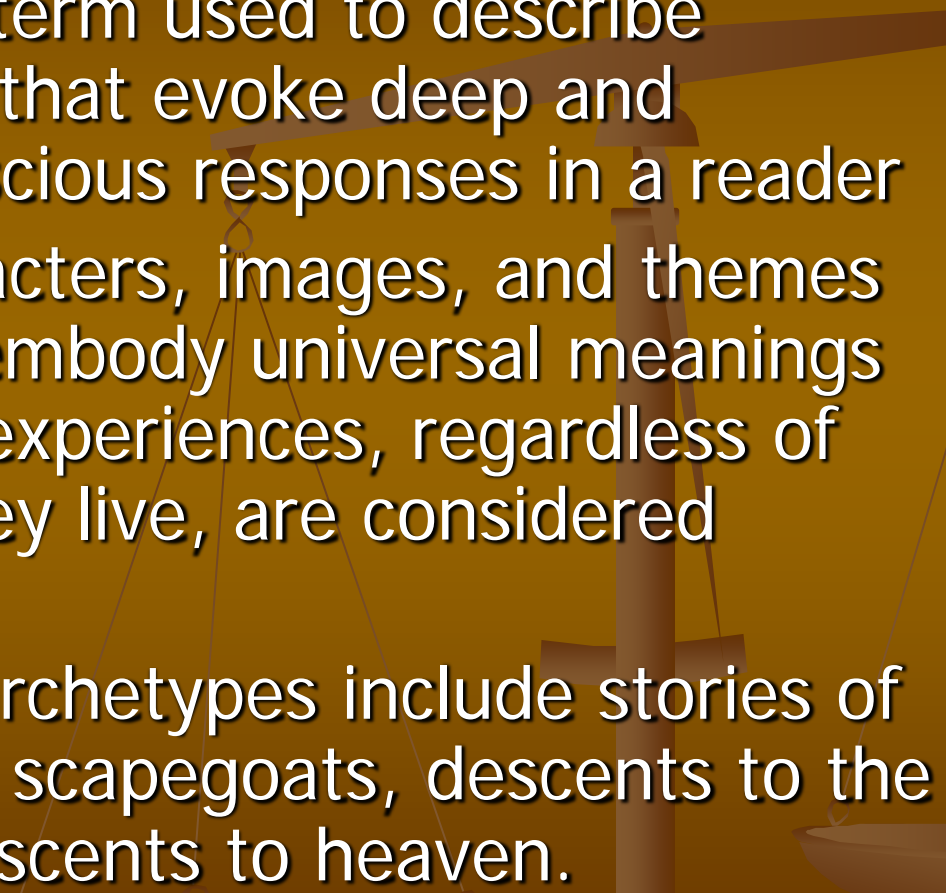


# Literary Archetypes



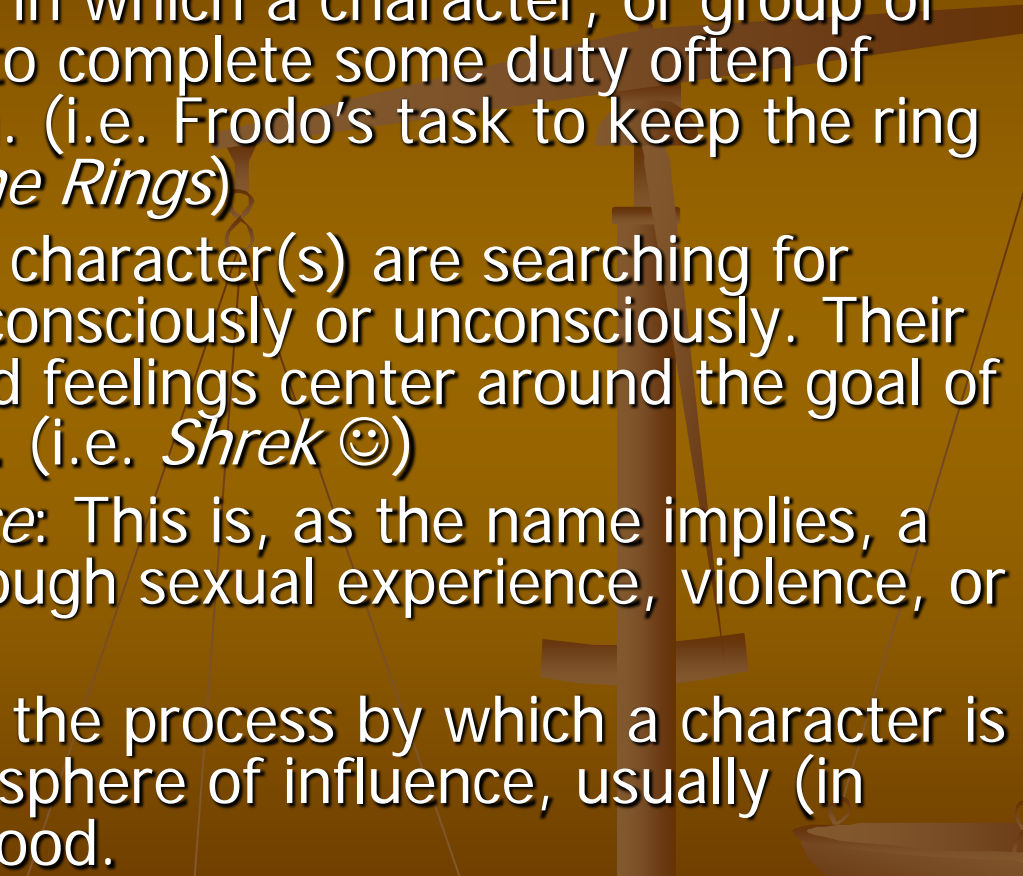
# What is an archetype?

- An archetype is a term used to describe universal symbols that evoke deep and sometimes unconscious responses in a reader
  - In literature, characters, images, and themes that symbolically embody universal meanings and basic human experiences, regardless of when or where they live, are considered archetypes.
  - Common literary archetypes include stories of quests, initiations, scapegoats, descents to the underworld, and ascents to heaven.
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# Common Character Archetypes

