate and distinct things, that by their very nature they must coexist. He realizes that this suffering is over come through social engagement, that through sacrifice of the self we are able to protect the people we love. This is strengthened in the resolve that we live on in the hearts of the living, giving them support and strength. Kamui, in Campbellian fashion, throws off the elements of "self absorption, personal preference or resentments" and stands before Fuma who runs him in with the sword. He is no longer hampered by

despair but realizes the purpose and meaning of sacrifice. Fuma rushes at Kamui to finish him and plunges his sword deep into Kamui. Kamui looks up and puts his hand on Fuma's heart, similar to the way Fuma put his hand on his heart when Kamui attacked him in episode 15 "Guardian" (2002). This gesture, although minuscule, draws both scenes together. If he is to defeat the dragon of earth he must aim for his "heart", his heart in this instance being that which keeps us alive but also a symbolic image of the community and things we care about. When Fuma attacks him with the sword Fuma says he will only die and be forgotten about. Kamui says that he has figured out how he will save Fuma. Fuma reaffirms that he is the dragon of earth. Kamui assures him that even though he was the dragon of earth he never wanted to hurt him, his only desire was to protect him. Kamui continues, "I will not be forgotten because I will always be inside your heart. I finally realized it. Kotori lives inside my heart...and my mother...and Sorata will continue to live in Arashi's...Hinoto, Saiki and Karen...they all will live in someone's heart giving hope to that person to live on. That's my wish, I entrust to you, this is what I have decided, my future" (Episode 24 "Legend", 2002). Fuma and Kamui are two sides of the same persona, like the human condition capable of both great kindness and depravity, they are able to create and destroy. Fuma as the dragon of heaven is unable to see beyond violence and berates Kamui for his "weakness," his inability to strike him down when he has a chance. Kamui as the hero is at first unable to see a choice beyond the violence of the patriarchal system of man, however, through identification with his loved ones, who symbolically represent the image of mother in Japanese society, he is able to tap into his power as the dragon of heaven and save the

world. This is the state altering choice that saves humanity; Kamui's identification of concepts of gender beyond the patriarchal system of violence and destruction ensures that everyone is free to decide, men and women alike. Accordingly the gendered context has a spiritual and existential component that has been expressed throughout the series. In the last scene we see that Kamui has mastered and come to understand that his original instinct to not kill Fuma was correct. This final revelation allows him to produce the *Kekkai* which expands and prevents the world's destruction.

In X/1999 enduring love beyond death and self sacrifice itself are essential to the feminist and pro-feminist reading of the text. This said some critics might suggest that the violence inherent in sacrifice and essential to the X/1999 plot co-opts any subversive feminist elements of the text, suggesting that indeed violence is still the answer despite it's problematised nature in human society and as dominance and control within the patriarchal system. However, it is the contention of the thesis that this interpretation of the text is shortsighted as it focuses on the violence rather than the intentions of the characters.

For example, Kamui enters into conflict with Fuma the dragon of earth, however, Fuma is not just another competitor as in Girard's theory or sacrifice. It has been argued throughout this thesis that he is a symbol of patriarchal violence, as made evident by it's supernatural nature and its ability to posse Fuma, submerging his protective and peaceful personality. The series doesn't deny violence, violence is an essential part of the series, without it's portrayal there is no conflict. What more, the violence portrayed is uncontrollable, and to be clear, when at the end of the series Kamui acts in violence to

resolve his conflict he is defeated as he participates in the repetition of sacrifice that has defeated humanity and has lead to this apocalypse. If Kamui had chosen to become the dragon of earth he would have sacrificed Fuma and humanity along with him in order to save the earth, resulting in a lasting peace without humanity. In the end, it is not the ritualistic sacrificial victim that is killed and blamed leading to enduring peace, but the ability of a young man to overcome his own patriarchal violence and fear of his death and despair to transcend his own perceptions of reality and save the world. In both possible futures the dragon of heaven is killed, yet in this future the world is saved, based purely on the intentions and motivations behind the Kamui, resulting in his ability to become the awakened dragon of heaven. Love ends violence because it robs violence of it's ability to frighten and intimidate. If we compare Kamui's sacrifice to the sacrifice of Karen, several interesting differences appear. Karen, as a figure of a religious group represents Christianity, which is known for ritualistic symbolic blood sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who is symbolically crucified and rises again every Easter, and to a large extent whenever the eucharist is performed. Karen fits into Rene Girard's system almost flawlessly, for example, the conflict between Yuma and Aoki, herself as a sacrificial victim who believes in her own flawed nature and the benefit of sacrifice, which allows her to save the people she loves even if it means her own death. In Karen we see the tragic consequences of sacrifice exemplified in her inability to escape performing sacrificial violence and the inevitable pain and suffering as a consequence of her dying. Again, this is similar to Sorata who throws himself in front of Arashi to save her, protecting someone he loves yet still succumbing to violence in the end and then retaliating in order to damage the dragon

