

# Literary Narratives of Orality: Discourses on Monomyth in Easterine Kire's *Son of the Thundercloud*

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## **Abstract**

Indigenous tribal communities depend largely on oral narratives and varied forms of storytelling to communicate their social histories and cultural identities across generations. India's north-eastern region, which is known for its vibrant mix of multiple tribes and their distinct ethno-cultural practices, has a strong tradition of sharing stories and narratives as an integral part of Indigenous identity. Emerging from a place with rich oral tradition, the writers of the region employ authentic narrative elements to share stories unheard by others. Easterine Kire, one of the most significant writers from Nagaland, voices the Indigenous pluralities of the tribal clans through her work. Kire amalgamates the elements of myth and reality, thereby highlighting their influences in shaping the individual and cultural discourses of the Naga tribes. This article examines Kire's representation of myth and orality, reflecting the behavioural patterns and cultural practices of the Angami Nagas, through her fictional narrative *Son of the Thundercloud*. The present study analyses the portrayal of the protagonist, Pelevotso, as an archetypal hero who nurtures the ethnic identity and cultural practices of the Angami Naga society. Joseph Campbell's theoretical conceptualisation of Monomyth, or the Hero's Journey, is employed to understand the fictional fabrication of archetypal and cultural discourses through literary and mythical orality.

**Keywords:** Angami Naga Tribe, Literary Narratives, Myth and Orality, Cultural and Archetypal, Discourses, Monomyth.

## **Introduction**

Oral narratives are the medium by which the mythical and historical stories are shared throughout generations to create and recreate the behavioural patterns of human beings. The orality of myths, legends, songs, folktales, and folklore encompasses cultural values, beliefs, and customs of a group or a community, reverberating its influences and implications in the lives of the

people. Bronislaw Malinowski states that oral stories “govern and control many cultural features, they form the dogmatic backbone of primitive civilization.”<sup>1</sup> Storytelling as an indispensable cultural form contributes to constructing the unique identities of a group or community. Indigenous groups accumulate their cultural knowledge through the narratives of the experiences they have encountered in the past. The Indigenous practices of a culture are continuously manifested through the oral narratives that encourage people to sustain them within their community. In India, the north-east region, which includes the eight states of ethnically and culturally diverse tribes, is particularly known for its enthralling and lustrous landscapes.

Oral narratives are intricately intertwined with the lives of the tribal people that help in transferring the community’s cultural ethos and historical past to the succeeding generations. Tribes of this region possess rich and divergent mythical and folkloric stories of their past that connect them to the present. Nagaland is home to several tribal and sub-tribal groups who reverberate their cultural historicity through oral literature such as narrating mythical stories. The region has a rich tradition of stories, legends and fables, as noted author Avinuo Kire explains, “Nagas are a highly oral indigenous society and the older generation who lived the oral tradition are natural-born storytellers.”<sup>2</sup> These stories are part of their heritage and provide significant elements of identity to the people. Malinowski opines that myth “strengthen tradition and endow it with a greater value and prestige by tracing it back to a higher, better, more supernatural reality of initial events. Myth is, therefore,

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<sup>1</sup> Bronislaw Malinowski, *Magic, Science and Religion and Other Essays* (New York: The Free Press, 1948), p. 85.

<sup>2</sup> Surbhi Gupta, ‘I Write on Conflict because of the Innumerable Lives It Has Destroyed, Silenced and Swept Away’, *The Indian Express*, 18 February (2021). At <https://indianexpress.com/article/books-and-literature/i-write-on-conflict-because-of-the-innumerable-lives-it-has-destroyed-silenced-and-swept-away-7194244/>. Accessed 18/02/2021.

