

Great Heroines: Medieval to Modern

The Female Heroic Framework

‘The desire for heroes is a profound if not fundamental part of the human condition.’

(Kavanagh and O’Leary 12)

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Introduction

Just as every story needs a hero, every hero needs a story. Whether the hero is an epic warrior like Beowulf, or a skinny teenager with a magic wand, they and their stories all share certain characteristics. Theoreticians have been eager to map these out over the ages: as early as 1876, Johann Georg von Hahn developed a framework in an attempt to capture the bare essence of the hero's story. Numerous explanations have been proposed for the startling similarities among myths worldwide, but as of yet, there is no conclusive answer as to why these stories all share certain characteristics. For this thesis, however, it is not necessarily important why these stories are so similar, but rather the fact that they are and that this has inspired numerous attempts to find the monomyth that seems to be at the base of every heroic tale, and its significance. Glaringly absent from these studies however, are heroines. As this study will show, previous major frameworks are all largely, or even exclusively, based on male heroes, which makes it difficult, if not outright impossible, to use these frameworks when analysing a heroine.

The present study builds upon a previous paper, 'Medieval Heroines: A Revised Heroic Framework' (Reinhoud 2016), that developed a female heroic framework based on an analysis of thirteen medieval heroines. The aim of the present thesis is to reassess and adapt that framework to make it applicable to modern heroines, in the same way that most of the traditional male frameworks are still valid for modern heroes, like Harry Potter and Luke Skywalker. In addition to analysing the Hermione Grangers and Leia Organas – the more obvious heroines – the present study also looks at some more dubious heroines, based on the earlier essay's findings on Grendel's mother, as heroic frameworks tend to leave little room for such heroes and heroines. For example, Severus Snape and Darth Vader would not easily fit into a traditional heroic biography, even though their motives and actions are (arguably) heroic, or at least understandable from their perspective. The present study aims to develop a

framework that allows for the analysis of modern and medieval heroines, and does not exclude anti-heroines such as Narcissa Malfoy and Cersei Lannister.

The first chapter will discuss the history of heroic frameworks, their uses, and their shortcomings. The second chapter discusses the medieval heroines and aims to illustrate how the earlier models can be adapted to create a female heroic framework. The third chapter will then analyse five modern heroines using this framework, to see to what extent it suits these heroines and whether there are any shortcomings to the proposed framework. The fourth chapter will discuss the findings of the third chapter and some general trends in the development of female heroism, and will propose a revised framework. The fifth and final chapter will briefly discuss the new framework's relevance and the possibilities for further research.

Chapter 1: The Heroic Framework

History, uses and shortcomings

The earliest version of a heroic framework was published by Johann Georg von Hahn in 1876. His Aryan Expulsion-and-Return Formula (Appendix A) is based on the biographies of fourteen male heroes taken predominantly from Greek mythology, and although it does not explicitly refer to men, the features mentioned are characteristic of male heroes. For example, both female and male heroes usually experience some hardship in their early childhood, but while many male heroes are abandoned as babies and then raised by animals or strangers (stages V-VII), female heroes are more likely to be left in someone's care, either as a foundling or with a relative or friend. Von Hahn's framework was largely ignored by scholars until Alfred Nutt added some features to it in 1881, to make it more inclusive for Celtic heroes such as Finn, Cú Chulainn, and King Arthur (see Appendix A). Whilst Nutt increased the options for the hero's birth and expanded on his activities abroad, he did little to make the framework more inclusive for female heroines, as he too referred only to male heroes. Although no framework can be expected to fit flawlessly for every hero or heroine, Von Hahn's version, with or without Nutt's additions, is too limited to be useful beyond his set of Greek heroes, and therefore has little lasting quality apart from providing a firm basis for future attempts.

A slightly later framework was developed by Otto Rank in 1909 (Appendix B). He analysed eighteen heroes from Babylonian, Hebrew, Indian, Greek, Roman, Celtic, Norse and Christian mythology, before delving into a Freudian analysis of their heroic lives. Despite showing a greater breadth of reading, again all the heroes are male and the framework itself refers explicitly to a male protagonist. Another shortcoming is that Rank's version is only half a framework – it says nothing of the hero's eventual, inevitable death and instead ends at a climax, with the hero gaining fame and respect. Rank also tends to focus on the relationship

between the hero and his parents rather than on the hero himself, but this can be expected as his primary goal was to use Freudian psychoanalysis to explain the recurring Oedipal themes. His framework is too rigid for many heroes and virtually useless for female heroines, although some of the earlier stages can be applicable to both female as well as male saints, who are often seen as the religious counterparts of secular heroes and heroines. Such stages are the royal parentage, the unusual birth, the prophecy and the resulting dangers during childhood.

In 1936 Lord Raglan developed a framework based on twenty-four male heroes (Appendix C), but apart from adding a few extra heroes and more detailed features, his version differs little from his predecessors. Its exhaustive detail makes it both more and less restrictive: the more detail contained in the framework, the fewer heroes that fit entirely, but by adding more features there is also a greater possibility that some can apply to female heroines as well. For example, to some extent this framework would suit Saint Brigit, the obvious exceptions being marriage (XII), kingship (XIII), loss of favour (XVI-XVII), and children (XX).

It is not until Campbell's 1949 version (Appendix D) that the frameworks become somewhat more inclusive. Despite stating that women "had too damn much to do to sit around thinking about stories" (*Pathways* 145), he is perhaps the first to include female heroines in his framework, albeit only two. Campbell's framework differs from his predecessors both in form and content: instead of a chronological list of features, Campbell divides the stages in three distinct phases, each with five or six (somewhat abstractly worded) notable events in the hero's life. Instead of being based on the hero's entire life, it is based rather on a journey, the hero's most important quest, which makes it highly suitable for male heroes and modern fantasy/action-films, but less so for most medieval heroines. Nonetheless, Campbell's version became, and still is, one of the most influential frameworks. For example,

the *Star Wars*-saga follows it almost to the letter. While Campbell's version might be useful for some modern fantasy heroines, it is of little worth for their earlier counterparts. Up until the early twentieth century women were hardly ever allowed to travel unsupervised, leaving little room for adventure, which means that a journey-based framework is unlikely to be of any use. It might, however, be applied to children's stories such as *Alice in Wonderland*, where fantasy runs wild enough to subvert the social restrictions of the Victorian era.

In 1963, Jan de Vries published his version of the heroic framework, and despite the fact that a second wave of feminism was brewing around this time, he reverted to basing his study solely on male heroes, save for a brief mention of Pallas Athena. However, De Vries' framework does not refer explicitly to male heroes and, excepting stages V to IX, is largely applicable to medieval heroines. One great virtue of De Vries' version is its form: by providing general stages with specific options, De Vries suggests there is room to fill in the phases in each hero's or heroine's own way. Unfortunately, this flexibility is lost after stage IV, and in order to apply to female saints and heroines, stages V to IX would have to be interpreted as metaphorical victories, maidens and journeys, which still makes it less than ideal.

If the masculine frameworks are obscure and hard to find, the feminine ones are even more so. The only study even vaguely resembling a framework specifically for female heroines is Elissa Henken's 1991 study of Welsh saints, where she lists some features that most Welsh female saints have in common. The only stages she recognises are childhood, nubility and death, and she notes that the former and latter are often either omitted or lost. These Welsh stories tend to evolve around the time when the saint reaches a marriageable age, and she has to escape marriage or rape to preserve her chastity. If successful, she has proven her sanctity and can perform miracles, which are usually of a more domestic kind than those of her male colleagues, and if she fails she can still become holy by giving birth to a

saint. Beyond their sexuality these female saints are virtually non-existent, which makes it difficult to create a framework for them. Additionally, the stages Henken describes are too limited to apply to a broader group of heroines; her stages are only suitable for her selection of female Welsh saints.

A brief survey of these frameworks shows that they are all woefully inadequate when applied to the lives of female heroines. The one attempt at a female framework is focused on only a very small group of heroines, which makes it too exclusive and limited to be useful in a broader context. The other frameworks all incorporate elements that are inherently masculine and can only be applied to heroines either by ignoring half the framework or interpreting these stages in a metaphorical sense. The most problematic stages are those concerning the slaying of monsters, life-changing journeys, and rescuing maidens. Medieval women generally did not receive martial training, and were usually not allowed to travel unattended. Both a journey and a monster tend to be involved in rescuing maidens, so by extension this is out of bounds too. If a scholar should wish to force any of the traditional frameworks onto a medieval heroine, they would have to interpret the monster and the journey as symbolic, and the maiden that is rescued becomes either the heroine herself or, in the saints' lives, a maiden won over to the Christian faith. A journey to foreign lands would have to become an inner journey, and fighting a dragon or conquering an evil king would have to become a spiritual fight, or even the ability to survive under harsh conditions.

The problem with frameworks is that it is difficult to find the right balance between generality and specificity. If the frame is too general, like Campbell's abbreviated monomyth¹, it becomes applicable to too many stories, which makes it too blunt a tool for an

¹ "A hero ventures forth 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." (*Hero* 28)

effective analysis. Such a framework will most likely only yield similarities, not differences. On the other hand, if the framework is too specific, it risks being applicable to only a select few heroes sharing perhaps a single folkloric motif, such as gaining supernatural powers through the eating of a magical fish. The purpose of a framework, however, should be to allow for comparisons across distances in time, location and culture, to discover which motifs are specific to which kind of stories, to recognise some of the larger trends in mythology and even to help determine which heroes and heroines might have been historical rather than mythological.

Although they are of little use to female heroines, the frameworks developed by De Vries and Campbell, and to some extent those by Von Hahn and Nutt, Rank, and Raglan, are useful analytical tools that are still largely applicable to modern male heroes, and thus prove their value across time. However, as they are all largely, if not exclusively, based on male heroes, they are simply not valid for female heroines. As the next chapter will show, it is perfectly possible to create a female framework based on the existing models and although there is far less available material on medieval heroines' lives, there is enough to create a framework specifically aimed at them. A female framework will allow for more structured comparisons between male and female heroes, to see which motifs they do and do not share, and, being the first of its kind, it will offer a valuable tool for in-depth literary-historical analyses of female heroines.

