



Psychological Disclosure Through Jung's Archetypal Images

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ABSTRACT

"Psychological Disclosure Through Jung's Archetypal Images" explores the archetypal images found in the selected animal poems of Ted Hughes, in order to draw the psyche of the creatures in contrast to the human world. The latent archetypal images of the poems are brought to light by making avail of Jung's archetypal theory and each image is defined to sketch the psyche of the creatures of the poem with comparison to the human world. "Hawk Roosting," "Thrushes," "Pike," "Crow's Nerve Fails," "Crow's Fall," "Crowcolour," "Crow's Theology" and "Crowego" are the poems, and hero, trickster, clown and shadow are the archetypal images applied to analyse the selected poems of Hughes in a psychological perspective.

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Introduction

Archetype is a division which leads to the psychological interpretation of literature. Carl Gustav Jung, a Swiss Psychiatrist and profounder of psychoanalytic theory is the first person to use the term archetype in literature and according to him, Archetype is a universal and archaic image that derives from the collective unconscious. The collective unconscious includes the elements that one has never experienced individually but which have come down to him from his ancestors.

The archetypal figures are prevalent indeed in literary works, especially in poetry, and Hughes' poems are not an exceptional. The poems of an eminent, versatile and fecund British poet, Ted Hughes carry a few archetypal images which aid in learning the psychology of the creatures.

The Hero

The Hero is an archetype and is represented in mythology as a powerful person, sometimes partly as a god, and as a fighter against evil. The archetypal image hero helps in learning traits of the creatures of both animal world and human world. In "Hawk Roosting," hawk gets a supreme description which poses it as the hero of the poem and as the most powerful creature of its world. In addition, depicting the hawk as the most powerful creature has revealed its brutality and the following lines of "Hawk Roosting" reveal the brutal heroic nature of the bird:

I sit in the top of the wood, my eyes closed.
Inaction, no falsifying dream
Between my hooked head and hooked feet:
Or in sleep rehearse perfect kills and eat.

.....
It took the whole of Creation

.....
Now I hold Creation in my foot

Or fly up, and revolve it all slowly –
I kill where I please because it is all mine.

There is no sophistry in my body:
My manners are tearing off heads –
The sun is behind me.

.....

My eye has permitted no change.

I am going to keep things like this. (1-4, 10, 12, 13-14-16, 21, 23-24)

The poem celebrates the heroism of the creature with reference to omnipotence. A hero is always portrayed as a winner; similarly, Hughes picturizes the bird as a victor and elevates it to the level of an omnipotent creature. As Jung's theory suggests, hero acts as a powerful person and partly as a god, in "Hawk Roosting," the hawk acts as a hero and god of its world. The poem is a monologue of the hawk, and the monopolistic style has sketched the hawk as an Omnipotent. The line: "... I hold Creation ..." "Hawk Roosting" (16) highlights the godly feature of the bird; the trait of the bird is that it never gives up its supremacy. Heroes are always projected as immortals; it is all because of the heroic role they play. Similarly, the hawk is figured as an immortal creature of its world and the line "I am going to keep things like this" "Hawk Roosting" (24) serves as a paradigm of the immortality of the bird.

In "Hawk Roosting", the hawk stands as an ideal personality, similarly in "Thrushes," the thrushes are pictured as ideal creatures; it is all because of their perfectly skilled and ideal personality. They are agile and they do not procrastinate which displays their agile and heroic nature. The heroic nature refers to the achieving ability of the birds, and it is explicit in the following lines:

No indolent procrastinations and no yawning states,

No sighs or head-scratching. Nothing but bounce and stab

And a ravening second. Is it their single-mind-sized skulls, or a trained "Thrushes" (6-9)

Apart from "Hawk Roosting" and "Thrushes," the poetic work, "Pike" also has the archetypal image hero. The poet delineates the structure of the Pike pretty well and in addition, the narration projects the creature as the hero of its world. The poem pictures the fish as a powerful and ruthless creature with no concern for other creatures, it is more cynical and the line "And indeed they spare nobody" "Pike" (22) exemplifies it. The poem also describes the cruel heroism of the creature. Being a cynical creature of the aquatic world, the pike prioritizes its hunger rather than anything. It is indeed ready to prey its own egg when it is hungry, and this depicts the brutal nature of the creature with respect to its role as a cruel hero.

Trickster

Jung delineates the archetypal figure trickster as supercilious and has no botheration for the victim: indeed, he is recorded as a winner like the archetype, hero, and as a victor he appears in various roles. Trickster breaks the lines between right and wrong, sacred and profane, young and old, living and dead. The trickster is controlled by his appetite and it dominates his behaviour, therefore, he is instinctual and he becomes more cruel and ruthless when his appetite takes upper hand over his behaviour.