an indispensable ingredient of all culture.”<sup>3</sup>

Due to the geographical location of Nagaland, people possess a holistic cultural and emotional bond with nature. The lifestyle and the social behaviours of these tribes are built on “observing and learning from the water, the moon, the plants, the animals, the stars, the wind, and the spirit world.”<sup>4</sup> Thus, their stories are deeply associated with nature and deal with the experiences of their everyday life. The stories of myths and legends are primarily oral narratives because of the absence of “secondary orality.”<sup>5</sup> They are known only within the particular sphere. By the process of textualising the orality, the values and essence of the sacred truths narrated through stories are shared across the globe. Easterine Kire's *Son of the Thundercloud* is one such mesmerising fiction, woven with mythical stories and beliefs of Naga cultural ideologies. The encounters and experiences of the protagonist Pelevotso, an Angami Naga, throughout his journey constitute the mythological elements that play a vital role in constructing the Indigenous knowledge systems of Naga tribes in general, and Angamis in particular. The traditional Naga myth of ‘Man, Tiger and the Spirit’ foregrounds the foundational ethical patterns of the tribal people that assist them leading an honest and moral life in association with their environment. These three facets recount the archetypal images embedded in the sustenance of the Indigenous Angami community. Pelevotso's spiritual awakening through his journey embodies the tenets of archetypal hero of Angami community which Kire aspires to highlight to her readers. With the concept of monomyth or Hero's Journey propounded by Joseph Campbell, the present study interprets the representation of the archetypal discourses through myth and orality in the selected fiction.

### **Marginalisation and Literature**

It is a global reality that Indigenous communities are ostracised by larger societies due to a complex mix of prejudices and the ongoing legacy of colonialism. Indigenous knowledge is of great importance to how Indigenous groups interact with the rest of the country in which they reside. The cultural

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<sup>3</sup> Malinowski, *Magic, Science and Religion and Other Essays*, p. 122.

<sup>4</sup> Barrie Carter, ‘Orality – Indigenous Knowledge through Oral Narratives | ETEC540: Text Technologies’, *Blogs of University of British Columbia*, 3 October (2010) At <https://blogs.ubc.ca/etec540sept10/2010/10/03/orality-%E2%80%93-indigenous-knowledge-through-oral-narratives/>. Accessed 18/02/2021.

<sup>5</sup> Walter J Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 2.

ideologies practiced by a given Indigenous group encompass their way of living and demonstrate their ancestral principles. In the Indian context, diverse ethnic tribes are culturally, politically and socially marginalised for various reasons. The north-east region of India in particular experiences multiple forms of exclusion from the mainland and is continuously subjected to numerous discriminations and predicaments. The stories of this region are predominantly relayed by outsiders or the others who perceive the land and its tragic history with their own assumptions, whereas the lived realities of the region and the excruciating encounters of the tribes are sidelined by the majoritarian narratives. Satpathy remarks on this deliberate marginalisation that, “[i]n India’s political imaginary the term [north-east] serves to describe a region that is both mysterious and dangerous. Historically it is somewhat unknown; a ‘heart of darkness.’”<sup>6</sup> The socially excluded, under-studied region of the north-east has grabbed attention of the outsiders in the contemporary period. Literature, for these marginalised people, serves the purpose of taking their indigenous knowledge to wider audience. Easterine Kire attempts to establish the tribal stories and histories to the outsiders as she states,

Every man is a story. Every nation is a bristling galaxy of stories. To be able to share one’s story—shouldn’t that be a basic human right? Where there is denial of the freedom to tell our stories, invisible prisons are created....The denial of the right to tell our stories violates our humanity. I believe that every story has its space in History.<sup>7</sup>

In this regard, Kire utilises literature as a medium to situate her Naga culture from the global standpoint by amalgamating fiction with reality thereby crossing the socially constructed marginality.