of the Earth. In the end the dragon of earth is overcome by the dragon of heaven. Fuma is healed, all futures are now possible. In this circumstance, as compared to traditional historical sacrifice, its meaning is not arbitrated by those with the power to control its interpretation. Instead, we as an audience have the ability to examine Kamui's motivations, and the motivations of all the characters, we participate in their frustration, suffering and despair, but in the end similar to Shaku Tesshu's (2003) "rousing story", it is the hope for a new future that allows us to see the motivations and purposes of the sacrifice. Moreover, those intentions re-contextualize both the context of sacrifice, and the overcoming of patriarchal violence in "the Kamui", both Kamui and Fuma combined, both sides of dragon of heaven and earth, masculine and feminine, in one body.

Identifying the violence of sacrifice rather than the motivating factors behind it as the central answers from the series would also dismiss the personal context of both women and mothers, and humanity in general. In this series instead of sacrifice being traditionally associated with patri-centered social organization it is contextualized around the act of giving birth or being a mother. For example in the moments of Kotori's awakening to her nature and the birth of the second holy sword, as a seer she says, "Blood...Mother's blood". In this circumstance the images of patriarchal dominance, violence and mother sacrifice are tied together. Accordingly, the imagery around sacrifice symbolize patriarchal domination of women, both through being sacrificed physically or metaphorically and denying their ability to choose and direct the course of their own futures. However, alluding to what Nancy Jay had written in her criticism of

Rene Girard (Jay 1992: 132), the sociability of mothers, infants and other affectionate relationships are far from irrelevant, the authors contextualize sacrifice as a beneficial aspect in that it functions based on a motivation to protect the people we love, a redeeming element of humanity that Kamui finally embodies at the end of the series. In this way the series covertly challenges the system of violence by shaping what it means by sacrifice through the motivations of the characters, in turn, shaping its interpretation.

Apotheosis

At the end of the hero's journey, Campbell describes a stage where the hero becomes the fusion of dualities and actually becomes the god. This Campbell explains is the purpose of transgender deities in world religions. He writes, "male-female gods are not uncommon in the world of myth. They emerge always with a certain mystery; for they conduct the mind beyond objective experience into a symbolic realm where duality is left behind" (1949: 152). In these figures we see the fusion of opposites, life and death, good and evil, male and female and all other dualities. For Campbell this was the lesson that is self-evident in all myths, a redefinition of the hero's sense of self so that he can view his enemy as not an alien or thing without redemption or human character.

According to Campbell,

The sufferer within us is that divine being. We and that protecting father are one. This is the redeeming insight. That protecting father is every man we meet. And so it must be known that, though this ignorant, limited, self-defending, suffering body may regard itself as threatened by some other - the enemy - that one too is the God. The ogre breaks us, but the hero, the fit candidate undergoes the initiation "like a man" ; and behold, it was the father: we in Him and He in us. The dear protecting mother of our body could not defend us from the Great Father Serpent: the mortal, tangible body that she

gave us was delivered into his frightening power. But death was not the end. New life, new birth, new knowledge of existence (so that we live not in this physique only, but in all bodies, all physiques of the world as the Bodhisattva) was given us. That father was himself the womb, the mother of a second birth (1949: 161-132).

In accordance with Campbell's description the mother aids the father in this final confrontation, the mother's support aids the hero in his apotheosis. Kotori as embodiment of the mother goddess gives him the knowledge of self-sacrifice, hope, and the endurance of love despite suffering which allows him to overcome the father figure who embodies death, suffering and despair. The trial transforms the hero's perception of the ogre aspect into the benevolent father aspect as the world is saved so too is Fuma. As the scene ends we see Fuma looking out over Tokyo, his hand over his heart. Kamui is gone but the world remains: in essence both Kamui's are one. As Campbell's monomyth describes, the mother and father are both reflected as they work in tandem, initiating the hero from his childlike misconceptions into adulthood.

