If you know some contemporary history that can be summed up in this way, it is not mere coincidence. Sagas such as The Matrix, Star Wars and Harry Potter follow such a structure, as well as many of the current Hollywood productions. The Lion King is another example. All this is because an American screenwriter adapted Campbell's
work for cinema use. Faced with the success of films that follow in the footsteps of the single myth, the writer's book Christopher Vogler has become somewhat of a bible for writers around the world.

But why do the public respond so well to the heroic journey? Would there be a collective unconscious in the creation process? What need of heroism have we to enjoy the stories that surround it? Without any scientism, the obvious, even infantile, response is that it is inspiring to see how the heroes win so many challenges and emerge safely from their adventures. It can feel satisfying to put yourself in the shoes of someone so special and feel like a winner too.

This puerile position is not without reason. Becoming a hero is an eminently human task in the pursuit of self-knowledge. It is in the reminiscences of the human-being. The author of "The Hero of a Thousand Faces" makes clear his position that the single myth is a journey of self-knowledge.

The symbols and mysteries of myth, which in the infancy of mankind provided human beings with the path with which to the search for their essence, today no longer meets expectations in the same way in the past. The great task of humankind today is to find another path that leads to the essence, a mechanism that awakens in the human being the deep archetypes of the knowledge of itself. After divinizing and knowing nature and the cosmos, it still remains for the human being to know himself. It is his own challenge.

Would modern fiction be a path to this awakening? Brought to the screens, The Heroic Journey arrives as a very pale representation, exterior and superficial, representing a path that needs to be travelled internally, a re-examination of the journey that humanity must undertake. The enemies to be vanquished - the villains you see in the movies - are, in fact, what the human being recognizes as himself. But while this fiction is only a caricature of the mission of self-knowledge, which is also the mission of our life, it is still a lively way of talking about the path.
In connection with his archetypal memories, the spectator assumes the intent of the hero's struggle. It is as if he were challenged to respond to a hidden voice saying, "do you want to go?" How much are you willing to risk?" To relinquish the “common world” to reach an unknown world is what is asked of the hero who has received the call. If fear of the obstacles that he may face initially discourages him from accepting the challenge, a fearlessness moved by something pre-existent in him, impels him to glimpse the latent hope of an unknown world in the unfathomed grounds of the soul.

Follow to where? And to fight, why? To save the opposite and missing side of you? This would mean saving everything that is projected on others as well, for it is necessary to face even the shadow itself, making light of its sword. The warrior, often portrayed also with shield, armour, helmet and coat – which are the precious symbols of inner realities – possesses in these accessories, the force that encourages him to fight.

The decision, the warrior, the battle ... These survival forces presented in the fragments of daily life are a way for the hero to relate to himself. In the midst of so many voices and conflicts, the positions he assumes make his point of view, become the problem. He identifies this from one side of the battlefield. And tired, without wanting to undergo the trials, he runs away, from himself.

However, the ensuing struggle turns stumbling blocks into lighthouses. The experiences of fear and faintness become the fuel for renewed action, giving his journey new perspective. It awakens in him the perception that pure and simple engagement on one side of the battle invariably leads, even with victory, to a depletion of forces and the emergence of new dangers. This perception, based on the experiences of the hero, becomes the lamp that gives the direction its true master. The recognition of this master indicates that the fight had an end and that he himself succumbed along with the warrior.

Life becomes an adventure when the soul begins to flourish and know itself. What once stood as a hostile world is now seen without the lens that the hero himself had forged for himself. He returns to this world but arrives transformed by his experiences. He has eliminated layers of himself, and so he knows that there is still work to be done. You need to be aware. You know there's no time to lose, because the difficult battle won was only one.

Just as in the sagas we accompany on the screen, the journey is a spiral: always the hero will receive a new call, will face more challenges, exhaust his forces, think he has
been defeated, but will fight to the end and win. The children understand this well when, unceremoniously, they dress as heroes, and fiction is doing what it can to give us the message.

But what about us?

When will we set our feet on this fantastic journey?