### Review of Literature

Writers transcend the essence of their thoughts to the readers through their literary productions. A work of art is subjected to diverse interpretations as it encompasses multiple meanings. Kire has constructed her novel *Son of the Thundercloud* with the amalgamation of several critical concepts that are construed from different perspectives. The aspects of mythical discourses of the novel are studied to identify new human life environment by analysing the themes of natural disasters discussed in the fiction. The convergence of

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<sup>6</sup> K. B. VeioPou, *Literary Cultures of India’s Northeast: Naga Writings in English* (Dimapur: Heritage Publishing House, 2018), p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Easterine Iralu, ‘Should Writers Stay in Prison?’, *Naga Sytes*, 4 September (2004). At <http://nagas.sytes.net/~kaka/articles/art007.html>. Accessed 18/02/2021.

myth and reality as two paradoxical factors in the lives of Indigenous community is examined to understand the cultural importance of the Nagas. Contemporary global issue of climate change and its ramifications that influence the living conditions of the people are construed through the mythical narrative of Kire. Research has been conducted on the dimensions of 'Deep Ecology', which the characters in the novel reflect through their behavioural patterns.<sup>8</sup> With the extensive study of the review of literature, this research centres the protagonist Pelevotso as an archetypal hero whose long journey manifests the ethnic identities and cultural reflections of the Angami Naga community through mythical discourses. The archetypal elements are traced with the orality of the myth that substantiates the unique tribal identity of the Angamis.

### **Theoretical Framework**

From time immemorial, human knowledge and behaviour have been shared through the oral narrations of mythical stories that manifest the untold truths about a community or a religion. Fatih Mehmet Berk explains, "The emergence of the myths is the reflection of the faiths of the human beings. Therefore, the history of civilisations associates with the history of religions."<sup>9</sup> The myths are beliefs that are transmitted across generations through various art forms which contribute to construct the homogenous identities of a group of people. In the pluralistic society, each community possesses its own unique mythical stories to share, especially Indigenous groups. Tribes are usually celebrated for their portrayal of epistemological stories reflecting the indigenous systems of life primarily through the art of storytelling and oral narrations. The stories guide the people in moral values and ethical principles that tend to shape their cultural and social behaviour.

Mythology, as William Harmon and Hugh Harmon remark, aims "to explain creation, divinity, and religion; to probe the meaning of existence and death; to account for natural phenomena; and to chronicle the adventures

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<sup>8</sup> Subhra Roy, 'Retracing Deep Ecology in the Reorientation of Naga Identity with Special Reference to the Select Works of Easterine Kire Iralu', *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, vol. 12, no. 5 (2020), pp. 1-6.

<sup>9</sup> Fatih Mehmet Berk, 'The Role of Mythology as a Cultural Identity and a Cultural Heritage: The Case of Phrygian Mythology', *Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences*, vol. 225, no. 1 (July 2016), pp. 67-68.

of cultural heroes.”<sup>10</sup> Narrations are usually centred on a mythical hero who acts as a bearer of the community’s cultural moralities. Thus, the hero becomes the archetypal entity whose humanistic principles pertaining to his culture appear as a recurring pattern in reality. The concept of ‘Monomyth or Hero’s Journey’ serves the purpose of portraying the literary archetypal heroes who illustrate the universal truths and the power of human beings. Joseph Campbell, Bill D. Moyers and Betty S. Flower state that the elements of myths “offer life models” through archetypal heroes whose experiences and attitudes in certain circumstances of their adventures, leave a trail to their community in leading a morally just life.<sup>11</sup>

Joseph Campbell’s monomyth involves seventeen stages of cyclic journey of an archetypal hero that are categorised into three primary phases. These three phases mark the basic patterns of an archetypal hero’s journey, which is as Campbell puts, “a magnification of the formula represented in the rites of passage: *separation -initiation –return*.”<sup>12</sup> The phase of separation incorporates the five stages of “The Call to Adventure...Refusal of the Call...Supernatural aid...The Crossing of the first Threshold ...[and] The Belly of the Whale” encountered by the hero in the familiar environment.<sup>13</sup> The intermediate act of initiation includes the next six stages namely, “The Road of Trials...The Meeting with the Goddess...Woman as the Temptress...Atonement with the Father...Apotheosis...[and] The Ultimate Boon.”<sup>14</sup> The hero confronts these stages after entering the unknown place. Finally, the ultimate phase of return covers the stages of “Refusal of the Return...The Magic Flight...Rescue from Without...The Crossing of the Return Threshold...Master of the Two Worlds... [and] Freedom to Live”, through which the archetypal hero re-enters his home with the elixir of life to instil his people with moral values to lead a harmonious life.<sup>15</sup> However, the present study discusses the three primary phases of separation, initiation and return consolidating the seventeen stages of the monomyth. Therefore, the archetypal hero of the mythical narrations who accomplishes the above