Kamui at the end of the series finally becomes the dragon of heaven. This was the one thing that nobody had foreseen. As a radical change overcame Fuma in his earlier transformation the same process over comes Kamui. He is no longer haunted by doubt, no longer fears suffering or pain. He is able to overcome Fuma because he has realized that even if the dragon of earth should destroy his body he will continue to exist. He is finally able to form a *Kekkai* in the shape of a large sphere that encompasses the earth, protecting it from destruction. His body disappears shortly afterward and he is never seen again in the series. Kamui, in this instance, transcends patriarchal values associated with masculinity. Instead of using violence and control to manipulate the

aggressive other, he transforms the aggressive persona within himself, choosing to act with love and compassion and be unthreatened by death or violence.

The Ultimate Boon

The last theme that Campbell describes in his hero cycle is of *the ultimate boon*. There is a recurring motif in myth of an exhaustible dish or cup that Campbell interprets as symbolizing a perpetual life-giving source. Other themes that Campbell discusses in connection with the hero's realization of the ultimate boon include images of an indestructible body, a cosmic protection of all forces of death and entropy; and a spiritual double who is not afflicted by losses or injuries. According to Campbell, the ultimate boon is the hero's desire for the indestructible body. The gods and goddesses are embodiments and custodians of this indestructible body as they are immortal. Through interacting with them he gains their grace, through their trials he earns that which makes him immortal. In Campbell's typical monomyth this boon is often left behind or lost as he departs his inner world and returns to the real world. However, in X/1999 the stages are reversed, Kamui gains immortality by dying to protect the people he loves. In this sense the hero overcomes the egocentric notion of physical and tangible immortality, instead he becomes impervious to attack by changing both his perspective and his goals.

This can be seen in the conclusion of the narrative. Kamui disappears leaving Fuma standing looking out over Tokyo his hand on his heart. As he revealed to Fuma, he shall live on in him, inspiring him. The presence of these people who have died can represent the indestructible body that Campbell suggested in his discussion of the

indestructible spiritual double. Furthermore, as Kakyō explains in the afterward reflection, from that point onwards all dreams are possible, all futures are possible. Kamui has broken the cycle and has chosen his own path where neither foreseen futures happen, that it is now in the hands of man. This is reiterated with images of the living carrying on with their lives, i.e. Kusanagi and Yuzuriha enjoying a beautiful waterfall in the mountain, Aoki and his family places flowers on Karen's grave, Arashi visiting a giant bell near the temple where Sorata grew up, the words, "I hope the woman I die for is hot" scratched on the inside. Subaru walking away happy amongst a field of cherry blossoms. Kamui's action have inspired the ability of hope and free will in the universe as he was able to overcome death, suffering and finally violence. All futures are possible. Whether they are the personal dream that inspires an individual or the dream that humanity will turn away from violence and isolation towards the freedom and hope associated with social engagement. The series ends as the scene pans away from the top of Tokyo tower. White feathers are flying wildly in the air, the city is bright and clean and the viewer can hear Kotori's voice say, "the future is yet to be decided? Isn't it?" This invites the viewer to question these same themes in their own lives and how their own choices are often directed by greed, guilt and suffering.

As we saw in the previous section on the hero's return to the physical world, the problem presented him was representing his spiritual realizations in the physical world. Beyond the spiritual principles the hero must gain on his journey, he must also be able to apply them to every day life. Success in this, according to Campbell, imbues two special qualities within the hero: he becomes the master of two worlds and is truly free to live.

According to Campbell the hero is able to transcend and move back and forth between the two worlds that once limited him. He writes, the hero has the, "freedom to pass back and forth across the world division, from the perspective of the apparitions of time to that of the causal deep and back - not contaminating the principles of the one with those of the other, yet permitting the mind to know the one by virtue of the other - is the talent of the master" (1949: 229). In other words, Campbell is suggesting that the hero has a perception that expands beyond his own perception in the world. However, this perception does not limit it to its own egocentric terms but allows the hero to see the opposing perspective in its own "language" of symbols and meaning. In regard to the gendered theme throughout the series, Kamui is able to overcome the violence of patriarchy by being able to see the value of protection and self-sacrifice that he has gained through identifying with not only the women and mother's in his life, but also through the experiences and trials of love that his friends and companions the seven seals have gone through. Accordingly, the uniqueness of all their experiences are maintained but he can understand them by means of their similarities. By freeing himself of violence, he changes and recreates a whole new future that never existed before. Quite possibly, as a pro-feminist scholar, Schwalbe (1995: 203) said in our discussion of men's spirituality, he has begun to create a moral masculinity in its community with social justice and peace.