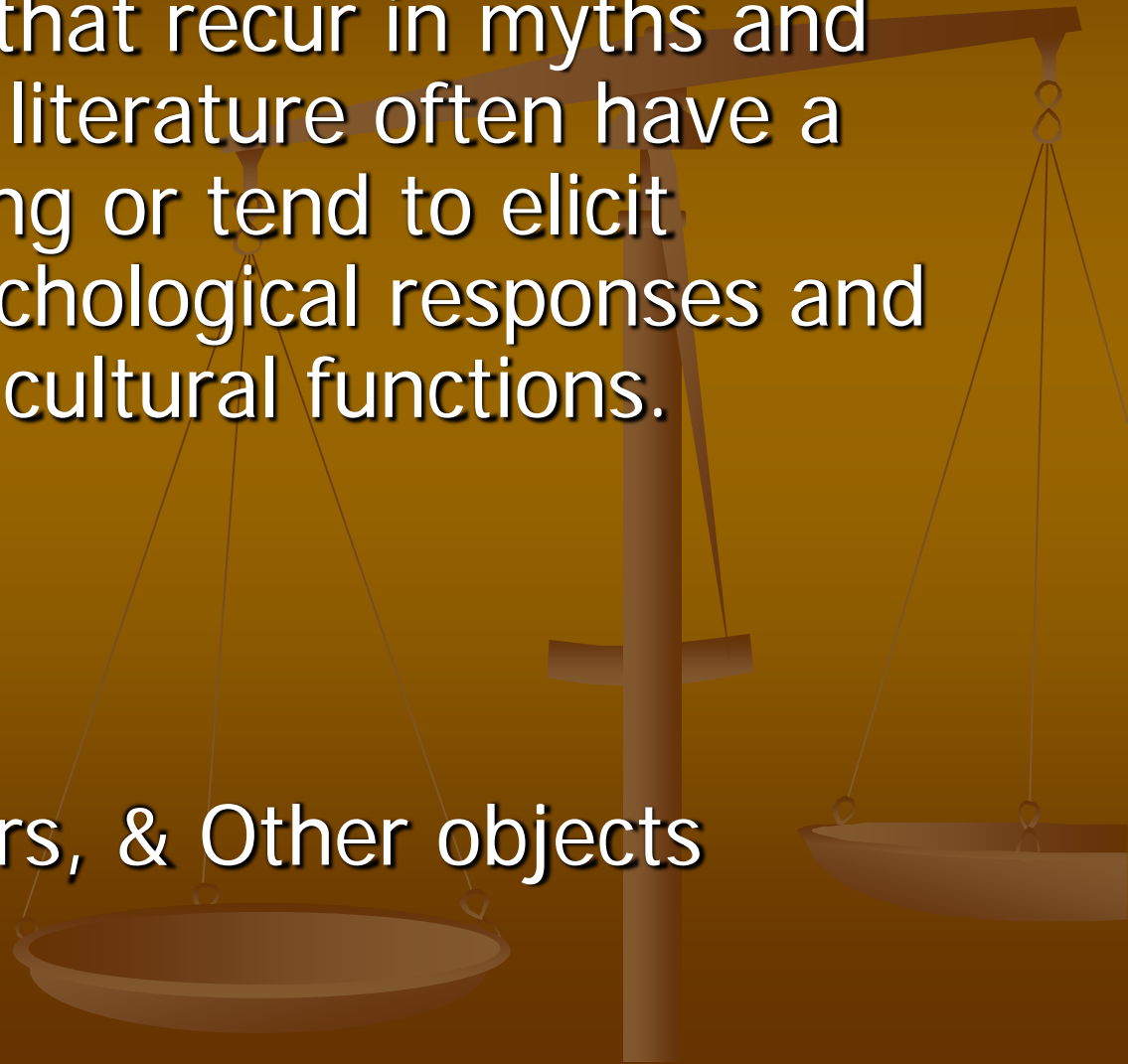
- *The Hero*: The courageous figure, the one who's always running in and saving the day.
- *The Outcast*: The outcast is just that. He or she has been cast out of a society or has left it on a voluntary basis. The outcast figure can oftentimes be considered as a Christ figure.  
(i.e. Simon in *The Lord of the Flies*)
- *The Scapegoat*: The scapegoat figure is one who gets blamed for everything, regardless of whether he/she is actually at fault.  
(i.e. Snowball in *Animal Farm*)
- *The Star-Crossed Lovers*: This is the young couple joined by love but unexpectedly parted by fate.  
(i.e. *Romeo and Juliet*)
- *The Shrew*: This is that nagging, bothersome wife always battering her husband with verbal abuse.

# Situational Archetypes

- *The Task*: A situation in which a character, or group of characters, is driven to complete some duty often of monstrous proportion. (i.e. Frodo's task to keep the ring safe in *The Lord of the Rings*)
  - *The Quest*: Here, the character(s) are searching for something, whether consciously or unconsciously. Their actions, thoughts, and feelings center around the goal of completing the quest. (i.e. *Shrek* 😊)
  - *The Loss of Innocence*: This is, as the name implies, a loss of innocence through sexual experience, violence, or any other means.
  - *The Initiation*: This is the process by which a character is brought into another sphere of influence, usually (in literature) into adulthood.
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# Common Image Archetypes

- Certain images that recur in myths and other genres of literature often have a common meaning or tend to elicit comparable psychological responses and to serve similar cultural functions.
- Water
- Sun
- Colors
- Shapes, Numbers, & Other objects



# Water

- a symbol of life, cleansing, and rebirth—represents the mystery of creation

Examples:

Sea—spiritual mystery and infinity; timelessness and eternity

River—death / rebirth (baptism), flowing of time into eternity, transitional phases of the life cycle