Chapter 2: Medieval Heroines

The Female Heroic Framework

Before a female framework can be developed, several problems need to be addressed. First and foremost, there are very few medieval heroines, and even fewer who have reached the same literary status as their male counterparts, which might be why there is no specifically female framework yet. For this reason, the proposed framework is based on heroines from a broad period: from the Early Middle Ages to the Late Middle Ages, spanning roughly the fifth to the fifteenth century. The next problem is that the available information about the existing heroines is often incomplete. Whereas there are countless birth-to-death biographies devoted to male heroes, most stories about medieval heroines relate only a small part of their lives. For example, Judith's story is limited to her seduction and decapitation of Holofernes. The missing details might have been well-known in earlier times, but may have been lost over the years, or they may simply never have existed at all. Either way, this means the proposed framework has to be partially based on assumptions. These can be as basic as assuming that a heroine was born, grew up and died at some point, as these stages are often omitted from their stories, but they can also be more substantial. For example, Grendel's mother displays significant martial skill in her fight with Beowulf, so it can be assumed that she likely received some form of martial training at some point in her life. A third problem is that even though female heroines often do not adhere to the traditional heroic frameworks, their stories were written within a masculine heroic tradition, which makes it impossible and illogical to create a female framework independently from that tradition. For this reason, the new framework is rooted in the traditional models, but while the theoreticians mentioned in Chapter 1, except Campbell, tend to either merely extend or even repeat each other's frameworks, the present framework only borrows the more general stages (e.g. conception, birth, death). The framework (Appendix F, G) has a similar layout to De Vries' version, but

while De Vries loses his flexibility after stage IV, this framework attempts to maintain its flexibility throughout and to avoid overly specific constraints. It consists of a sequence of stages that occur in every heroine's life, and lists the most common options for each stage. These options are the results of extensively reviewing, summarising and schematising the stories of the thirteen core heroines and a continuous process of revising and reshaping in an attempt to find the underlying structure of the medieval heroine's life. Appendix F contains the bare framework, while appendix G is more detailed and shows where each heroine fits. Not all stages can be, or need to be, discussed in this chapter, so appendix G serves as illustration for the more self-explanatory stages and as a guideline for navigating the bare framework found in appendix F.

The female framework is based on thirteen Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman heroic women, whose stories range from legendary to (pseudo-)historical: Grendel's mother, Queen Æthelflæd, Queen Cordeilla, Queen Gwendolen, Judith, Juliana of Nicomedia, Dame Ragnelle, Saint Brigit, Elaine of Astolat, Le Freine, Goldeboru, Queen Guenever, and Queen Isoud. The source material for each heroine is provided below. The heroines were selected on the grounds of being a major character in their stories, the availability of information about their life and background, and whether they take up an active, non-traditional, masculine or otherwise exceptional social position.

Heroines	Primary source(s)
Grendel's Mother	<i>Beowulf</i> . Trans. Seamus Heaney
Queen Æthelflæd	<i>The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle</i> . Trans. James Henry Ingram. Years 912-920
Queen Cordeilla	Monmouth, Geoffrey of. <i>History of the Kings of Britain</i> . Book II Chapters 11-15
Queen Gwendolen	Monmouth, Geoffrey of. <i>History of the Kings of Britain</i> . Book II Chapters 1-6
Judith	<i>Judith</i> . Trans. Elaine Treharne.
Juliana of Nicomedia	Nelson, Marie. <i>Judith, Juliana and Elene: Three Fighting Saints</i> .
Dame Ragnelle	Hahn, Thomas, ed. "The Wedding of Sir Gawain and Dame Ragnelle."
Saint Brigit	<i>Bethu Brigte</i> . Trans. Donnchadh Ó hAodha.

	Connolly, Sean and J. M. Picard. "Cogitosus's 'Life of St Brigit.'" McCone, Kim. <i>Pagan Past and Christian Present in Early Irish Literature</i> .
Elaine of Astolat	Malory, Thomas. <i>Le Morte Darthur</i> .
Le Freine	Laskaya, Anne and Eve Salisbury. "Lay le Freine: Introduction."
Goldeboru	Herzman, Graham, Salisbury. "Havelok the Dane: Introduction."
Queen Guenever	Malory, Thomas. <i>Le Morte Darthur</i> .
Queen Isoud	Malory, Thomas. <i>Le Morte Darthur</i> .

The heroines can be divided into three categories: A) those who take on a male social role entirely, B) those who take on a male social role partially or temporarily but also accept or even employ their femininity, and C) those who do not take on a male social role but are still undeniably heroines. Category A consists only of Grendel's mother – such heroines were rare. Even rarer were those that relied on pure strength alone, and did not rely on their femininity in any way. Although her fight with Beowulf has some sexual undertones, these are never overt, nor does she use this to her advantage. Some women from category B also engage in combat, but they employ and/or accept their femininity: Judith uses sex to distract Holofernes, while queens Æthelflæd, Cordeilla and Gwendolen are never explicitly said to join the fight themselves, and Juliana's fight is more a battle of faith than an actual fight. They only transgress into male territory temporarily, and remain rooted in their female position in society. Grendel's mother, on the other hand, fully takes on a male role and only abandons it after she dies. Therefore, she belongs in category A, while the others are placed in category B, which consists mainly of queens who, after losing their kings, rule in their own right, but also women who (temporarily) defy, transgress or are forced into traditionally male territory. Ragnelle fits into this category because she had to take upon herself the male duty of finding a husband. Judith belongs here too, because she used her sexuality to infiltrate Holofernes' camp, and inspired her countrymen to rise against the Assyrians by bringing them his head. Saint Brigit could be placed in both category B and C, depending on how much stress is given to her more masculine exploits, such as building and overseeing various

monasteries and journeying through Ireland. The present study places her in C, as the source materials used focus more on her miracles and early life. Other heroines in category C are for example the more traditional women from the Middle-English Romances, such as Guenever and Isoud. The medieval framework shows that female heroines tend to fit into one of these groups, and their lives usually progress along one of three different paths: the Warrior Path, the Noble/Nubile Path, or the Spiritual Path. These are most clearly recognisable in stages IV, V and IX: Training tends to relate logically with Adulthood, and this usually relates to the Heroine's Death as well (e.g. Warrior Path means death in battle). The paths and groupings relate to some extent (e.g. category A and the Warrior Path) but both are guidelines only and it is not uncommon for heroines to belong in none or more than one of the categories. These labels are mainly meant to create some level of order in what otherwise might become a chaotic assembly.

Some further explanation may be required for the inclusion of Grendel's mother in this framework. As Kevin Kiernan points out, Grendel's mother is only considered non-heroic because she is described as a monster, otherwise her actions would be seen as heroic: a mother venturing alone into the mead hall of an enemy to avenge her son, as befits a warrior, for "[i]t is always better / to avenge dear ones than to indulge in mourning" (*Beowulf* ll. 1384-5). After all, Judith also sneaked into the enemy camp to murder a high-ranking military leader to ensure victory for her people, and she is seen as heroic without any doubt. One is considered a heroine, God's handmaiden even, and the other a villain, while the main differences rest merely in the perspective of the narrator, their outward appearance, and their being cast in either a stereotypically 'good Christian' or 'evil monster' mould. Admittedly, Judith's people were innocent whereas Grendel was a rampaging murderer, but he was also her son and sole companion, and the Germanic warrior-ethos compelled his mother to take revenge. It may be considered unheroic that Grendel's mother crept in without making herself

known to her opponent and fleeing immediately afterwards, but Judith did not make her true intentions known either, nor did she wait for the guards to find her after completing her mission. For these reasons, the female heroic framework includes Grendel's mother, and tries not only to be applicable to heroines, but also to some anti-heroines. That is, those whose actions can be considered heroic or at least understandable and are mainly seen as evil because of the narrator's perspective.

The heroine's life, like that of the hero, has its own distinct stages. Some features are self-explanatory and will not be discussed further: every woman and man is conceived, is born, and dies at some point. The differences between heroes and heroines arise in youth. Heroes are usually threatened by prophecies or abandoned by their parents; heroines may encounter this too, but an added danger is that of extraordinary beauty, explored in later literature as the male gaze and its inherent dangers. Often the heroine is already extremely beautiful in her childhood, making her desirable both for potential husbands and men with less honourable intentions. Saint Brigit has a particularly creative way of dealing with this:

Bacéne ... said: "The beautiful eye which is in your head will be betrothed to a man though you like it or not." Thereupon she immediately thrusts her finger into her eye. "Here is that beautiful eye for you," said Brigit. "I deem it unlikely," said she, "that anyone will ask you for a blind girl." (*Bethu Brigitte* 23)

Not all heroines encounter this, or take care of it so drastically; other dangers are harsh environments – for example growing up Christian in a society of pagans – and magic in the form of curses, prophecies and love potions. In their youth, heroes and heroines are at their most vulnerable. Ill-meaning relatives can easily stow them away in a dungeon, or well-wishing potion-brewers may entrust a love potion to the wrong person.

The next phase in the heroine's life is Training. Category A, Grendel's mother, is the only kind that is likely to ever receive a complete martial training. Grendel's mother is said to be armed and skilful in combat and the use of weapons, which would make it fair to suppose she has had training. Judith's victory on the other hand was largely derived from her element of surprise: she took her chance and killed an unarmed, unsuspecting man, which does not necessarily require any training. Queens Æthelflæd, Cordeilla and Gwendolen may have received tactical training, as they successfully commanded armies in battle, but they never explicitly take up arms themselves. While tactics might be considered a martial skill, it does not require physical prowess, nor does it require these heroines to abandon their female position in society. Categories B and C receive either a noblewoman's education or religious training, although the former is never actually mentioned in the stories.

The Adulthood phase follows logically after Training: noblewomen marry whether they want to or not, and religious women continue to practice their faith. This is closely connected with stage VI, The Heroine and Sex. For heroines, this warrants a separate stage, as for women both sex and marriage could determine the course of their whole life. Queen Cordeilla gained independence through her marriage, Ragnelle's curse is broken, Guenever and Isoud are put in an impossible position and Elaine dies of heartbreak. Most religious heroines go to great lengths to protect their maidenhood, while the noblewomen tend to fall in love outside wedlock. In the male frameworks, love and marriage are far less present. Kavanagh and O'Leary explain that this is a typical feature of the Celtic hero: "There is always a tension between the value of human relationships and the need to be victorious in battle. But the human relationship rarely takes precedence" (6). This also applies to Germanic heroes, and on a broader scale, epic heroes in general. It is not until the later medieval heroes, such as Arthur, Lancelot and Tristram, that love starts playing a significant role in the hero's

life. This development was mainly due to the influence of the rise of the chivalric romance genre, where love was much more important than in the epics.

For some heroines, marriage meant the end of their story. Goldeboru is an excellent example of this: her story in *Havelok the Dane* shows great heroic potential, but as soon as she is married to Havelok, she disappears behind him. Goldeboru's marriage may be what stifled her heroism: instead of regaining her own kingdom, Havelok does it for her after he regains his, even though their stories are perfectly symmetrical up until their marriage and Goldeboru would have had a considerable advantage, being the rightful heir. While the main reasons why some medieval heroines wished to stay unmarried were based on religious teachings, a more covert reason for their insistence on chastity may have been that, in medieval times, marriage and extra-marital sex generally deprived women of their independence, and thus their heroic potential. This may be why Judith was made a widow in her story, and why Juliana and Brigit were so violently against marriage. Queens Æthelflæd and Gwendolen also do not show their full heroic potential until after losing their husbands: Gwendolen even defeats her own (ex-)husband in the battlefield. One final remarkable difference between heroes and heroines is that heroines do not need to come to a violent end, and can grow old and die of natural causes.