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<sup>10</sup> Cheryl Hunter, *Mythological Heroes and the Presence of the Hero and Journey Archetypes in The Lord of the Rings and Harry Potter* (Master of Arts Thesis, University of New Hampshire, 2007), p. 1.

<sup>11</sup> Joseph Campbell, *The Power of Myth* (Friday Harbour: Turtleback Books, 2012), p. 16.

<sup>12</sup> Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), p. 28.

<sup>13</sup> Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, p. 34.

<sup>14</sup> Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, p. 34.

<sup>15</sup> Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, pp. 34-35.

phases of an adventure is considered as the primordial character representing the group's cultural and traditional practices.

### Creation of Angami Archetypal Images through Hero's Journey

I believe that every story has its space in history...The imprisoning of stories can prevent the healing of a nation's soul. No one has the right to do this.<sup>16</sup>

A hero becomes an inception through his characteristics and behaviour thereby inspiring the entire human race. He carries the cultural ethos and values of a certain group. The hero is the mythical persona who guides the community with moral ethics and principles. "A hero ventures from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered, and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man."<sup>17</sup> Kire's protagonist Pelevotso as a hero of the Angami community sets out his journey and encounters unbelievable incidents which help to construct the identity of the Angami tribe. The significance of his name reveals archetypal hero's attribution to miraculous adventure. The name Pelevotso means "faithful to the end."<sup>18</sup> His grandmother named him so because she wanted him to wander beyond their village for chasing his *self* and cultural knowledge. She says, "[h]e's destined to wander," and that one should not restrict children "from living a life of heroism and wisdom."<sup>19</sup> His journey to the unfamiliar place is the result of the sudden famine that ravaged his village. The prime reason for his journey is loss of his wife and children to the great famine. In his grief, "Pele bolted his house and decided to leave the village."<sup>20</sup> This is the initial phase of "separation" where the hero migrates from his place to a new location with the cultural knowledge of his community.<sup>21</sup> Campbell describes the first phase of the hero as follows:

This first stage of the mythological journey—which we have designated the "call to adventure"—signifies that destiny has summoned the hero and transferred his spiritual center of gravity from within the pale of his society to a zone unknown. This fateful region of both treasure and danger may be variously represented: as a

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<sup>16</sup> Shiva Prasad Sharma, 'Easterine Kire's Fictions and Nagaland', *Palarch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology*, vol. 17, no. 7 (2020), p. 10809.

<sup>17</sup> Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, p. 28.

<sup>18</sup> Easterine Kire, *Son of the Thundercloud* (New Delhi: Speaking Tiger, 2016), p. 12.

<sup>19</sup> Kire, *Son of the Thundercloud*, p. 12.

<sup>20</sup> Kire, *Son of the Thundercloud*, p. 14.

<sup>21</sup> Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, p. 28.

distant land, a forest, a kingdom underground, beneath the waves, or above the sky, a secret island, lofty mountaintop or profound dream state; but it is always a place of strangely fluid and polymorphous beings, unimaginable torments, superhuman deeds, and impossible delight.<sup>22</sup>

Pele wanders across the landscapes of hilly mountains, abandoned villages, parched land, and the magic created by the pull of the stars that lead to the chasm on the earth. Throughout his adventure, he carries an Indigenous ethos that he learns through the mythical stories. He is destined towards the Village of Weavers in the quest for food and water, but the “journey could take him anywhere, or nowhere.”<sup>23</sup> The hero’s journal does not necessitate the fantastical: it is equally applicable to stories set in reality. Pele’s call to adventure is into the real world where he meets his own Angami people with strange behaviours and supernatural powers. The quest within his self propels him to accept the call of nature to witness unimaginable happenings during his journey of adventure.