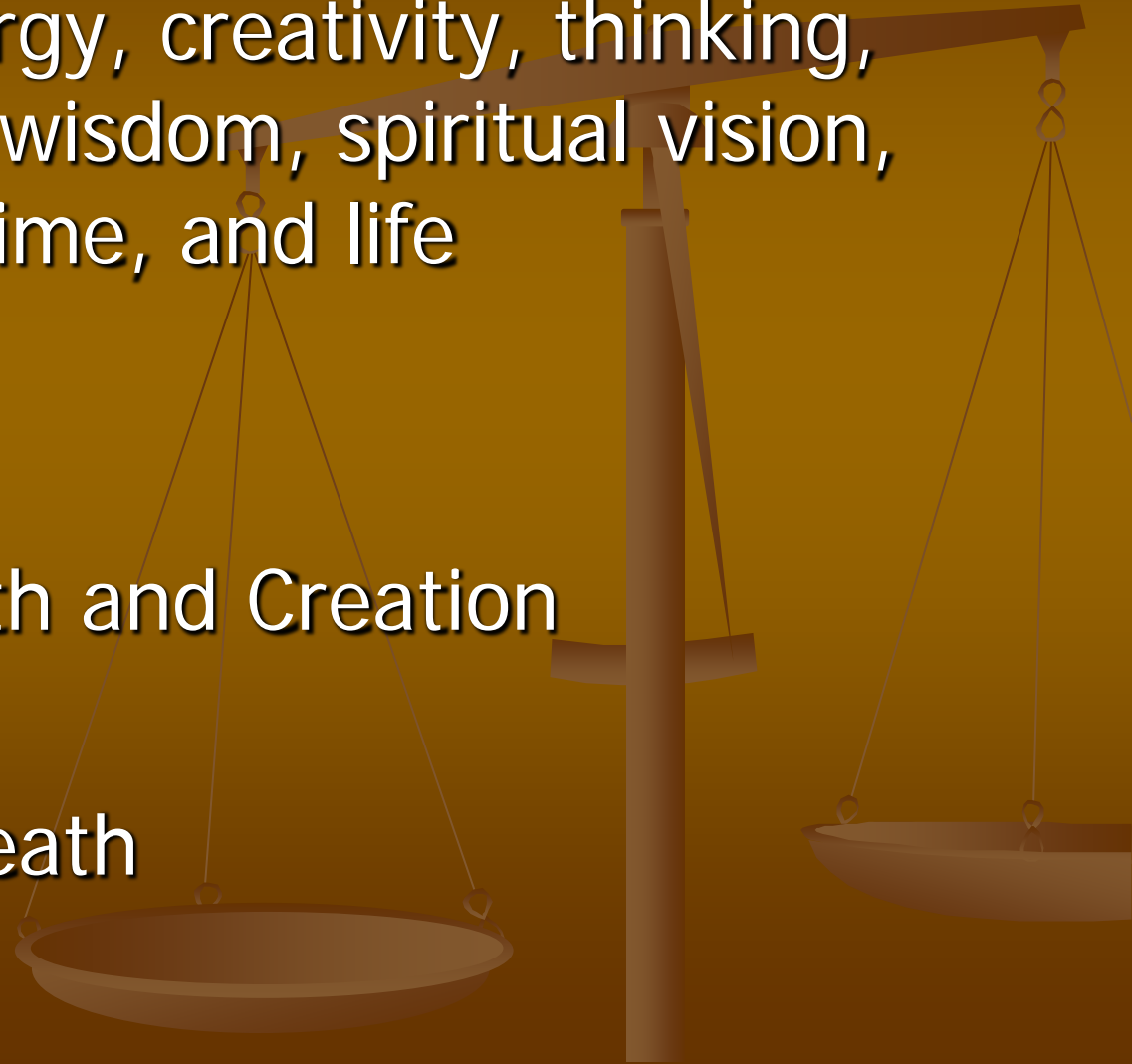
# Sun

- Represents energy, creativity, thinking, enlightenment, wisdom, spiritual vision, the passing of time, and life