As the medieval heroines' stories were written within a masculine heroic tradition, the feminine framework is rooted in the same tradition as the masculine frameworks. It would therefore be illogical to test it by a different standard, and so in order to establish whether this framework is a valid tool for analysis, it should be subjected to the same test as the masculine frameworks – namely, whether it is still useful for modern heroines.

Chapter 3: Modern Heroines

The Analysis

In order to satisfactorily test the female framework, it ought to be tried on a number of modern heroines. This chapter will discuss various female characters from modern fantasy literature, TV series, and films, whose actions can be defined as heroic, regardless of whether they are commonly considered as good or evil. This is in line with the earlier decision to include Grendel's mother in the selection of medieval heroines, and allows for a broader variety of characters for analysis. Additionally, it will ultimately not only help establish the value of this framework, but maybe even allow for a less traditional, black-and-white perspective on heroism.

The modern heroines come from stories from roughly the last thirty years. In the case of multi-book series such as *Harry Potter* and *A Song of Ice and Fire*, but also large studios such as Disney and Pixar, a maximum of six heroines were taken from the same story, author, or producer. This should ensure that the characters are from a large variety of sources and that the framework is exposed to as many different influences as possible. The guiding principles for the selection procedure were the following: 1) a female character, 2) whose actions can be seen as heroic, 3) and are at least marginally important to the plot, 4) whose life has been described in some detail or can be pieced together from contextual clues, 5) who either ages throughout the story or goes through a sufficiently significant personal development so as to pass through the various stages of the framework, and 6) whose story was written by (a) Western author(s)², 7) in the last thirty years.

² The sixth requirement is mainly because my own knowledge of modern fantasy literature and film does not extend much beyond the Western world, and I consider it out of my depth to analyse the stories of non-Western heroines without first further familiarising myself with these works.

In an attempt to limit the size of this study, only five core heroines will be given a full analysis and traced throughout the framework. Chapter 4 will, where relevant, refer to more heroines. Below are included two separate tables, one naming the core heroines, and one naming a number of other relevant heroines, each with their respective source materials. Not all heroines are discussed in either this chapter or the following, but their stories were taken into consideration while writing and developing the framework, and might prove to be a useful starting point for later researchers.

Core Heroines	Primary source(s)
1. Katniss Everdeen	Collins, Suzanne. <i>The Hunger Games</i> books 1-3.
2. Narcissa Malfoy	Rowling, J.K. <i>Harry Potter</i> books 1-7.
3. Moana	<i>Moana</i> . Disney, 2016.
4. Emma Swan	<i>Once Upon a Time</i> . Disney-ABC 2011-Present.
5. Brienne of Tarth	Martin, George R. R. <i>A Song of Ice and Fire</i> books 2-5. <i>Game of Thrones</i> . HBO, 2011-Present.
Other Heroines	Primary source(s)
Merida	<i>Brave</i> . Disney-Pixar 2012.
Jessica Jones	<i>Jessica Jones</i> . Marvel-ABC, 2015.
Esmeralda	<i>The Hunchback of Notre Dame</i> . Disney, 1996.
Maleficent	<i>Maleficent</i> . Disney, 2014.
Cersei Lannister	Martin, George R. R. <i>A Song of Ice and Fire</i> books 1-5. <i>Game of Thrones</i> . HBO, 2011-Present.
Melisandre	Martin, George R. R. <i>A Song of Ice and Fire</i> books 2-5. <i>Game of Thrones</i> . HBO, 2011-Present.
Arya Stark	Martin, George R. R. <i>A Song of Ice and Fire</i> books 1-5. <i>Game of Thrones</i> . HBO, 2011-Present.
Catelyn Stark	Martin, George R. R. <i>A Song of Ice and Fire</i> books 1-5. <i>Game of Thrones</i> . HBO, 2011-Present.
Sansa Stark	Martin, George R. R. <i>A Song of Ice and Fire</i> books 1-5. <i>Game of Thrones</i> . HBO, 2011-Present.
Hermione Granger	Rowling, J.K. <i>Harry Potter</i> books 1-7.
Lily Potter	Rowling, J.K. <i>Harry Potter</i> books 1-7.
Molly Weasley	Rowling, J.K. <i>Harry Potter</i> books 1-7.
Princess Fiona	<i>Shrek</i> films 1-4. Dreamworks, 2001-2010.
Padmé Amidala	<i>Star Wars</i> episodes I-III. Twentieth Century Fox, 1999-2005.
Leia Organa	<i>Star Wars</i> episodes IV-VII. Twentieth Century Fox, 1977-2015.
Rey	<i>Star Wars</i> episode VII. Twentieth Century Fox, 2015.
Rapunzel	<i>Tangled</i> . Disney 2010.
Galadriel	Tolkien, J.R.R. <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> books 3-6.
Éowyn of Rohan	Tolkien, J.R.R. <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> books 3-6.
Arwen Undómiel	Tolkien, J.R.R. <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> books 1-6.

Stage I-III: The Begetting, Birth and Youth of the Heroine

The earliest stages of the medieval heroine's life are often either unknown, lost, unimportant or referred to only in the briefest fashion, and so it is left to the listener or reader to guess the details of their origins. The heroine's parents are often left out and are usually either dead at the time of the story or oppose the heroine's wishes. For most modern heroines, details regarding the exact circumstances of their begetting and birth are also often left out, although their parents tend to have a larger role. The youth of the heroine is not always threatened; some heroines may experience a blissful childhood, although there are still plenty that are not so lucky, or whose childhood is not even discussed.

Katniss Everdeen

Katniss is one of those unlucky enough to have a dangerous childhood. She grows up in District 12 of post-apocalyptic America, known as Panem. She lives in the poorest part of the poorest district, and after her father dies she takes on his duty of providing for her mother and younger sister by illegally hunting and scavenging in the woods. From the age of twelve she also increases her risk of being reaped for the annual Hunger Games by applying for tesserae³. Katniss applies for the maximum number of tesserae every year, which means that during her entire childhood, Katniss had a huge chance of being reaped for the Games, and with each year this chance grew exponentially. Katniss' youth fits stage IIIc, the dangerous environment: Katniss' childhood is threatened by both starvation and the government. Her father was a poor mine-worker from the Seam, and her mother an apothecary's daughter from the richer part of District 12. They fit stage Ia-ii, being both an unusual pair and humble, and

³ These are tokens that can be exchanged for a meagre year's supply of grain and oil for a single person; children can apply for one tessera per family member, but this means their names are entered into the reaping bowls an additional time for each tessera. On top of that, everyone's name is entered an extra time for each year they are over twelve.

Ib-iii, as Katniss is their legitimate daughter. As with most heroines, the circumstances of Katniss' birth are unknown (IIb).

Narcissa Malfoy

Narcissa Malfoy was born Narcissa Black, the younger sister of Bellatrix Lestrange and Andromeda Tonks, the pureblood⁴ daughter of Cygnus Black III and Druella Rosier. Little is known about her parents, her begetting, birth and childhood other than that she was raised on a twisted philosophy of 'purebloods-first' and attended Hogwarts from age eleven. The Black family has a long and proud bloodline, and believe their (supposed) blood purity and considerable wealth makes them superior to others. Narcissa seems to have adopted this belief. From what is known of Narcissa, she fits Ia-i (as her family considers themselves the modern equivalent of nobility) and Ib-iii. As usual, the exact details of her birth are unknown, so she fits stage IIb. As for her youth, it can be assumed that it was relatively unthreatening: she grew up before the Wizarding Wars in a privileged, protected position. She encountered magic of course, but unlike the medieval stories, she is the one using it rather than the one threatened by it, and although Narcissa has inherited the Black-family's good looks, these are said to be marred by an arrogant expression and she is never in danger because of her beauty. It might be argued that her youth is threatened by a poisonous society (IIIc), indoctrinating her with a false sense of superiority and spoiling her character, but it does not threaten her life.

Moana

Moana is the daughter of a Hawaiian chief and grows up on an idyllic island. She is free to do as she likes, except when she wants to go sailing. Going beyond the reef is out of the question. Moana tries to sail once, but lacking a teacher, her boat topples over and she nearly drowns. After this, she gives up her dreams of sailing and instead devotes herself to her duties

⁴ Pureblood means there is no non-magic (Muggle) blood in the line.

as the chief's daughter. Apart from this love-hate relationship with the sea, there is little that directly threatens Moana's childhood. She is marked by the sea at a young age, destined to return the heart of Te Fiti, which was stolen by demi-god Maui. This is bound to be a dangerous journey, but she does not embark until she is older. Moana fits stage Ia-i, being the chief's daughter and heir, and consequently also Ib-iii. The birth is again unknown (IIb) and her youth could be said to be indirectly threatened by magic, or (demi-)gods rather, as Maui endangers all islands by stealing the heart of Te Fiti, for which Te Ká has sworn vengeance. This could however also be classified as a prophecy as seen in the male frameworks: Moana is destined, which usually means danger.

Emma Swan

Emma is the child of Snow White and Prince Charming, magically transported into the real world to save her from the Evil Queen's curse, so that she can, in turn, save all the characters from the Enchanted Forest, who have also been transported to the real world where they have forgotten who they are. Emma ticks nearly all boxes: her parents are royalty (Ia-i), she is raised in the foster care system (Ia-ii), her begetting was somewhat unnatural as her mother had to drink a magic potion to become fertile again after being cursed (Ib-i), she was born within wedlock (Ib-iii) and that is only the first stage. She is one of the very few whose circumstances of birth are known: she is born moments before the Evil Queen's curse hits her parents' castle, and her father places her in a magical cupboard carved from an enchanted tree to transport her to safety in a different world. This can safely be said to be both a liminal and an extraordinary birth (IIa). She is born on a threshold between worlds: the magical and the real, the dangerous and the unknown. She is also born too early: had she not been, her mother would have gone through the cupboard while pregnant⁵ and would have been able to raise

⁵ The cupboard only allowed two persons to pass through, but the first place was already taken by another.

her. Instead, Emma has to go alone, separated from her family in an attempt to protect her. Consequently, Emma's youth is troubled: she grows up in an orphanage where she feels terribly lonely, she has some wrong friends, steals from stores and tries her best to escape any foster family. Not only that, she is also prophesied to be the Saviour, the one to bring back the happy endings, and break the curse on the Enchanted Forest and its inhabitants. She also becomes pregnant at the age of seventeen. This adds up to fully fill stage IIIa and c.

Brienne of Tarth

Brienne is the only child of Selwyn Tarth to have survived into adulthood, and thus not only his daughter but also his heir. Her mother, older brother and two younger sisters all died young. In her youth, Brienne lived on the Isle of Tarth with her father and their household staff. Brienne is of noble parentage (Ia-i), born within wedlock (Ib-iii), her birth is unknown (IIb) and her youth seems relatively unthreatened, except perhaps for the general dangers of growing up in a medieval environment. Brienne is ironically nicknamed 'the Beauty' for her coarse, unfeminine features, and was refused by a suitor while still very young because of her significant lack of beauty and social graces. Although not necessarily endangering her, it could be said that her appearance made her childhood rather more difficult, thus conforming to the opposite of IIIb.