When looking at the boon that the hero Kamui gains throughout his journey, he has certainly become master of two worlds. As has been previously argued this narrative expresses a feminist/pro-feminist spirituality, in this spirituality the limits of gender roles

and their consequences have been transcended. On one hand you have the limits placed upon women that they have been restricted by gender constructs in what opportunities they may avail themselves of in a patriarchal society that values competition, aggression and destruction. He overcomes his personal grievances and sees the truth behind their actions. According to Campbell, "The individual, through prolonged psychological disciplines, gives up completely all attachments to his personal limitations, idiosyncrasies, hopes and fears, no longer resists the self annihilation that is prerequisite to rebirth in the realization of truth, and so becomes ripe, at last, for the great at-onement. His personal ambitions being totally dissolved, he no longer tries to live but willingly relaxes to whatever may come to pass in him; he becomes, that is to say, an anonymity. The law lives in him with his unreserved consent" (1949: 236). On one hand the sacrificial symbol of motherhood is powerful in that it expresses a dedication towards communal engagement towards the people that we love. Furthermore, that we as individuals find endurance between suffering through social engagement, where the dead live in the memories of the living inspiring them. Ultimately, Kamui finds transcendence when he chooses to transform the violent and aggressive person within himself rather than becoming it to do battle with the patriarchal forces that seem to threaten human society. By transcending the expectations of patriarchal society, Kamui becomes master of both worlds. Where he makes a choice reminiscent of the sacrificial symbol of motherhood it frees all people to make the same choice and determine their own future. As such he becomes master of both worlds transcending constructs of masculinity and femininity, becoming a model for all people, to choose and embrace the power that social

engagement can have upon humanity. Kamui demonstrates the path that redeems humanity and produces a future no one had foreseen. I think Campbell explains this the best in his reason why the hero is free to live, it is because, "The hero is the champion of things becoming, not of things become, because he is" (1949: 243). As Kotori states at the end of the series, "the future isn't decided yet, is it?" inviting us all to pursue our own wishes and dreams beyond the weighty pull of foreseen destinies.

Chapter Summary

The intent of this analysis was to examine the gendered spirituality made evident in X/1999 by plotting it against Joseph Campbell's monomyth. We have done so by pulling out the many ideological and spiritual perspectives throughout the series. In summation the narrative problematizes human nature as violent, aggressive, and competitive, so unable to overcome these characteristics that destruction is the only alternative. The question of whether there is hope for a redemption for humanity is left in the hands of one young man and his friends and hinges on whether he can change his perspective, his doubts, self deceptions, and his own pain and become the hero and the dragon of heaven all wish to see in him. Through the qualities of social engagement and self-sacrifice as expressed through the feminist image of the sacrificial mother in Japanese society he is able to do so, modelling her character and her intent in his actions. He ends the cycle of violence even if it means his own death. He overcomes death and lives on indefinitely in the minds of others, inspiring them, achieving true immortality. He triumphs where no other could. He symbolically makes this choice and the nature of

humanity is changed. This world is not preordained for destruction, through human wisdom it can be saved.

In the first part of our analysis the many scenes and archetypes of Campbell's model are made evident . This acted a means to contextualize the series as a modern myth, or depending on your definition of myth perhaps even a legend. In fact the last episode in the series is called that, "Legend", reiterating the authors intent in creating the narrative. Throughout the series there have been various uses of religious models, some might say that the approach to suffering resembles Buddhist concept of *samsara*. Furthermore, the concept of the "beast" controlled by Satsuki, the corruption of the earth, the use of Marian imagery or the pacifist sacrificial hero resembling Jesus could be compared to Christianity. Furthermore, beyond these mythic examples, we see Buddhist, Shinto priests, Christians, alike becoming the defenders of the human race. On one hand the series has a very specific religious setting and context. This said most of the characters are young adults who draw from their own interpersonal relationships and experiences to guide their actions. This suggests that the future is in the hands of the young to make a radical change.