Examples:

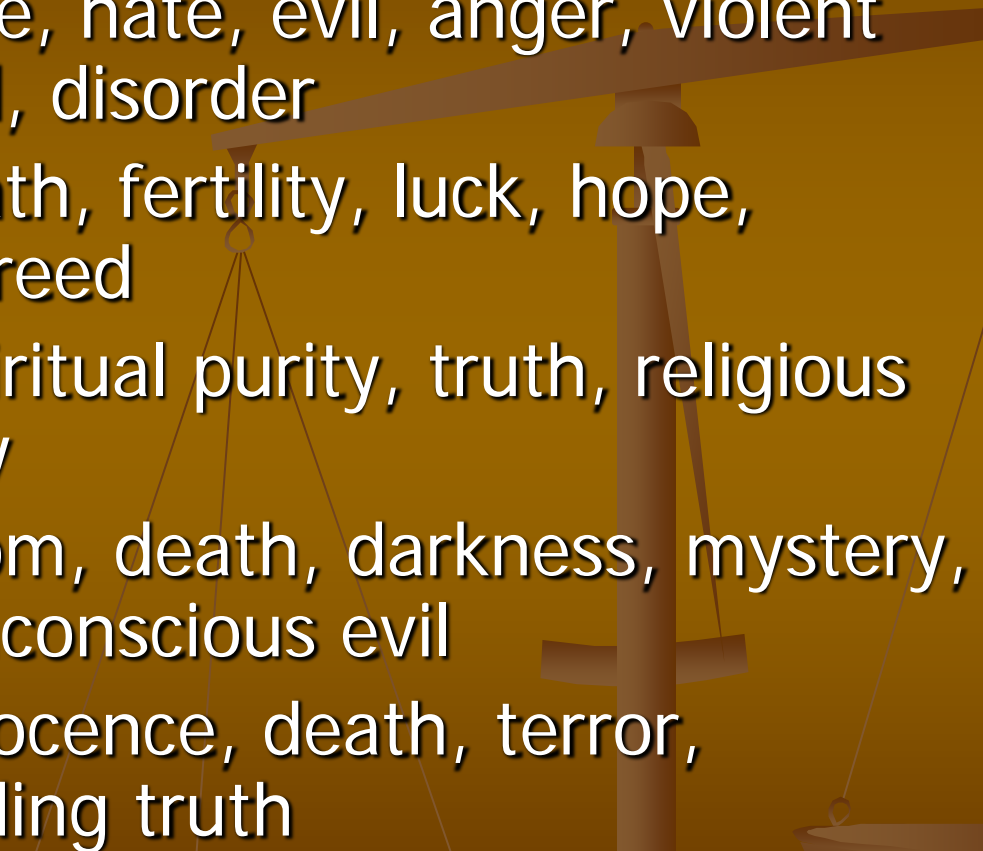
*Rising Sun*—Birth and Creation

*Setting Sun*—Death





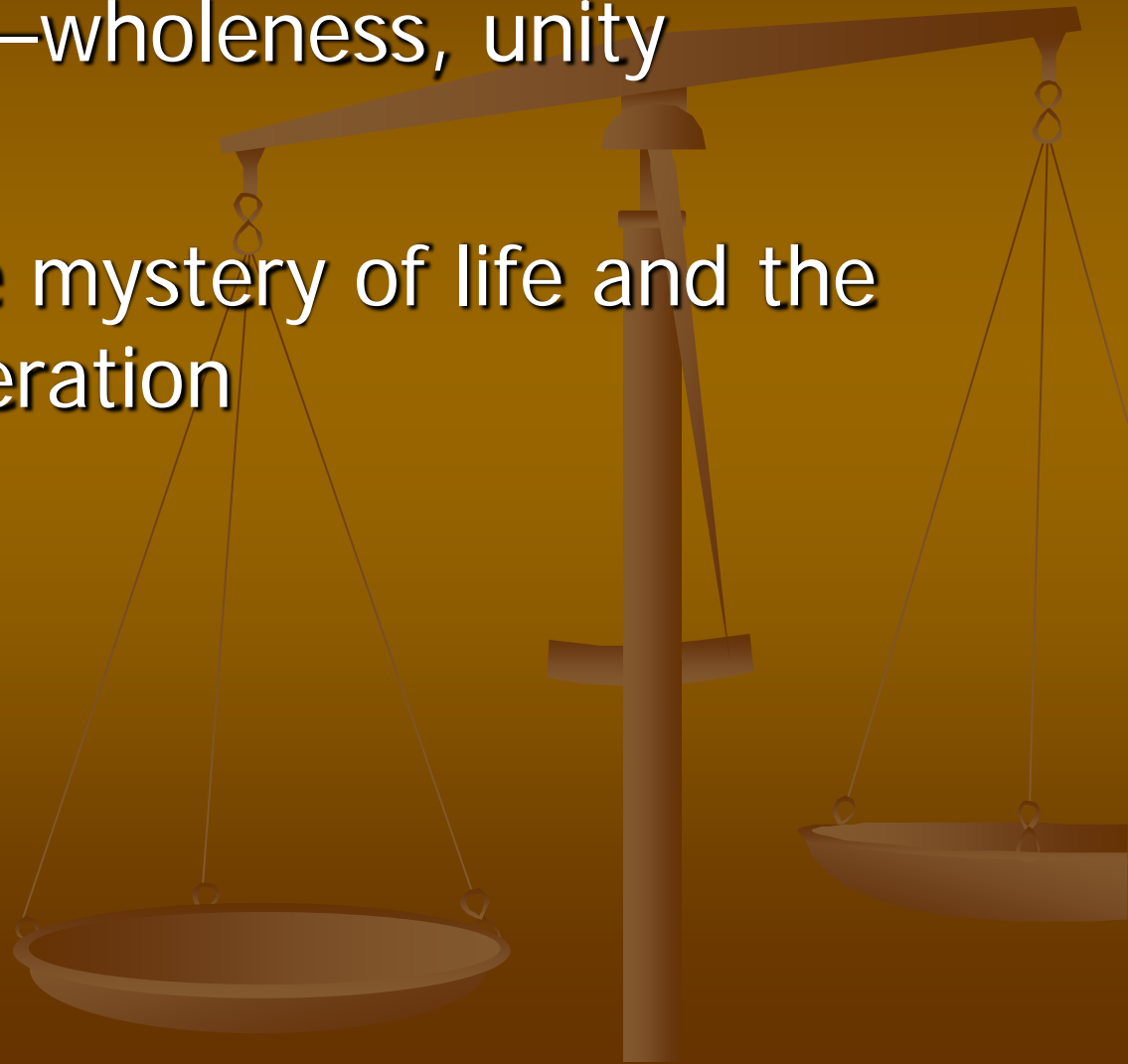
# Colors

- Red—love, sacrifice, hate, evil, anger, violent passion, sin, blood, disorder
  - Green—birth / death, fertility, luck, hope, jealousy, decay, greed
  - Blue—sadness, spiritual purity, truth, religious feelings of security
  - Black—power, doom, death, darkness, mystery, primal wisdom, unconscious evil
  - White—purity, innocence, death, terror, supernatural, blinding truth
- 



# Shapes

- Circle (Sphere)—wholeness, unity
- Egg (Oval)—the mystery of life and the forces of regeneration



# Animals

- Snake (serpent, worm)—evil, corruption, sensuality, destruction, wisdom, temptation
  - Dark-colored bird (raven, hawk)—death, hate, corruption
  - Light-colored bird (dove)—peace, love, life
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# Numbers

- Three (3)—represents unity, spiritual awareness, and light
- Four (4)—cycle of life, (earth, water, fire, air) nature
- Seven (7)—unity between 3 and 4, completion and perfect order