During his journey in search of his new destination, Pele encounters two dark, human figures who are misunderstood for spirits. Later, he recognises that they are women from the village of Nouné waiting for their famine affected land to be transformed into a fertile area. The wait is for “Seven hundred years”, which puts Pele into unimaginable shock.<sup>24</sup> The two weird sisters are living in the abandoned village for more than three hundred years with the “...great hope of the ancestors who used to say that our ancient misfortune will end when the Son of the Thundercloud is born” as he will “bring rain and mist that softens the soil.”<sup>25</sup> The reality that Pele encounters is beyond imagination and it is shared through mythical narration. The sisters who have been “living on hope” to witness the fertility of their land are the supernatural elements who guide the hero in his journey.<sup>26</sup> The abandoned land, the two sisters, and the myth of the birth of the Son of the Thundercloud are the facets that persuade Pele to concentrate on achieving the cultural knowledge and the spiritual awakening within his self.

‘You must go to the Village of Weavers. But it has moved since the time you were given directions,’ the older women said. ‘The stars pull it along with them, and it is even further east now than when you were

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<sup>22</sup> Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, p. 53.

<sup>23</sup> Kire, *Son of the Thundercloud*, p. 17.

<sup>24</sup> Kire, *Son of the Thundercloud*, p. 19.

<sup>25</sup> Kire, *Son of the Thundercloud*, p. 19.

<sup>26</sup> Kire, *Son of the Thundercloud*, p. 20



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first told of it.<sup>27</sup>

Upon hearing this, Pele is enthralled by this unbelievable story, which is impossible in an ordinary world. He takes them for evil creatures, but regrets this judgment when he experiences the pull of the earth by the stars that created a huge chasm on earth. The assistance of the supernatural beings in Pele's adventure is the second phase of his journey, "initiation", where he ventures into the threshold of unimaginable and mythical circumstances.<sup>28</sup>

This is the most crucial act of hero's adventure where the hero is, ...covertly aided by the advice, amulets, and secret agents of the supernatural helper whom he met before his entrance into this region. Or it may be that he here discovers for the first time that there is a benign power everywhere supporting him in his superhuman passage."<sup>29</sup>

The two sisters bless him with the necessary power to endure the happenings in his journey and guide him. They act as the symbols of moral support to the hero with magical powers in experiencing and expressing his self through the transcendental adventure.

The hero's arrival into the Village of Weavers with the guidance of sisters is the continuation of Pele's phase of initiation in his adventure. Mesanuo, the youngest of the three sisters, narrates them the story of her miraculous pregnancy. She said, "...a drop of rain fell on me. *A single drop of rain!*" with strange happiness in her voice.<sup>30</sup> Pele is stunned to hear this testimony from her, as he had chanced to come across the same story during his childhood, as an oral myth of imagination. He remembered the narration as follows.

In a small village of the Angamis, there lived an old woman. A tiger had killed her husband and seven sons, and she spent long, lonely days waiting for the hour when she would join them in death. One afternoon, a raindrop fell on her from the sky. She became pregnant and gave birth to a son...<sup>31</sup>

He had never thought of witnessing the story of the tiger-widow in his lifetime. Through his real experiences of the story, it is proved that myth "is a true story in so far as it recalls events which have in one way or another shaped the society and its social order through emergence and consolidation

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<sup>27</sup> Kire, *Son of the Thundercloud*, p. 23.

<sup>28</sup> Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, p. 28.

<sup>29</sup> Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, p. 89.

<sup>30</sup> Kire, *Son of the Thundercloud*, p. 36.