The series can be seen as presenting a feminist and pro-feminist approach. It has contextualized the saving grace or boon from the hero around the concept of motherhood, as we saw in relation to Hinoto, particularly her association with classic goddess imagery, and Kamui's Aunt and mother, Tokiko and Toru, as they gave their lives to give Kamui this one chance at changing the world. Those characters that are not mothers that are associated with self-sacrifice are considered to be mother-like in the role within the series

as representing goddess imagery in Joseph Campbell's monomyth, Kotori and Hinoto are examples of this. Moreover, even the male characters are defined by their relationship with their mothers, Sorata and his promise to never make a woman cry like his mother did, or Subaru and Seishiro, the sacrifice Subaru's sister made and the redemption that Seishiro's mother foretold for him when she died. Motherhood as a context for understanding forgiveness, unconditional love, suffering and sacrifice creates a feminist spiritual context which has been expressed throughout the series. Motherhood is a unique context for understanding spirituality in X/1999 similar to how Carol Ochs (1997:31) described it in chapter two on gender and spirituality.

Similarly, the series rearranges Campbell's model such that the journey to gain the boon is done through the real life experiences rather than the fantastical ones of an inner journey. It is through real life choice and suffering that the heroes overcome the trials sent before them, they deal with the grief that comes with the death of a loved one, they contemplate their continued existence supporting and loving them through their memories, and they come to discover that although flawed, humanity has the ability to change and protect this world rather than destroy it. The real life context is another characteristic which indicates the series is expressing feminist spirituality (Schneiders 2004: 89; Carr 1986: 55; Ochs 1997:9).

Furthermore, the series shows a concern for the environment that has been destroyed and subjugated for personal gain. This subordination of the environment through the means of violence is frequently linked in feminist spiritual contexts to the suffering of women throughout history. Therefore, the strong environmentalist element

is another significant indicating factor in arguing the series expresses gendered spirituality. Last, the series in many regards is political in this context, as many scholars have argued, feminist spirituality continually involves becoming political and seeking out justice and equality for all (Schneiders 2004: 188). This series plays out that journey towards justice in questioning how fit humanity is to hold guardianship over the earth.

Finally the series, portrays elements of pro-feminism, in that this journey of social justice is as pertinent for men in the series as it is for women. The hero begins to question the values of patriarchal masculinity that subjugate the world and men themselves and through identification with the struggle and sacrifices women and mothers have made, are able to change themselves and demonstrate that all of humanity has the ability to transcend. The boon is the change of perspective, that we all have potential to overcome violence and choose to preserve both the environment and human life.

In many instances the model frames the series perfectly, leaving me to conclude that Joseph Campbell's monomyth may have been a structure that the authors drew upon to shape their narrative. Further, the authors of the series have drawn upon its strengths in tying together religious thought globally as a means to discuss the issue of gender in contemporary Japan, and arguably, the world, as the apocalypse affected the entire planet rather than just the nation of Japan. However, there are departures from Joseph Campbell's model.

Joseph Campbell's model argues that traditional mythic treatment of women casts them as either an ideal to aspire to or conversely a foil that guides the hero. In the

X/1999 narrative the women in the series played a lead role in guiding the hero to his eventual conclusion. It is through self-sacrifice that we are able to protect the people we love and create a world where choice is possible. By drawing upon the influence of social engagement expressed through the image of sacrificial mother in Japan it becomes for the narrative a model for all of humanity. The narrative diverges from Campbell in that the women in the series are just as dynamic as the hero himself. Kanoe and Hinoto for example are undone by their ambition and quest for an independent identity. The former appealing to the sacrificial ideal of motherhood while Kanoe fades to nothingness unable to come to terms with the actions of her sister. Women, like men, struggle with valorized patriarchal masculinity as the only means to compete in the contemporary setting of business and politics. In this strain of thought, we have seen throughout the series that archetypal roles that were often attributed to men in Campbell's model were adapted, examined and explored through female characters in the *anime*. The original authors may have used Campbell to expand upon his model and adapt it to a feminist spiritual perspective.

Are we left to believe that Campbell's model then is flawed specifically through the limits of his universalized patriarchal mythic interpretation? The answer to this I would argue is no. Campbell, like much of his work, is caught between the polarities of duality. On one hand he argued frequently for the power of myth to reveal our individualized identities through a communal narrative of human nature. Yet he has argued that traditional myth has no place for modern individuated women or that women need not go on the journey of myth as they were already "there" as he put it.