Stages IV-V: The Heroine's Training and Entering Adulthood

For medieval heroines, these two stages are usually inextricably linked: Training prepares for Adulthood, and the heroine can do little to change this. Few medieval heroines leave their allotted path. Only Le Freine and Juliana changed course: Le Freine was raised by an abbess, and thus likely received a religious education (IVc), yet she married a nobleman (Vb), and Juliana was likely raised by her parents to become a good wife (IVb), yet she refused marriage and instead clung to religion (Vc). As will become evident, the paths become blurred among the modern heroines, and path-changes are more frequent.

Katniss Everdeen

Katniss' training proved invaluable when she had to compete in the Hunger Games. It consists mainly of what her father taught her: archery, hunting and gathering. Over the course of the series she is trained in various other combat skills. All this accumulates into a sound martial training (IVa), which corresponds to her Adulthood: by the time of the Rebellion, Katniss is a skilled warrior (Va). Katniss marries Peeta after the Rebellion (Vb-i), and after fifteen years together they even have children. Her marriage is what eventually heals her and helps her regain the will to live, but this is not incorporated in the original sense of the framework; while Katniss' marriage is also the end of her heroism, it is not in the negative way Goldeboru experienced, whose marriage stopped her from ever even becoming a heroine. It is rather more similar to Ragnelle's curse; in order to lift the curse, or as in Katniss' case, her PTSD and depression, the heroine marries. Katniss' training might however also be considered as the post-apocalyptic wife- and womanhood training (IVb): in District 12, where food is scarce, her hunting and gathering skills would have made her a valuable part of any family.

Narcissa Malfoy

Even though Narcissa is not the main character of the series, her training and adulthood can be inferred. She went to Hogwarts where she received an actual education that put her on the same level as any other wizard, and which cannot be placed in the original framework.

Although she would have learnt defensive charms and combat spells (IVa), her education consisted of much more than that. Some subjects (such as history) may have been included in a noblewoman's education (IVb), but there are many subjects that do not fit any of the options – for example charms, transfiguration, apparition and more. Although she is a skilled duellist herself (Va), Narcissa's adulthood is centred mostly on her marriage to Lucius Malfoy (Vb), her son Draco, and their exploits in service of the Dark Lord. While their activities are not particularly heroic, Narcissa is left out of them and never officially becomes a Death Eater herself. This would mean the marriage classifies as Vb-i, although arguably it is also her marriage that brings out her heroism (Vb-iii): without Lucius, she would not have had Draco, which means she would not have had a reason to betray the Dark Lord and save Harry's life. Like Grendel's mother before her, Narcissa risks everything for her child.

Moana

Moana's training does not fit any of the framework's options. Although she learns and even teaches some traditionally womanly arts such as dancing, drawing and basket-weaving (IVb), her education is focused mainly on following in her father's footsteps as chief. Her parents teach her how to care for her people, and throughout the film there is no mention of marriage or a love interest, even though she has plenty of peers on the island. Unlike the masculine frameworks, where the boy hero is abandoned by his parents and/or raised by strangers, Moana is taught what it means to be a chief, which makes Moana an exceptional heroine – most male heroes wind up on a throne after a victorious campaign, not necessarily knowing how to rule a kingdom. Moana is still very young when her story ends, so she has not

necessarily reached adulthood yet. However, if the Adulthood-phase is instead interpreted as instances of personal growth, Moana fits multiple options. For example, the moment she decides to dedicate herself to her people and give up her dreams of the ocean constitutes a form of maturity, and the closest fit in the existing framework would be Vb-ii, seeing her dedication to her people as a vow to always care for them, which she has inherited from her parents and cannot simply refuse. It is, however, not a comfortable fit, and comparable to interpreting a masculine journeying-phase as a feminine spiritual-journey-within-the-mind-phase. Moana's second Adulthood-phase occurs after her grandmother dies, and she decides to fulfil her destiny and solve her people's problems once and for all, by embarking on her journey to find Maui and restore the heart of Te Fiti. This is rather a journey than a fight, though, and so Moana is still hard to place in the female framework.

Emma Swan

Emma's childhood is only told through the occasional flashback to support the main story, and none of these flashbacks so far have shown her in any kind of school. Seeing how disrupted her childhood was, it is unlikely that she received more than a basic education, although she may have had the chance to read and study during her time in prison or in Tallahassee afterwards. In the first episode of the first season, Emma is seen working as a bounty hunter, which requires significant physical strength and a certain knowledge of criminal behaviour. How she gained the former is unknown, but of the latter she has first-hand knowledge, as she was a criminal herself. Later in the series, Emma also learns how to use magic from the Evil Queen, and she is seen handling swords and other weapons quite skilfully. Emma's criminal youth might be interpreted as martial training (IVa). Although she did not fight much during that time, it gave her a certain stealth and courage. Emma's Adulthood can be classified as Va: a skilful warrior, as she is by far the most powerful character in the series, being the product of true love, a trained and tried warrior, and in

possession of the Saviour's magic. As of yet, she has not decided to marry anyone, although she is in a rather serious long-term relationship with Hook.

Brienne of Tarth

Brienne was educated by her Septa Roelle, and later by her father's master-at-arms Ser Goodwin. Septas nurse the children of the older and richer Westerosi families, while the Maesters would teach them about history, heraldry, and other such subjects. Septas also teach the daughters the gentlewomanly arts, such as needlework, dancing, and etiquette. Brienne is not said to have been taught by a Maester, so her training probably consisted of a very much frustrated Septa Roelle attempting to hammer some womanly grace into her (IVb) and presumably teaching her about the Seven Gods (IVc), although Brienne does not seem particularly religious in her later life. At some point, she starts training under Ser Goodwin to become a knight (IVa). Having failed in all womanly arts, having rejected and having been rejected for marriage multiple times, Brienne gives up any aspirations of ever becoming a wife. Instead, she grows up to become a skilful knight (Va), beating men in combat and even winning a duel against the living legend Jaime Lannister.

Stage VI: The Heroine and Sex

For early medieval heroes, sex and love were not a big part of their lives, while for medieval heroines, it was life-changing. Only in the later medieval period, under the influence of French Romance, did love become important for male heroes, and since then love and sex have been an important part of any hero's or heroine's life, often in the form of true love's kiss and happily ever after. Only since very recently has the influence of love and sex on the heroine's life lessened somewhat, with young heroines like Moana and Merida, while other genres do their best to de-romanticise courtly love and show some harsher realities, for example in *A Song of Ice and Fire*.

Katniss Everdeen

In the *Hunger Games*-trilogy, Katniss has two love interests: Peeta Mellark and Gale Hawthorn. She eventually marries and has children with Peeta, but their romantic relationship had a rather odd start: Peeta confessed his love for her on live television, and Katniss had to play along pretending she reciprocated these feelings to appeal to sponsors and increase her chances of surviving. For a long time, both Katniss and Peeta are not sure to what extent the other is pretending or being genuine. Katniss uses her sexuality, or in this case Peeta's crush, to her advantage throughout the series (VI_d), although eventually the relationship changes to one of mutual dependence and trust. Katniss might also to some extent be considered to be in an adulterous relationship (VI_c): she is not in an official relationship with either Gale or Peeta until the last chapters, but she keeps hovering between the two boys throughout the earlier books.

Narcissa Malfoy

Over the course of the last two *Harry Potter*-books it becomes evident that, despite their general unpleasantness, Narcissa and Lucius Malfoy are in a loving relationship and depend upon each other equally. However, Narcissa's attitude to sex and her sex life in general are

never mentioned. She does not use her sexuality (VI_d), she is never mentioned as having an affair (VI_c), nor is she ever described protecting her maidenhood (VI_a). It might be argued that she tries to protect Draco's innocence, although not necessarily his virginity (VI_b). Sex appears to be a taboo subject in the *Harry Potter*-series; it is a children's story after all, and it is only ever hinted at in ambiguous terms, vague enough to escape a child's notice, which explains why it is hard to place Narcissa in stage VI.

Moana

Moana stands out among heroines for the distinct lack of sexual undertones in her story. Although some objects in the film might be vaguely linked to sexuality (e.g. a banana and a peculiarly shaped seashell), there is never any overt discussion of romantic love or sex. The film is of course aimed at a young audience, and Moana herself is still rather young at the time of her adventure, but so are most other Disney/Pixar films and princesses who do have a love interest. Moana never expresses any interest in love or sex, she never encounters a potential suitor, nor does she ever have to fend off a rapist. She is rather unique among Disney and Pixar heroines for being one of the few, if not the only princess without even a potential love interest, and forms a radical contrast to the female Welsh saints from Henken's study, whose stories usually consisted of nothing except their relationship to sex, or rather rape. She also forms a contrast with the medieval and modern heroines in general, as she does not fit this stage of the proposed framework in any way.

Emma Swan

Emma is one of the few characters whose sex life is explored in some depth, and also one of the few who has had multiple lovers. As she has never been married, all these affairs are extra-marital (VI_c), which means her son, Henry, is officially a bastard. However, in Emma's time and place this is not as much of a crime as it was among medieval heroines, and does not carry the same weight. She is never shown protecting either her own or another's

maidenhood, nor does she use her sexuality to her advantage. She does share a true love's kiss with Killian Jones/Captain Hook, which is one of the strongest forms of magic in her world, but the proposed framework does not accommodate for that. With only a strenuous link to stage VIc, Emma is also hard to place into this stage of the proposed framework.

Brienne of Tarth

Brienne has never had an actual relationship, although she has spent quite some time fending off hostile men whose intentions were rather less than honourable. When she joins Renly Baratheon (on whom she has a secret crush), she learns that there is a wager among the knights on who will be the one to take her maidenhead. Some may have been tempted to win by taking her by force, which means Brienne would have had to defend her maidenhood (VIa). The wager is stopped before she needs to defend herself, but later in the series she has to fight off more would-be rapists. In the TV series she rescues Sansa from Ramsay Bolton (VIb), but only after he has already raped her.

Stages VII-VIII: The Heroine's Victory and Loss

Heroes and heroines alike are shaped by their victories and losses. For many medieval heroines, the latter outweighed the former. They lost husbands, children and other family members, their freedom, and, in some cases, even their lives. The victory and the loss usually share a causal connection. For example, Queen Cordeilla won the battle for Britain against her sisters, but by winning she lost them both forever. It also incurred the wrath of her sisters' sons, who later imprisoned her and caused her to commit suicide. For the modern heroines, this has not changed. Their victories and losses are the most notable events in their lives, and for the sake of the plot these are usually linked inextricably and poetically.

