

ARCHETYPES

A Look at the Structure of the
Stories We Tell...and Are Told

DEFINING ARCHETYPES

- General
 - Original model from which something is developed or made
- Literary Criticism
 - Images figures, character types, settings, and story patterns that, according to Jung, are universally shared by people across cultures

Definitions taken from *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms*.

WHAT THAT MEANS

- Literature
 - Stock characters
 - Style of character (hero, villain, etc.) common across the literary canon
- Psychology
 - Akin to a stereotype
 - Connotation is not always negative

UNIVERSAL ARCHETYPES

- According to Jung, there are universal archetypes
 - Inherited by everyone
 - Birth, rebirth, death, power, magic, the hero, the child, the trickster (jester), the demon, God, wise old man (sage), the Earth Mother, etc.

CATEGORIES OF ARCHETYPES

- Situational
- Character
- Symbolic

SITUATIONAL

- The Quest
 - Search for someone (or something)
- Examples
 - *The Once and Future King*
 - *The Lion King*
 - *Star Wars*

CHARACTER

- Hero
 - Young or innocent
 - Of noble or honorable birth/descent
- Villain
 - Antithesis of the hero
 - Deformed
 - Physical
 - Mental/spiritual
- Sage
 - "Wise Old Man"
 - Provides the hero with a talisman and/or guidance
- "Princess"
 - Female character
 - Family of or related to the hero
- Sidekick
 - Faithful companion, usually to the hero
 - Aids the hero in completing his journey
- Jester
 - Trickster
 - (Occasionally) Comic relief
- Herald
 - Brings a message that sends the hero on his journey

LIST OF TRAITS FOR HERO ARCHETYPE

- Circumstances of his conception are unusual (mother a virgin)
- Attempt to kill him at birth
- He is spirited away
- Reared by foster parents
- We know nothing of his childhood
- Upon on manhood, he returns to his future kingdom
- Has a victory over the king or a wild beast
- Marries a princess
- Becomes king, but reigns uneventfully
- Loses favor with the gods
- Driven from the city after which he meets with a mysterious death often at the top of a hill
- His body is not buried
- He has one or more sepulchers

THE DEVIL FIGURE

- Evil incarnate
- Offers worldly good, fame or knowledge to the protagonist in exchange for possession of the soul
- Examples
 - Satan/Lucifer
 - Palpatine/Emperor in *Star Wars*

MENTORS

- These individuals serve as teachers or counselors to the initiates
- Work as role models
- Often serve as father or mother figures
- Teaches by example the skills necessary to survive the quests
- Examples
 - Gandalf to Frodo
 - Merlyn to Wart/Arthur
 - Obi-Wan to Luke

HUNTING GROUP OF COMPANIONS

- Loyal companions willing to face any number of perils in order to be together
- Examples
 - Knights of the Round Table
 - Robin Hood's Merry Men

LOYAL RETAINERS

- These Individuals are somewhat like servants who are heroic themselves
- Their duty is to protect the hero and reflect the nobility of the hero
- Example
 - Watson to Sherlock Holmes
 - Alfred the Butler to Bruce Wayne/Batman

EARTHMOTHER

- Offers spiritual and emotional nourishment to those with whom she has contact
- Depicted in earth colors and has large breasts and hips symbolic of her childbearing capabilities
- Symbolic of fruition, abundance, fertility
- Examples
 - Mother Nature
 - Mammy in *Gone with the Wind*

THE TEMPTRESS

- Characterized by sensuous beauty
- Protagonist is physically attracted to
- Ultimately brings about his downfall
- Examples
 - Guenever, King Arthur legends
 - Sirens in *The Odyssey*

THE DAMSEL IN DISTRESS

- Vulnerable woman who must be rescued by the hero
- Often used as a trap to ensnare the unsuspecting hero
- Examples
 - Snow White
 - Sleeping Beauty

SYMBOLIC ARCHETYPES

The collective unconscious makes certain associations between the outside world and psychic experiences. These associations become enduring and are passed from one generation to the next.

SYMBOLIC

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| • Natural Archetypes | • Man-made Archetypes |
| – Trees | – Rings |
| – Sun | – Weapons |
| – Moon | • Swords |
| – Rivers | • Arrows |
| – Rain | – Towers |
| – Fire | – Bridges |
| – Animals | |

LIGHT VS. DARKNESS

- Light-suggests hope, renewal or intellectual illumination
- Darkness-suggests unknown, ignorance or despair

WATER VS. DESERT

- Water is necessary for life and growth, thus is commonly appears as a birth or rebirth symbol
- Lack of water (desert)-death
- Examples
 - Water in baptismal services-spiritual births
 - Rain in a work of literature can suggest a character's spiritual birth (*The Shawshank Redemption*)

HEAVEN VS. HELL

- Man has traditionally associated parts of the universe not accessible to him with the dwelling places of the primordial forces that govern his world
- Skies and mountain tops- house of gods
- Bowels of the earth-diabolical forces

{Primordial-having existed from the beginning; in an earliest or original stage or state;}

SHAPE ARCHETYPES

- Circle
 - Heaven, intellect, thought, sun, the number two, unity, perfection, eternity, oneness, celestial realm, hearing, sound
- Oval
 - Woman, passivity

SHAPE ARCHETYPES

- Triangle
 - Communication between heaven and earth, fire, the number three (3), trinity, aspiration, movement upwards, return to origins, sight, light
- Square
 - Pluralism, earth, firmness, stability, material solidity, the number four (4)

COLOR ARCHETYPES

- White
 - Innocence, purity, virginity, spiritual thought
 - Spirit, creative forces, the direction East,
 - Worn prior to experiencing a rite of passage
- Black
 - Knowledge, intelligence, evil, chaos, mystery, unknown
 - Hero may wear combination of blacks and whites while progressing through various trials

COLOR ARCHETYPES

- Red
 - Depicts great passion as in violence, love, artistry, sunrise
 - Fire, emotion, death, mother, Mars, the note C, anger
 - Worn by hero character or one of his cohorts during battles
- Blue
 - Compromise, serenity, the day, sea, heaven, religious feeling, innocence, Jupiter, the note F, physical soothing and cooling
 - Characters wearing this color represent peacemakers
- Green
 - Symbolizes life, rebirth, hope, envy, Earth, growth, Venus, the note G, fertility, nature