<sup>31</sup> Kire, *Son of the Thundercloud*, p. 39.

of beliefs and norms.”<sup>32</sup> Hence, cultural beliefs of the Angami Naga groups reverberate their construction of moral and ethical identities in the social milieu through mythical narrations. Pele’s acquaintance with Mesanuo and her son, Rhalietuo, is like a dream that subjected him to understand the realities of life at every moment. His journey with the flow of Mesanuo and her son underpins the valuable meanings and cultural ethics of his life.

The purpose of the birth of son of the thundercloud is to redeem his family’s fate by killing the spirit-tiger that took the lives of his father and brothers. This course of prophecy is fulfilled by Rhalietuo, and during the course of action, Pele’s journey is tied with the destiny of Rhalie. The killing of the spirit-tiger by Rhalie will eventually bring glory to their village. The cynical attitude of the villagers towards the Angami’s animistic faith keeps the prophecy as merely a story; however, it makes a strong impact when it is witnessed in reality. Mesanuo grieves that the villagers’ disbelief and their loss of faith in seer’s prophecy have led to the death of son of the thundercloud by her own community members. She blames the famine for “...about the famine of stories and songs. They killed all storytellers who tried to tell them about the Son of the Thundercloud. They killed hope.”<sup>33</sup> Through this line, Kire attempts to stress the significant place of oral stories and their influence in the lives of Angami tribe. Stories have the power to transmit the unknown values to the future and also to help in preserving the cultural and ethical identities. Son of the thundercloud, tiger-widow, spirit-tigers and three sisters are the symbolic representations of Angami community’s collective and cultural facets. “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 that tend to tie it back.”<sup>34</sup> The symbols embedded in the stories, contribute to the prevalence of the moral principles in the lives of Indigenous tribes and aid in living balanced, holistic lives.

Pele’s mind and soul are thoroughly cleansed with transcendental emotions by his journey into the village of weavers and by his experiences with the weird sisters and the son of the thundercloud. He admits, “I actually feel... reborn-if I may use such a term. Things that I learned as I was growing up no longer fit or belong, and this is the only reality I want to hold on to...”<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Jelena Vukočić, ‘Myth, Identity and Ethnic Boundaries’, *Sociološki diskurs*, vol. 4, no. 8 (November 2017), p. 49.

<sup>33</sup> Kire, *Son of the Thundercloud*, p. 48.

<sup>34</sup> Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, p. 10.

<sup>35</sup> Kire, *Son of the Thundercloud*, pp. 94-95.

His foundational Indigenous epistemologies have been vitalised by his adventure into the unknown miraculous world intersecting with reality.

This is the final act in monomyth, the “return”, where the hero is experiencing the realisation of his true self and gains strong wisdom to go back to his own place to emanate the knowledge that he obtained through his journey.<sup>36</sup> Campbell marks this ultimate phase as, “If the hero in his triumph wins the blessing of the goddess or the god and is then explicitly commissioned to return to the world with some elixir for the restoration of society, the final stage of his adventure is supported by all the powers of his supernatural patron.”<sup>37</sup> Accordingly, Pele in his journey with the assistance of supernatural blessings and guidance, is able to attain rebirth by which he carries the knowledge about self and cultural patterns.

While the cultures of societies vary, there is a common strand embedded within the infrastructure of each civilization: the hero and his story. Societies throughout history and from all over the globe have lifted up exemplary individuals from folklore and legend as the embodiments of the qualities valued by their cultures. Heroes vary with the qualities of their cultures. Likewise, every hero undergoes a quest from which he achieves a place in the literary pantheon of his homeland. While there is no outline used to definitively chronicle the journey from mere citizen to iconic being, the fact remains that the hero is the personification of his culture's morality and value system.<sup>38</sup>

In the words of Julie Harris, almost all existing cultures celebrate their distinct archetypal heroes who manifest the Indigenous ethnic ethos of a community and bestow with life models to their people. Every archetypal hero encounters a mystical journey morally guided by Indigenous knowledge systems, which possess the moral values and beliefs within. Similarly, the protagonist Pelevotso underpins the traits of an archetypal hero whose journey through separation, initiation and return strengthens the cultural conscience of Angami community guided by the animistic and spiritual powers upon which the indigeneity of the Angami Naga tribes are rooted.