Accordingly, he found himself stuck between the rock and a hard place, trying to maintain the value of myth while balancing his own modern feminist and pro-feminist consciousness. He attempted to find some means to unify all of them together in one cohesive theory. Whether in the end it was that Joseph Campbell failed myth or patriarchal myth that failed Joseph Campbell, his theory of the monomyth is useful in studying popular culture. Why? Because Campbell has become a source of myth to draw upon as any other. By looking at X/1999 through the lens of Campbell and vice versa, we are able to explore the strengths and limitations of gender norms and roles.

Conclusion and Final Comments

This thesis proposed to analyze the religious, spiritual and mythic elements present in the *anime* X/1999. It began by looking at the concept of spirituality and religiosity in modern story telling, a phenomenon that scholars have defined to as “modern myth”. In evaluating this narrative as a modern myth, the thesis demonstrated the spiritual and mythic dimensions of the narrative through the utilization of Joseph Campbell’s theory of the monomyth. Furthermore, this model assisted in demonstrating the gendered spirituality inherent in X/1999 as both feminist and pro-feminist. Additionally, in utilizing Campbell’s theory of the monomyth to study X/1999, the thesis offered a critical appraisal of Campbell’s theory. Through the application of Campbell’s theory to X/1999, the thesis argued that Campbell’s model of myth is specifically flawed when it comes to analyzing gender in a contemporary mythic context. It was posited that the authors and artists of X/1999 may have deliberately used, changed, and departed from Campbell’s model to covertly discuss the topic of gender and patriarchal values as a modern spiritual crisis in Japan, and by extension, for the human race. Moreover, this thesis drew upon the similarities that Campbell identified amongst world myths to return to the unique experience of gender in Japanese society. X/1999 has demonstrated qualities that suit the definition of modern myth and has expressed characteristics of both feminist and pro-feminist spirituality.

The project began by discussing the influence of story telling on modern society, in particular to what some have called “modern myth.” Through comparing the terms

myth and modern myth it has tried to demonstrate the similarities and differences between the two phenomenon. The term "modern myth" highlights the psychosocial function that myth once performed and still performs for religious communities, within the context of modern secular media. Studies of fandom from within the context of religious studies have argued that these pop cultural narratives can have a significant influence on how fans conceive of and shape their world (Porter; 2009) through what Thomas Luckman describes as "invisible religion" (1967). Admittedly, the limitations in comparing them has been the notion of authorship. Traditional myth claims no individual authorship and is considered literally true, while modern myth in the age of copyright makes authorship both a legal and liable obligation. Authorship also reinforces modern narratives as fictitious in nature. However, as the thesis has argued something does not need be literally interpreted as "true" if it speaks a "truth" about something that people within modern society can relate to. From an academic perspective, "truth" in regard to belief systems and story telling is a subjective experience. As author Orson Scott Card aptly expresses:

This is the essence of the transaction between storyteller and audience. The "true" story is not the one that exists in my mind; it is certainly not the written words on the bound paper that you hold in your hands. The story in my mind is nothing but a hope; the text of the story is the tool I created in order to try to make that hope a reality. The story itself, the true story is the one that the audience members create in their minds, guided and shaped by my text, but then transformed, elucidated, expanded, edited and clarified by their own experience, their own desires, their own hopes and fears (1991: xxv).

The interaction between storyteller and audience is significant for understanding the usage of the term "modern myth" to describe the fictional narratives within popular

culture. Such narratives speak to the personal experience of reality of many fans, filtered through the lense of the pop cultural narrative as guided by the author in the creation of the narrative.

Studying the linkage between “modern myth”, popular culture and *anime* can also illustrate religious and societal value systems or symbols that are embedded within such pop-cultural texts. Popular culture both reflects and helps shape or transform cultural norms (Porter & McLaren 1999: 2). Studying popular culture can therefore help determine whether dominant socio-religious norms have changed or are in the process of changing. In particular, this thesis has argued that the X/1999 narrative demonstrates gendered spirituality. It has attempted to demonstrate this in highlighting the gendered elements in relation to it’s mythic and existential themes. The X/1999 narrative suggests that the values of patriarchal society are valorized in many modern societies and affect everybody regardless of gender. Similar to a traditionally mythic narrative, the story of X/1999 is paradoxical, however on one hand, it radically re-symbolizes the image of motherhood readily accessible to all of Japanese society, taking the value of group cohesion and communal support and expressing it through the relationship of a child to its mother. In turn, it applies these “feminine” values to all human interactions. In this regard, it takes an essentialist characteristic of the “feminine” and makes it a human quality.