Katniss Everdeen

Katniss may be the heroine that loses and wins the most. She liberates Panem from the tyrannical post-apocalyptic government (VIIa), but at the cost of almost all of her family and friends, and even her own sanity. After the two consecutive Hunger Games and the Rebellion, she suffers from extreme PTSD and loses herself in deep melancholia and apathy. Only after fifteen years of peace does she finally gain enough courage to have children and carry on with her life. The events in the *Hunger Games*-series have altered her beyond recognition – she has lost, to some extent, her own identity. Her hardest losses were her loved ones (VIIIa): her father, her sister Primrose, Rue, Cinna, and when Peeta nearly dies, she is mad with fear and grief. Katniss was never truly free whilst living in the dystopian land of Panem; therefore, she never had any freedom to lose (VIIIb). Another notable victory is that Katniss once saved Peeta's life by using the modest healing skills her mother taught her and fighting off other Tributes for the right medicine (VIIIb-i). She also protects and saves some of her allies during the Games and the Rebellion, but this protection-victory is not explicitly represented by the proposed framework.

Narcissa Malfoy

Narcissa is a rather conflicted heroine – even her classification as a heroine is dubious. For most of the series, she is a background character with little to no voice of her own. In the final books, however, she becomes much more important to the plot, culminating in the scene where she rejects Voldemort and plays a pivotal role in his downfall (VIIa). That was hardly her main motivation, though: she did not care either way, as long as she and her husband would be reunited with their son. Narcissa's victories are hard to classify, as it is unclear to what extent she sides with Voldemort, and thus to what extent she considers the Death Eaters' victories hers. It is possible that Narcissa only ever sided with Voldemort because Lucius did, and that as the books progress, she takes over Lucius' role as head of the household and guides her family away from Voldemort. One victory can without a doubt be ascribed to her: by the end of the books, her family is alive and together. They have all survived the Battle of Hogwarts (which might be classified as VIIIb-i, a victory against death, although it is not through healing powers) and they are not sent to Azkaban because they abandoned Voldemort before the Battle was over (which is the opposite of stage VIIIb, loss of freedom). In the last book, Narcissa's sister Bellatrix dies, and judging by their behaviour in *The Half-Blood Prince*, they were close at some point. However, the sisters are rarely shown together, which makes it hard to say to what extent Narcissa still considers Bellatrix's death as the 'loss of a loved one' (VIIIa). Narcissa loses Lucius briefly when he is sent to Azkaban after the events of book five, but this may have been a victory in disguise: after this, Narcissa becomes a much more significant, outspoken character.

Moana

Moana's story is straightforward. She loses her grandmother (VIIIa), is briefly imprisoned by Maui (VIIIb), but eventually completes her mission and returns to enjoy her birthright (VIIa). Along the way, she learns much about herself and grows with her victories and failures. She

even heals Te Fiti by restoring her heart (VIIb-i), who in turn heals the surrounding islands, and she also heals Maui by restoring his magical fishing hook and his heroism. She also has to continually protect Heihei, her idiotic rooster, and saves him from his own stupidity countless times. The most significant of these rescue actions is when she single-handedly saves Heihei from an army of Kakamora. She heals her people as well, by restoring the heart of Te Fiti and their love for the ocean.

Emma Swan

As Emma is the main heroine of a long-running TV series, her victories and losses are almost beyond count. Some of her more significant victories are against the Evil Queen, the Snow Queen, Peter Pan, Zelena the Wicked Witch of the West, Cruella de Vil, Ursula, Maleficent, Cora the Queen of Hearts, Nimue, Hades, and many, many more (VIIa). She has survived a trip to the Underworld, defeated the Darkness inside her, and she has saved countless lives (VIIIb and VIIb-i). Her victories largely outweigh her losses, although this can be mainly attributed to the fact that death tends to be only temporary in this TV series. A large majority of main characters that die eventually come back one way or another, with only a few exceptions. Henry's father, Neal, for example, did not come back from the dead, and this could be considered a significant loss (VIIIa).

Brienne of Tarth

Brienne's life consists of a few significant victories and numerous bitter losses. Her victories are both physical (VIIa) and symbolic (VIIb); any time she is accepted for who she is, or acknowledged as a good knight, she considers it a victory. These instances usually occur after she wins a physical fight, for example when she beats Loras Tyrell and is accepted into Renly's Rainbow Guard. She has won fights against famous knights, who all underestimated her purely because she is a woman, and she made them regret it. She has a low self-esteem though, so each loss weighs heavily on her. For example, when Renly is killed (VIIIa) by

Stannis' demonic shadow, she blames herself for his death even though she could do nothing to prevent it, and goes above and beyond to avenge him. Other losses are: not being able to find either Arya or Sansa (although in the TV series she has found both; Arya escaped, Sansa accepted her sword), Catelyn's death, and early in life the loss of her mother and siblings. She is also briefly held prisoner by the Brave Companions, and she is eventually captured by Lady Stoneheart and the brotherhood without banners (VIIIb).

Stage IX: The Heroine's Death

While medieval heroines died for love, religion, and other noble causes, the modern heroines rarely die. That is, their story finishes before their death, and the reader is left with the impression that the heroine lives on. This appears to be a general trend in modern heroic fiction: heroes rarely die. Some are shown in old age, or an epilogue shows how everything turned out alright and how they live happily ever after, but their actual death is rarely – if ever – included.

Katniss Everdeen

Despite some near-death experiences during the Hunger Games and the Rebellion, Katniss is still alive by the end of the series. Judging by the tranquillity of the epilogue, she will probably die of old age with her loved ones nearby (IXd).

Narcissa Malfoy

Narcissa is also still alive by the end of the series, and while J.K. Rowling occasionally reveals what happens to characters after the books, she has not revealed what happens to Narcissa. In all likelihood, Narcissa will also die of old age (IXd), unless she becomes involved in some new magical menace.

Moana

Moana's story is the shortest of all core heroines, and by the time her story ends she has only just reached her prime. It is impossible to say how she will die; it could be anything, depending on what kind of adventures she will have in later life and what kind of chieftain she will become.

Emma Swan

Seeing how characters in *Once Upon a Time* tend to not stay dead, it is highly likely Emma will die a couple of times and happily walk back into the frame in the next episode. She has already escaped from the Underworld, and by season six she starts having visions of her own

death in combat (IXc). She will probably somehow survive this encounter though, as the series is based on classic Disney fairy tales: everyone lives happily ever after. Her true death would mean the end of the series, so it would have to be special somehow: either a peaceful death in old age (IXd), a glorious death in combat (IXc), or she will movingly sacrifice her life to save others (IXa).

Brienne of Tarth

The latest book ends with Brienne being hanged by Lady Stoneheart and then popping up in the Riverlands imploring Jaime to follow her. This either means that she gave in to Lady Stoneheart's wishes at the last moment and was cut down before she suffocated or broke her neck, or that the brotherhood's Red Priest brought her back from the dead. Brienne's (true) death is hard to predict. She could easily die in combat (IXc), or alternatively, be executed, but she is also likely to sacrifice herself for some noble cause (IXa). Under certain circumstances she might even be moved to commit suicide, for example if she were to think she had acted unforgivably dishonourably. Of all options, old age and other natural causes (IXd) seem the most unlikely, especially when taking into consideration that George R.R. Martin has an unfortunate tendency to kill off his characters.

Chapter 4: The New Framework

Alterations and discussion

Based on the analyses of the modern heroines in Chapter 3, Appendix H summarises a revised female heroic framework that is analytically applicable to medieval and modern heroines alike. Additions based on the findings of Chapter 3 have been added in italics. This chapter will discuss these alterations and some general trends in the shift from medieval to modern. For each change to the original framework there are generally at least two core heroines, or one core heroine and one or more other heroines, to justify it.

Alterations

Stages I and II are still sound for both the medieval and the modern heroines, so these stages required no changes. The differences arise in stage III, Youth of the Heroine. Modern heroines can still be threatened by magic (Princess Fiona), extraordinary beauty (Sansa Stark) and a dangerous environment (Emma Swan, Katniss Everdeen), but these stages do not always fit. For example, Brienne's, Arya's, and Fiona's youth are threatened by their extraordinary appearance, but they are not considered beautiful, so IIIb has been changed to a more general option: '*Male gaze, or appearance (extraordinarily beautiful or ugly)*'. The real danger in both the medieval and the modern stories is the male gaze, not the heroine's appearance. The revised framework reflects this more explicitly. Some other additions are to IIIc, where a dangerous environment now includes society and the government, as the dangers modern heroines face are more likely to originate from these than from nature; and IIIa, which originally included both magic and prophecy, has been split into two separate options, as prophecy has proved itself to be significant enough in the lives of modern heroines (Emma Swan and Moana for example) to warrant its own category, even though the two are often intertwined.

Stage IV also required some changes. The most significant is that it is now quite common for heroines to have an actual education: most *Harry Potter* heroines attended Hogwarts with their male peers, many of the (admittedly wealthier) *A Song of Ice and Fire* heroines were tutored by a Septa or a Maester, and even the impoverished Katniss attended a school. Education appears to have become an ingrained part of the heroine's life, and it is no longer limited to either a completely martial, spiritual or nubile training; heroines can be educated in all these skills and more. Hence the addition of stage IVd: *General education*. One other small change is the addition of 'or survival' to IVa. While there are more women-warriors than ever, there are at least as many heroines who are taught how to wield weapons for the purpose of hunting, not necessarily to fight, Katniss being the prime example. The framework was not changed to accommodate Moana's chieftain-training, as such a training is still too rare among heroines; it is still more common for (royal) heroines to grow up away from their parents.

Stage V: Entering Adulthood, especially Vb: Marriage, had to undergo some changes to become sufficiently applicable to modern heroines. Especially the *Harry Potter* and *A Song of Ice and Fire* series, but also *Once Upon a Time*, have fully unleashed the heroic potential of mothers that originated with Grendel's mother. Hence the change of 'Marriage' to 'Marriage and motherhood', and the specification of 'Start of the heroine' to the 'freedom to act' option. For example, Narcissa's heroism is based entirely on her love for her husband and son. In a similar way, Lily Potter, Molly Weasley, Catelyn Stark, Emma Swan and even Cersei Lannister are all partly, if not mainly, heroic because of their love for their children. Another new possibility for stage Vb is that of a happy marriage. While for some heroines marriage is still the end of their heroism (e.g. the more classical Disney-princesses), for others, their happy marriage is what motivates or even initiates their heroism, examples being Narcissa Malfoy, Molly Weasley, Lily Potter, and Princess Fiona. The most important

development in this stage is that marriage no longer alters the heroine's situation as it once did – Hermione and Ginny may be married by the end of the *Harry Potter*-series, but it does not influence their (potential) heroism.