## Conclusion

Pelevotso appears as evidence of witnessing the age old myths in his real life. The realisation of the meaning of mythical stories by encountering the birth of son of the thundercloud by Pele is the point of saturation in his life, from

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<sup>36</sup> Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, p. 28.

<sup>37</sup> Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, p. 182.

<sup>38</sup> Julie Harris, *The Hero's Journey: Cultural Values & the Struggle Against Evil* (2014), p. 2.

which he understands the real purpose of life which is interconnected with cultural discourses. Pele as an archetypal hero "...undertakes for himself the perilous journey...into the crooked lanes of his own spiritual labyrinth, he soon finds himself in the landscape of symbolic figures."<sup>39</sup> Through his encounters with supernatural and magical figures in his adventure, he is able to redefine himself and his community's collective praxis. Through the character of Pele, Kire brings the juncture of myth and reality by projecting the intertwined place of oral narrations in Naga tribal groups. Oral narrations have the ability to connect the past with the present and to foresee the future. Thus, the stories Pele heard during his young age and his testimony to the oral myth are the strictures that aid to mould the future of Angami community with Pele as an archetypal hero. A hero, as Myles Breen and Farrel Corcoran state, is a,

Part of the perceptual system of a culture through which unfamiliar situations, originating either within the culture or outside it, are interpreted or fitted into old symbolic molds. In helping to pattern the relationships among basic beliefs, values, and behaviors that organize social interaction, [heroes] produce common social understanding of new social conditions.<sup>40</sup>

Pelevotso is portrayed as a preserver of group's beliefs and practices by appearing as a recurring character in his society. The author succeeds in producing a literary work encompassing archetypal discourses with the confluence of myth and reality that,

...consists in the unconscious activation of an archetypal image, and in elaborating and shaping this image into the finished work. By giving it shape, the artist translates it into the language of the present, and makes it possible for the reader to find the way back to the deepest springs of life.<sup>41</sup>

In this regard, Easterine Kire formulates a literary shape to her Angami Naga orality by blending myth with reality through her artistic characteristics of writing that illuminates the audience with the indigenous knowledge systems and cultural practices. Like any other art forms,

Oral tradition and storytelling represent a crucial part of the all indigenous cultures to an extent that many contemporary writers of indigenous origin after years of silence have been striving to

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<sup>39</sup> Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, p. 92.

<sup>40</sup> Myles Breen and Farrell Corcoran, 'The Myth in the Discourse', *Education Resources Information Centre*, April (1982), p. 17.

<sup>41</sup> Jung, 'On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetry', in *Twentieth Century Theories of Art*, ed. James M. Thompson (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1990), p. 67.

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incorporate many key elements of the oral traditional storytelling into their writings not only to preserve them but also to make them understandable for contemporary generation of native and also non-native readers.<sup>42</sup>

Kire reciprocates the essence and significance of Angamis mythical ethos which are intertwined with the cultural reality of the tribes. Thus, she transmits the cultural assets and the Indigenous totality of the Angami community to the succeeding generations in the form of secondary orality. Literatures from north-east India portraying the cultural manifestations of a community negate the inappropriately constructed mirages as perceived by the outsiders. Therefore, it can be construed that literature breaks the line of marginality and exclusion between the ostracised tribes and the mainstream society in constructing humanistic nations beyond perceived assumptions.

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<sup>42</sup> Jana Ščigulinská, 'Oral Tradition in Native American and Australian Aboriginal Culture', in *English Matters VI*, ed. Zuzana Straková (Prešov: University of Prešov Press, 2015), p. 116.