On the other hand, the narrative is potentially anti-feminist in that it suggests that unless a man steps up to change the world, positive, “real” change can never happen. The hero is after all a man not a woman. However, my analysis suggests that this anti-

feminist reading of the text is short sighted. The narrative demonstrates the vital role of women in modern society, while criticizing the valorization of and internalization of power structures used by men to subjugate women. Princess Hinoto becomes X/1999's covert example of the paradoxes inherent in this modern mythic text. On one hand, Princess Hinoto's ego allows a demon to possess her, compromising both her values and the dreams she has to protect the world, on the other hand, her intentions are clear in her final actions as she takes her own life as a last resort to save the world. Accordingly, X/1999 forces us to question our assumptions on gendered norms and behaviour, forcing us to ask what is beneficial and what is destructive in our quest for self awareness, whether for the community or the individual.

In exploring the gender dynamic within X/1999 as a mythic text, the thesis proposed that the *anime* serves as a formative response to dominant models of feminist ideology in Western countries, as it demonstrates characteristics of Japanese "balance" feminism, grounded in the conviction that in order for society to thrive, the expectations and roles of gender must be shared equality such that neither men or women are overwhelmed by obligations that limit their ability to determine the course of their own lives. As such the dependency of children on parents and individuals on fellow members of a community are (or should be) shared by men and women alike. While pursuing the actualization of the individual self per Campbell's psychological monomyth, the series suggests that one can achieve this goal while simultaneously supporting the dreams of others. Moreover, it suggests that society can thrive and excel outside the context of competition and self-aggrandizement. It also suggest that the elements that limit us in

our daily lives have larger and greater social consequences when the primacy of the individual or even the nation leads us to war or environmental destruction. Through a re-contextualization of the image of the sacrificial mother in Japanese society and transformation of an adolescent male through this image, the artists and authors of X/1999 have made an essentialist argument; namely, that the personal sacrifice to protect and support inherent in the Japanese mother image is essential to human nature, both male and female.

According to the storyline of X/1999, society can be saved from destruction by the acceptance of new models of behaviour, such as compassion and self-sacrifice, both of which have been culturally associated with the feminine in Japanese society. Salvation at the end of the series comes not when a feminine hero takes on the role of a man but when a man identifies with those models of behaviour associated with the feminine, transcending notions of gender. The hero of this contemporary monomyth realizes that these characteristics -compassion, self-sacrifice, emotional availability- are simply and fully human rather than masculine or feminine traits, and are only limited by the constraints that society places upon them. The series reaches its climax in a confrontation between two sides of the male psyche, the patriarchal expectations of violence (Fuma) and potential to change (Kamui). At the beginning of the series, Kamui is given two choices: accept the world as it is or destroy it. He provides a third option, to not give in to the violence even if it means destroying himself and through the internalization of characteristics typically associated with the feminine in Japanese society, becomes the guardian the world needed.

The presentation and critique of gender roles within X/1999 encourages viewers to perceive the human ideal in all of us, transcending outdated societal stereotypes of behaviour, as a means to a new future that transcends all gendered restrictions. By stepping outside of a real world context, the authors and artists can use the hyper reality of popular culture to discuss and express a gendered ideology that might otherwise have been met with considerable resistance. Through animation and narrative, X/1999 presents a challenge to traditionally gendered roles in Japanese society, criticizes the valorization of the male-stereotypes as the root of spiritual and ecological crises, and proposes a new model for gendered self-realization. As such it can serve as one example of modern myth with the vast field of contemporary mythic pop-culture.

This thesis has made contributions to the study of both popular culture and the term "modern myth". Ideally, it has demonstrated how modern myth might act as a story telling phenomenon that expresses a spirituality outside of the institutionalized structures that we come to regard as religious. Furthermore, we can see how the narrative expresses a spirituality that is uniquely universal in its struggle of all people, male and female, eastern and western, within the crushing oppression of patriarchal masculinity. Perhaps what Kotori invites us to consider is true - the future has yet to be decided. Perhaps Campbell is correct in saying that there are no models of the individuated modern woman in myth. Perhaps this new archetypal goddess is only emerging in modern pop-cultural mythic narratives. Perhaps too there are no models for contemporary men to be found in ancient myth, perhaps he too has only begun to emerge as a new archetypal hero.

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