Stage V has been expanded further, with the addition of a new path called 'Wayfinder', based on Moana. Wayfinders are heroines who are destined to fulfil a task and whose main objective is trying to balance that task with their own desires, like Moana, Emma Swan, and Katniss Everdeen. Wayfinders may be warriors, wives, mothers or a combination of these, but their main purpose in life (or rather their story) is their task. While heroines generally have a quest, most are either a warrior, a wife, or a mother, and in some exceptional cases religion guides them in their quest. The main difference is that wayfinders may be anywhere between none and all of these, and generally do not allow themselves to be distracted from their main quest by love, family, and other such things.

In Stage VI, the original options still stand, but the stage has been expanded by VIe: '*happily married, or true love*' and VI f: '*not mentioned/relevant*'. The former is identical to Vb, but as sex and marriage tend to go hand in hand, both have been left in. The latter is a serious change from the female Welsh saints, whose stories consisted mainly of their relationship to sex and/or rape, and little more. Modern heroines can exist beyond their sexuality, and may, like the epic heroes before them, pronounce their quest as more important than their love life. Moana is one of the first heroines in whose story not a single male counterpart presents himself, and Merida's quest consists of being able to decide for herself when, if, and who she wants to marry (and have sex with). This development is still rather new among heroines – most heroines are still fighting for love and similar causes, rather than rejecting it entirely or even being ignorant of it.

Stage VII was left unchanged except for the addition of a new option to VIIa, namely that of saving or protecting someone from harm. Most modern heroines assert their

heroicness this way: Katniss saves her sister from the Games, Narcissa saves Harry from Voldemort, and Moana saves her rooster from himself. Stage VIII needed more changes, namely the addition of VIIIc and VIIIId: '*Identity*' and '*Failure*'. With the growing appreciation of heroines (or women in general even) as individuals, they gained an identity, and by gaining it, they stand to lose it. This is most evident in Katniss: the books start out with a tough, but innocent young woman, and they end with a frail, traumatised mess of a person. Katniss changed dramatically over the course of the series, and the young woman in the first chapters is lost beyond retrieval. Another (anti-)heroine that goes through such a change is Maleficent, whose identity changes for the worse after her heart is broken. VIIIId, *Failure*, is based on Brienne. While most heroines are eventually successful, or at least have a happy ending, Brienne keeps accepting new quests but so far she has not completed any. In the TV series, Brienne executes Stannis Baratheon as revenge for Renly's murder, she briefly sets eyes on Arya, and finds Sansa, but in the books she does none of these things. The only mission she accomplishes is that of escorting Jaime to King's Landing, but that was only the first half of Catelyn's quest: the second half was ensuring the Stark girls were returned safely. Cersei Lannister, a dubious heroine much in the same way as Grendel's mother, also failed in her quests: one for power, the other one protecting her children. Her position in King's Landing is weak and crumbling, and by the fifth book her eldest son is dead, her daughter is far away in Dorne, and her youngest son is being used as a political pawn. In the TV series, they are all dead, but her quest for power is somewhat more successful.

The final stage, IX: Death, needed a few additions. Aside from being killed in battle, the chance of heroines being executed or murdered has grown, mainly because of series such as *Harry Potter*, *A Song of Ice and Fire*, and *The Hunger Games*, where female characters are actively and physically involved in various wars. The last addition is that of IXe: *Unknown*. None of the five core heroines has unequivocally died by the (current) end of their stories;

few, if any, heroines truly die these days. If they do, they are usually a secondary character, such as Lily Potter: her death is what shapes the entire series, but she is not the main character.

Discussion

The main trend in the development of heroism appears to be a move towards a more nuanced definition of heroism involving less of a dichotomy between good and evil, with complex characters that are increasingly difficult to place in the traditional frameworks. For example, in *A Song of Ice and Fire* all characters are at least to some extent morally dubious, and in *Once Upon a Time* Emma Swan was at one point even both the main hero and the main villain. It is no longer as simple as Good versus Evil. There are of course still those, and there will always be some that stick to this simple formula, but there are already many author(s) who have succeeded in reaching a sophisticated nuance. The traditional frameworks were not only inherently masculine, they were also one-dimensional regarding the definition of heroism, and left little to no room for deviation from a cut-out path. The new framework attempts to accommodate both heroines and anti-heroines for these very reasons.

A more general trend is a change in the attitude to sex, love and marriage. Medieval heroines' lives were inextricably connected to their sex and sexuality, and while modern heroines are more diverse in their attitudes to sex, their relationship with sex is still infinitely more complicated than that of medieval and modern heroes. For this reason, the female framework devotes an entire stage to sex, while the traditional frameworks do not even mention it. This single stage cannot possibly encompass all there is to be said, and this is by far the most difficult stage to describe, as the heroine's relationship with sex and love is never straightforward, and probably never will be. The younger and more recent heroines, such as Moana and Merida, tend to either not have to deal with sex and marriage at all or successfully reject it, while older heroines tend to have more explicit, and more often voluntary, dealings

with sex and/or love, but some modern heroines, such as Brienne, still face sexual violence and arranged marriages. Medieval heroines were more often forced to accept an arranged marriage; if they did not, they were likely to meet an end similar to Juliana's. Even saints and queens had to face the threat of rape and nearly all medieval heroines were at some point either forced to protect their own maidenhood or compelled to protect another's, sometimes even going as far as performing abortions (e.g. Saint Brigit). In some of the older stories, such as Æthelflæd's, Gwendolen's and Cordeilla's, sex, rape and love are hardly mentioned, but this is rather more due to the fact that their stories are recounted in a fragmentary manner than because these were not important parts of their daily lives. Only with the heroines from the French Romances did the idea of voluntary sex arise, and with that came also the possibility of adulterous, pre- and extramarital sex. Only very few heroines explicitly used sex to their advantage in medieval times, and yet each of the medieval heroines is punished for her own or another's sexuality to some extent. The most obvious and most horrifying example is how Guenever is often blamed for bringing down the Round Table because she (allegedly) slept with Lancelot. The main differences between medieval and modern heroines in this aspect are the absence of this moralising stance, the reduced threat of rape and the lack of arranged marriages in most modern fantasy, the exception being *A Song of Ice and Fire*. This might, however, also be due to the genre, as most fantasy series tend to be aimed at children and young adults, while *A Song of Ice and Fire* is aimed at a more mature audience. Another important change from medieval to modern is that marriage no longer significantly alters the heroine's situation or her heroic potential. It is no longer an obligatory part of the heroine; she can now decide for herself if and when she wants to marry. Not all medieval heroines were deprived by their marriage – some benefited from it – but for them the choice to marry was rarely their own. Ragnelle, for example, either had to marry or live a cursed life,

while Cordeilla would have been foolish not to accept an offer of marriage after being disowned and abandoned by her father.

A more tentative development is one of more inclusivity regarding sexuality. Many studios and writers are still hesitant to write about heroes and heroines that are not cisgender heterosexuals, and although there is still a long way to go, some first steps have been made. Brienne, for example, may have preferred to go through life as a man, even though Martin never explicitly has her state any such thing. The newly released *Beauty and the Beast*-film is one of the first Disney productions to include an explicitly gay character, but he is still only a comic sidekick, not the main hero or heroine. In *A Room of One's Own*, Virginia Woolf points out how women in literature are generally “not only seen by the other sex, but seen only in relation to the other sex” (81), and rarely in their relation to other women. This is still very much present in modern fantasy literature and film; even Moana is hardly ever seen in her relationship to other women. The only women she interacts with are her mother and grandmother (not counting the goddess Te Fiti/Te Ká, who hardly speaks), while male heroes, either medieval or modern, are rarely ever shown interacting with their family. Evidently, there is still a long way to go for the modern heroine, and in order to leave some room for any future developments in this area, the framework uses neutral terms for Stage VI: The Heroine and Sex, without any assumptions about the gender of the heroine's love interest. One stage that ought to have been included was The Heroine and her Friend(s), but unfortunately, heroines still appear to have very few of those, and when they do, they either assume a mentor-pupil relationship (as with Moana and Maui, or Katniss and Rue), or they die an untimely death (as with Brienne and Catelyn), or in some cases even both (as with Katniss and Rue).

A significant change is the almost complete lack of religion in modern heroic fiction. Save for Moana and Melisandre, there are few if any heroines or anti-heroines whose actions

are influenced by their religion in any way comparable to some of the medieval heroines. A few Disney heroines, such as Esmeralda, are Christian, but this appears to be merely the last remnant of the once flourishing literature of Christian heroines. The likes of Judith, Juliana, and Saint Brigit are hard to find in modern heroic literature. Christianity appears to have been replaced by Moana's polytheism, Melisandre's Lord of Light, and the magic of *Harry Potter*. The scarceness of religious modern heroines mirrors the development of the medieval, religious society towards a modern, secular society, but what is harder to explain is the religious heroine's tentative comeback in *A Song of Ice and Fire*, one of the few fantasy series where religion plays an influential role.

Another trend is that modern authors rarely ever give their heroine a proper, final death. This is possibly due to the influence of Disney's happily-ever-after and the high public demand for a Hollywood-style happy ending, although it may also be connected to genre. Most fantasy series are aimed at children and young adults, and so authors may perhaps decide to leave the characters while they are still young and alive to encourage their audience to think of them as peers, or even friends. Perhaps they believe that it will make their character's influence more lasting, or perhaps they are simply being practical and leave them alive so they can write a sequel, should their story be a success. Whatever reason these authors may have had to end the stories without truly ending them, it is quite a change from the medieval stories, where a story was not over unless the hero or heroine had died. Then, of course, there is also the radical opposite, Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire*, where heroes and heroines die by the dozens and a death of old age is rarer than dragons' eggs.

While analysing the modern heroines, it became evident that the Paths mentioned in Chapter 2 are no longer as useful as they were for the medieval heroines. While some modern heroines, such as Emma, still stick to a single path (the Warrior Path in this case), most heroines possess qualities of and follow each Path at the same time to some extent. Narcissa,

for example, is both a Warrior and a Noble/Nubile. The categories used in Chapter 2 were no longer useful either, as these were mainly concerned with the extent to which women transgressed into traditionally male social territory. This study compares medieval heroines to modern ones, while the aim of the original essay was to compare medieval heroines to medieval heroes, and as this thesis focused on a significantly smaller selection of heroines, the classifications became superfluous.

The original framework is for the most part still valid, and needed only a few minor changes to be able to fully accommodate modern heroines. Most of these changes can be traced back to historical developments, such as the improved position of women in society under the influence of feminism, the sexual revolution of the sixties, the change from a religious society to a more secular society, and changing audience expectations, such as well-developed characters and a classic Hollywood happy ending. Aside from the original purpose of the framework, namely comparing female heroines with male heroes, the framework should now also be sufficiently equipped to be useful in structured, in-depth literary-historical analyses of medieval and modern heroines of the Western world, and provide a useful model for comparing heroines and anti-heroines across the ages. The resulting framework achieves the precarious balance between generality and specificity as described in Chapter 1, as the framework is sufficiently general in its main stages, which cover the heroine's life from conception to death, and sufficiently specific in the options listed under each stage, resulting in a uniquely flexible framework, tailor-made for great heroines from medieval to modern times.

Chapter 5: Future Heroines

Relevance and research possibilities

As stated in Chapter 1, the purpose of a framework is ‘to allow for comparisons across distances in time, location and culture, to discover which motifs are specific to which kind of stories, to recognise some of the larger trends in mythology and even to help determine which heroes and heroines might have been historical rather than mythological’ (page 9). So far, the proposed and subsequently improved framework has proved itself useful for comparisons across time and demonstrates quite clearly which motifs are specific to the stories of heroines as opposed to those of heroes. By comparing the old framework to the new version, the differences between medieval and modern heroines become clear as well. The question of historicity versus mythologicality is not difficult in modern literature: it is usually (made) clear whether a heroine is a real person, based on one, or entirely fictional. The medieval framework used heroines varying from (pseudo-)historical to mythological, which means the framework is applicable to heroines along this spectrum, but not necessarily useful in determining a character’s historicity. This study itself has also described some of the larger trends in the development of heroines, so the framework and its discussion have covered most of the requirements set out at the start. The next hurdle, then, is to discover to what extent this framework is useful in comparisons across various locations and cultures. Further research will have to determine whether this framework is of sufficient quality to allow for cross-cultural comparisons, whether it covers enough ground to bring out the differences and similarities, and whether it is unbiased in its emphases, despite being exclusively based on Western heroines.

The revised framework has proved its adequacy in the analysis of both medieval and modern heroines. Being the only one of its kind, it offers new possibilities for structured analyses ranging from large scale comparative studies to detailed analyses of a small number

of heroines. It is also a new step towards the discovery of a monomyth – whether such a thing exists, and whether its essence can be captured in words – and makes for a valuable, contemporary addition to the previous work in this field, as it covers a considerable niche area.

Future studies could either use the new framework to analyse heroic lives, or continue to test and improve the framework itself. A next step, for example, would be to test the framework on a selection of non-Western heroines from medieval to modern times, to see to what extent the framework is applicable to their lives, and whether the framework might be made more universal by making a similar amount of alterations as the change from Western-medieval to Western-modern required.

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Appendix A: Von Hahn (1876) and Nutt (1881)

Based on Taylor and Ó Cathasaigh. Nutt's additions in italics.

Birth

- I. Principal hero illegitimate, *and/or born posthumously or supernaturally*
- II. Mother, daughter of native prince
- III. Father, a god or stranger

Youth

- IV. Omen to a parent
- V. Hero, in consequence, exposed
- VI. Suckled by brutes
- VII. Reared by childless herdsman, *or a widow*
- VIII. Arrogance of the youth
- IX. Service abroad
 - a. *The hero attacks and slays monsters*
 - b. *The hero acquires supernatural knowledge by eating a magic fish*

Return

- X. Triumphant homecoming, and return from abroad
- XI. Fall of the persecutor; acquisition of sovereignty; liberation of mother
- XII. Foundation of a city
- XIII. Extraordinary death

Subordinate Figures

- XIV. Slandered or incestuous and early death
- XV. Vengeance of the injured servant
- XVI. Murder of the younger brother

Based on Perseus, Hercules, Oedipus, Amphion and Zethus, Pelies and Neleus, Leucestus and Parrhasius, Romulus and Remus, Dietrich, Wolfdietrich, Siegfried, Cyrus, Kei Khosrav, Karna, and Krishna. Twins are counted as one. Nutt added some Celtic heroes, such as Finn, Cú Chulainn, and King Arthur.

Appendix B: Rank (1909)

Based on Rank.

- I. The hero is the child of very distinguished parents.
- II. Usually the son of a king.
- III. His origin is preceded by difficulties, such as sexual abstinence, prolonged infertility, or secret intercourse of the parents due to external prohibition or obstacles.
- IV. During or before the pregnancy, a prophecy, in the form of a dream or oracle, warns against his birth, usually threatening harm to the father.
- V. Therefore the newborn child, usually at the instigation of the father or his representative, is doomed to be killed or exposed.
- VI. As a rule, he is surrendered to the water, in a box.
- VII. He is then saved by animals, or by lowly people (herders).
- VIII. He is suckled by a female animal or a lowly woman.
- IX. He grows up.
- X. He finds his distinguished parents in a variety of ways.
- XI. He takes revenge on his father.
- XII. He is acknowledged.
- XIII. He achieves greatness and fame.

Based on Sargon, Moses, Karna, Oedipus, Paris, Telephos, Perseus, Dionysus, Gilgamesh, Cyrus, Trakhan, Romulus, Hercules, Jesus, Siegfried, Tristan, Lohengrin, and Scéaf.

Appendix C: Raglan (1936)

Based on Raglan.

- I. Mother is a royal virgin
- II. Father is a king
- III. Father often a near relative to mother
- IV. Unusual conception
- V. Hero reputed to be son of god
- VI. Attempt to kill hero as an infant, often by father or maternal grandfather
- VII. Hero spirited away as a child
- VIII. Reared by foster parents in a far country
- IX. No details of childhood
- X. Returns or goes to future kingdom
- XI. Is victor over king, giant, dragon or wild beast
- XII. Marries a princess (often daughter of predecessor)
- XIII. Becomes king
- XIV. For a time he reigns uneventfully
- XV. He prescribes laws
- XVI. Later loses favor with gods or his subjects
- XVII. Driven from throne and city
- XVIII. Meets with mysterious death
- XIX. Often at the top of a hill
- XX. His children, if any, do not succeed him
- XXI. His body is not buried
- XXII. Has one or more holy sepulchers or tombs

Based on Oedipus, Theseus, Romulus, Heracles, Perseus, Jason, Bellerophon, Pelops, Asclepius, Dionysos, Apollo, Zeus, Joseph, Moses, Elijah, Wata Gunung, Nyikiang, Sigurd, Llew Llawgaffes, Arthur, Robin Hood, Quetzalcoatl, Horus, and Attis.

Appendix D: Campbell (1949)

Based on Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*.

I. Departure

1. The Call to Adventure
2. Refusal of the Call
3. Supernatural Aid
4. The Crossing of the First Threshold
5. The Belly of the Whale

II. Initiation

1. The Road of Trials
2. The Meeting with the Goddess
3. Woman as the Temptress
4. Atonement with the Father
5. Apotheosis
6. The Ultimate Boon

III. Return

1. Refusal of the Return
2. The Magic Flight
3. Rescue from Without
4. The Crossing of the Return Threshold
5. Master of the Two Worlds
6. Freedom to Live

Appendix E: De Vries (1963)

Based on De Vries.

- I. The Begetting of the hero
 - a. The mother is a virgin, who is in some cases overpowered by a god, or has extra-marital relations with the hero's father
 - b. The father is a God
 - c. The father is an animal, often the disguise of a god
 - d. The child is conceived in incest
- II. The Birth of the hero
 - a. It takes place in an unnatural way
 - b. The 'unborn' hero, i.e. the child is born by means of a caesarean section
- III. The youth of the hero is threatened
 - a. The child is exposed, either by the father who has been warned in a dream that the child will be a danger to him, or by the mother who thus tries to hide her shame
 - b. The exposed child is fed by animals
 - c. After that the child is found by shepherds, etc.
 - d. In Greek legend various heroes are brought up by a mythical figure
- IV. The way in which the hero is brought up
 - a. The hero reveals his strength, courage, or other particular features at a very early age
 - b. On the other hand the child is often very slow in his development: he is dumb or pretends to be mentally deficient
- V. The hero often acquires invulnerability
- VI. The fight with a dragon or other monster
- VII. The hero wins a maiden, usually after overcoming great dangers
- VIII. The hero makes an expedition to the underworld
- IX. When the hero is banished in his youth he returns later and is victorious over his enemies. In some cases he has to leave the realm again which he has won with such difficulty
- X. The death of the hero

Appendix F: The Female Framework (2016-7)

❖ Stages VI to VIII need not be chronological.

- I. Begetting of the Heroine
 - a. Parentage
 - i. Noble parentage
 - ii. Unusual (foster-)parentage
 - b. Begetting
 - i. Unnatural
 - ii. Extramarital
 - iii. Marital
- II. Birth of the Heroine
 - a. Liminal or otherwise extraordinary
 - b. Unknown
- III. Youth of the Heroine (threatened by any or all of these dangers)
 - a. Magic
 - b. Extraordinary beauty
 - c. Dangerous environment
- IV. Training of the Heroine
 - a. Martial
 - b. Wife- and womanhood
 - c. Religious
- V. Entering Adulthood
 - a. Skilled warrior
 - b. Marriage
 - i. End of the heroine
 - ii. Arranged marriage
 - iii. Freedom to act
 - c. Religion
- VI. The Heroine and Sex
 - a. Protects own maidenhood
 - b. Protects another's maidenhood
 - c. Adulterous affair, pre- or extramarital sex
 - d. Uses sexuality as an advantage

- VII. The Heroine's Victory
 - a. Physical fight, military victory, reclaiming birthright, overcoming an enemy
 - b. Symbolic, spiritual
 - i. Can also be a victory against death or disease through healing powers
- VIII. The Heroine's Loss
 - a. Loved one(s)
 - b. Freedom
- IX. Death of the Heroine
 - a. Sacrificial: for love or religion
 - b. Suicide
 - c. In battle
 - d. Natural causes: old age, disease, etc.

Based on Grendel's mother⁶, Queen Æthelflæd, Queen Cordeilla, Queen Gwendolen, Judith, Juliana of Nicomedia, Dame Ragnelle, Saint Brigit⁷, Elaine of Astolat, Le Freine, Goldeboru, Queen Guenever, and Queen Isoud.

⁶ Although traditionally seen as a villain, depending on the perspective her actions can be considered heroic.

⁷ Many male saints adhere to the masculine heroic framework, so female saints should fit the feminine framework. For this reason Saint Brigit has been included.

Appendix G: Extended Female Framework (2016-7)

- ❖ *Italics* means there is no biographical evidence to support this, but when the context would suggest that such a phase would logically fit in the heroine's life.
- ❖ Stages VI to VIII need not be chronological.
- ❖ Heroines are grouped by their categories to keep the framework orderly. The categories are *not* a ranking of heroiness, but meant to facilitate comparisons with the masculine framework and to demonstrate the various kinds of heroism among heroic women.

I. Begetting of the Heroine

a. Parentage

- i. Noble parentage: one or both parents are royal or noble
 - B: Queen Æthelflæd, Queen Cordeilla, Queen Gwendolen, Ragnelle
 - C: St Brigit, Elaine, Le Freine, Goldeboru, Guenever, Isoud
- ii. Unusual (foster-)parentage: humble, orphan, adopted, foundling, etc.
 - A: Grendel's mother (descendant of Cain)
 - B: Juliana (Christian daughter of pagan parents)
 - C: Le Freine (abandoned at birth)

b. Begetting

- i. Unnatural
 - A: Grendel's mother (Cain/fatherless)
- ii. Extramarital
 - C: St Brigit
- iii. Marital
 - B: *Queen Æthelflæd, Queen Cordeilla, Queen Gwendolen, Judith, Juliana, Ragnelle*
 - C: Elaine, Le Freine, Goldeboru, Guenever, Isoud,

II. Birth of the Heroine

a. Liminal or otherwise extraordinary

- A: Grendel's mother: both beast and human, mother and warrior, victim and attacker, heroic and monstrous, descended of Cain and yet fatherless.
- C: St Brigit was born on a doorstep, Le Freine was immediately abandoned. Both were left without social class, status, or family and marginalised by society.

b. Unknown

All other heroines used here

III. Youth of the Heroine (threatened by any or all of these dangers)

a. Magic

B: Ragnelle (curse)

C: St Brigit (prophecy), Isoud (in some versions she and Tristram fall in love by drinking from a love potion meant for her and her future husband King Mark)

b. Extraordinary beauty

Most heroines are beautiful, but not all are threatened by it, so not all beautiful heroines are included here.

i. Heroine may act to protect herself, for example via prayer or self-harm

B: Juliana (defaced by torture), Ragnelle (defaced by curse)

C: St Brigit (prays beauty away to escape marriage; in *Bethu Brigitte* she stabs out her own eye)

c. Dangerous environment

A: *Grendel's mother* (suggested in *Beowulf* ll. 1355-1361)

B: Judith (war), Juliana (Christian during Roman persecution, living in a society of pagans), Ragnelle (abandoned by her family after being cursed)

C: St Brigit (father banishes slave mother and unborn child), Le Freine (abandoned at birth), Goldeboru (father dies when she is young, left in the care of Godrich, Earl of Cornwall)

IV. Training of the Heroine

a. Martial

A: *Grendel's mother*

b. Wife- and womanhood

B: *Queen Æthelflæd, Queen Cordeilla, Queen Gwendolen, Juliana, Ragnelle* (before the curse)

C: *Elaine, Guenever, Isoud*

c. Religious

B: *Judith*

C: St Brigit, *Le Freine* (raised as foundling by abbess)

V. Entering Adulthood

a. Skilled warrior

A: Grendel's mother

b. Marriage

i. **End-station** of the heroine

B: Ragnelle's marriage is her end. It breaks the curse, Gawain gives her sovereignty over their marriage, and that is the end of her story.

C: Goldeboru shows all characteristics of a heroine up until marriage. After this she virtually disappears behind her heroic husband Havelok.

ii. **Arranged marriage** that in some cases keeps the heroine from her true love

B: *Queen Æthelflæd*, Queen Cordeilla, Queen Gwendolen, Ragnelle (arranged by herself)

C: Goldeboru (to the 'highest' man in England) *Guenever*, Isoud

iii. **Freedom** from family, curse, etc.; but also to take action as married woman, divorcée or widow

B: Queen Æthelflæd, Queen Cordeilla, Queen Gwendolen, Judith, Ragnelle (curse is broken partially after her marriage, and entirely when Gawain gives her sovereignty)

c. Religion

Could offer protection to heroines in one of the following ways:

i. God, or faith

ii. Angels

iii. Convent

B: Judith, Juliana (their faith gives them courage and strength)

C: St Brigit (joins convent to escape marriage)

VI. The Heroine and Sex

a. Protects own maidenhood

B: Judith (widowhood), Juliana

C: St Brigit

b. Protects another's maidenhood

C: St Brigit (The Silver Brooch, the abortion)

c. Adulterous affair, pre- or extramarital sex

A: *Grendel's mother* (arguably; she is presumably unmarried and she had Grendel, but he is also described as a 'fatherless' creature)

C: Elaine (is prepared to become Lancelot's mistress if he will not marry her),

Le Freine (implied sexual relations with Guroun before their marriage),
Guenever, Isoud

d. Using sexuality as an advantage

B: Judith

C: Guenever (depends on which version is used; not in Malory, but others, e.g. *Lanval*, describe her as a treacherous seductress)

VII. The Heroine's Victory

a. Physical fight, military victory, reclaiming birthright, overcoming an enemy

A: Grendel's mother (avenges Grendel)

B: Queen Æthelflæd (building fortresses), Queen Cordeilla (against sisters), Queen Gwendolen (against husband), Judith (Holofernes and the Assyrians), Juliana (the devil; dies with virginity intact), Ragnelle (breaks the curse)

C: Le Freine (discovers true lineage and marries Guroun), Goldeboru (but only via her husband)

b. Symbolic, spiritual

i. Can also be a victory against death or disease through healing powers

C: St Brigit (makes mutes speak and the blind see), Elaine (heals Lancelot), Isoud (heals Tristram)

B: Juliana and the devil (a battle of faith)

C: St Brigit (the murderous men), Elaine (versus herself/broken heart; she turns to religion and seems at peace, although she dies anyway)

VIII. The Heroine's Loss

a. Loved one(s)

A: Grendel's mother loses her son

B: Queen Æthelflæd loses her husband, Queen Cordeilla loses her entire family, Queen Gwendolen loses her father (and her husband), Judith lost her husband, Ragnelle is abandoned by her family

C: Elaine 'loses' Lancelot, Goldeboru loses her father, Guenever loses Arthur at Camlann and breaks up with Lancelot, Isoud loses Tristram,

b. Freedom

B: Queen Cordeilla is imprisoned by her nephews, Juliana fights the devil in a cell

C: Goldeboru is imprisoned after her father's death, Guenever's abduction, imprisonment and pyre, Isoud's marriage to the cruel King Mark

IX. Death of the Heroine

a. Sacrificial: love or religion

B: Juliana (martyred)

C: Elaine, Isoud (after/with Tristram)

b. Suicide

B: Queen Cordeilla

C: Elaine

c. In battle

A: Grendel's mother

d. Natural causes: old age, disease, etc.

B: *Queen Æthelflæd*, Queen Gwendolen, *Ragnelle* (dies young)

C: St Brigit, *Le Freine*, Goldeboru, Guenever

Appendix H: The Revised Female Framework (2017)

- ❖ Stages VI to VIII need not be chronological.
- ❖ Additions to original framework (Appendix F) are in italics.

- I. Begetting of the Heroine
 - a. Parentage
 - i. Noble parentage
 - ii. Unusual (foster-)parentage
 - b. Begetting
 - i. Unnatural
 - ii. Extramarital
 - iii. Marital
- II. Birth of the Heroine
 - a. Liminal or otherwise extraordinary
 - b. Unknown
- III. Youth of the Heroine (threatened by any or all of these dangers)
 - a. Magic
 - b. *Prophecy*
 - c. *Male gaze, or appearance (extraordinarily beautiful or ugly)*
 - d. Dangerous environment, (*caused by*) *government or society*
- IV. Training of the Heroine
 - a. *Martial or survival*
 - b. Wife- and womanhood
 - c. Religious
 - d. *General education (and/or a mix of the above)*
- V. Entering Adulthood
 - a. Skilled warrior
 - b. Marriage *and motherhood*
 - i. End of the heroine
 - ii. Arranged marriage
 - iii. *Start of the heroine; freedom to act*
 - iv. *Happiness; or true love*
 - c. Religion
 - d. *Wayfinder*

- VI. The Heroine and Sex
 - a. Protects own maidenhood
 - b. Protects another's maidenhood
 - c. Adulterous affair, pre- or extramarital sex
 - d. Uses sexuality as an advantage
 - e. *Happily married, or true love (see also Vb-iv)*
 - f. *Not mentioned/relevant*
- VII. The Heroine's Victory
 - a. Physical fight, military victory, reclaiming birthright, overcoming an enemy, *protecting/saving someone from harm*
 - b. Symbolic, spiritual
 - i. Can also be a victory against death or disease through healing powers
- VIII. The Heroine's Loss
 - a. Loved one(s)
 - b. Freedom
 - c. *Identity*
 - d. *Failure*
- IX. Death of the Heroine
 - a. Sacrificial: for love or religion
 - b. Suicide
 - c. In battle, *killed or executed*
 - d. Natural causes: old age, disease, etc.
 - e. *Unknown*

Based on Grendel's mother, Queen Æthelflæd, Queen Cordeilla, Queen Gwendolen, Judith, Juliana of Nicomedia, Dame Ragnelle, Saint Brigit, Elaine of Astolat, Le Freine, Goldeboru, Queen Guenever, Queen Isoud, Katniss Everdeen, Narcissa Malfoy, Moana, Emma Swan, and Brienne of Tarth.

PLAGIARISM RULES AWARENESS STATEMENT

Fraud and Plagiarism

Scientific integrity is the foundation of academic life. Utrecht University considers any form of scientific deception to be an extremely serious infraction. Utrecht University therefore expects every student to be aware of, and to abide by, the norms and values regarding scientific integrity.

The most important forms of deception that affect this integrity are fraud and plagiarism. Plagiarism is the copying of another person's work without proper acknowledgement, and it is a form of fraud. The following is a detailed explanation of what is considered to be fraud and plagiarism, with a few concrete examples. Please note that this is not a comprehensive list!

If fraud or plagiarism is detected, the study programme's Examination Committee may decide to impose sanctions. The most serious sanction that the committee can impose is to submit a request to the Executive Board of the University to expel the student from the study programme.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the copying of another person's documents, ideas or lines of thought and presenting it as one's own work. You must always accurately indicate from whom you obtained ideas and insights, and you must constantly be aware of the difference between citing, paraphrasing and plagiarising. Students and staff must be very careful in citing sources; this concerns not only printed sources, but also information obtained from the Internet.

The following issues will always be considered to be plagiarism:

- cutting and pasting text from digital sources, such as an encyclopaedia or digital periodicals, without quotation marks and footnotes;
- cutting and pasting text from the Internet without quotation marks and footnotes;
- copying printed materials, such as books, magazines or encyclopaedias, without quotation marks or footnotes;
- including a translation of one of the sources named above without quotation marks or footnotes;
- paraphrasing (parts of) the texts listed above without proper references: paraphrasing must be marked as such, by expressly mentioning the original author in the text or in a footnote, so that you do not give the impression that it is your own idea;
- copying sound, video or test materials from others without references, and presenting it as one's own work;
- submitting work done previously by the student without reference to the original paper, and presenting it as original work done in the context of the course, without the express permission of the course lecturer;
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- when one of the authors of a group paper commits plagiarism, then the other co-authors are also complicit in plagiarism if they could or should have known that the person was committing plagiarism;
- submitting papers acquired from a commercial institution, such as an Internet site with summaries or papers, that were written by another person, whether or not that other person received payment for the work.


The rules for plagiarism also apply to rough drafts of papers or (parts of) theses sent to a lecturer for feedback, to the extent that submitting rough drafts for feedback is mentioned in the course handbook or the thesis regulations.

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I hereby declare that I have read and understood the above.	
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Student number:	5497590
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