In myth, the trickster is the primary stage to develop a hero in which the hero is childish, instinctual, and uninhabited, and probably the tricksters are masculine. In *Man and His Symbols*, Jung has illustrated "Trickster as a figure whose physical appetite dominates his behaviour and has the mentality of an infant; he is cruel, cynical, and unfeeling" (103-104). Jungians believe that the trickster does think only to help him rather than others; he never feels for anything and moves on his own path having no concern for others.

Comparing the human world and the animal world with reference to Hughes's poems in the light of trickster, reveals loads of ideas. "Crow's Fall" charts trickster, and the poem deals with a battle between a crow and the sun, therefore, triumph is the motif of the poem. The bird is personified using the third person singular pronoun 'He' in a subtle style. The poet also adds that the Crow plays the role of an advocate for the entire black race.

"Hawk Roosting" figures the hawk as instinctual and the omnipotent description reveals the bird as the trickster of the poem as well as the hero of its world. The line "I hold creation in my foot" "Hawk Roosting" (12), elucidates the merciless nature of the dominant creature. The psychological aspect of the bird is revealed through the underlying blood-sucking nature of the creature; thirst for blood gives a horrifying effect to the poem. It always searches for a vulnerable creature because of its instinctual blood-sucking nature, thus, its instinct can be compared with that of an infant who knows nothing other than to fulfil his hunger. It targets to bounce at the prey which is clearly expressed in the following lines: "I sit in the top of the wood... / Or in sleep rehearse perfect kills and eat" "Hawk Roosting" (1, 4), the lines also reveal the cynical nature of the bird. Sitting at the top of the wood has assisted him to predate and show off his heroism by this the poet has interlinked the heroism and brutality of the bird. The poet in his portrayal of the hawk reminds the readers that the hawk plays not only the role of a hero but also the role of a trickster and the lines: "I kill where I please because it is all mine / My manners are tearing off heads" "Hawk Roosting" (14, 16) explain the idea vividly. In addition, the lines reveal that the bird does not spare any other creatures and it desires to fulfil its desire - the thirst for blood.

Besides "Hawk Roosting", "Pike" too has trickster as an archetypal image and the bard describes the pike as a predatory creature of the non-human world. The unfolded psychological characteristics of the pike are instinctual, vigorous and dominant. In the following lines, the predatory instinct of the pike is reflected which in turn reveals the psyche of the pike too: "Killers from the egg: the malevolent aged grin / And indeed they spare nobody" "Pike" (3, 22). Phrases such as 'killers from the egg' and 'they spare nobody' reflect the malevolent and vicious nature of the pike.

Like pike, thrushes are also regarded as the tricksters because they also aim solely at the prey. Ted Hughes' effective portrayal of the birds has disclosed their furious traits. The lines: "No sighs or head-scratchings. Nothing but bounce and stab/ And a ravening second. / Is it their single-mind-sized skulls, or a trained" "Thrushes" (7-9) sketch that thrushes have the single-sized skull and this guides them to concentrate wholly on the prey just like an infant. The cynical picture of the thrushes unfolds the psyche of the birds.

The Clown

The Clown is another archetypal image through which the psychology of both human and animal world can be examined; it is just contrary to the image of the trickster, and the terms closely associated with clown are the fool, joker, and the court jester. The archetype is related to three major characteristics: makes people laugh, cry, and wears a mask to covers one's own real emotion.

Ted Hughes portrays the battle between the crow and the sun in "Crow's Fall". He has used an ironical treatment and the tone is sarcastic. Jung's theory of archetype insinuates: the Crow plays the role of a clown. The Crow plays the role of a clown by battling with the sun; the poem merely ridicules the foolishness of the creature. Though the poem has an underlying meaning, the direct representation of the Crow is sarcastic: mentioning the sun as an enemy of the Crow. The Crow, he, aims at the centre of the sun in order to attack the sun and the reason for the battle is that he thinks, the sun is whiter than him and hence it is glaring. The poet says that the Crow defies his failure. Although he fails to win the glaring sun, he convinces himself by articulating, "Where white is black and black is white, I won" "Crow's Fall" (15). Like the crow, in the human world there are people who never accept their failure, instead, falsify their it. Even though their failure is brought to light, they lack the mind of acknowledging their failure because their real intention is to manifest themselves as a victorious personality but when the failure is apparent, they can play only the role of a clown and nothing else. The falsifying nature of the personality makes others mock them as Hughes' crow is mocked. The ignorant psyche of the Crow and his role as a clown is explicit:

He got his strength up flush and in full glitter.
He clawed and fluffed his rage up.
He aimed his beak direct at the sun's centre.

He laughed himself to the centre of himself

And attacked.

At his battle cry trees grew suddenly old,
Shadow flattened.

But the sun brightened -
It brightened and crow returned charred black.

He opened his mouth but what came out was charred black. "Crow's Fall" (4-13)

The Shadow

The shadow is composed of repressed ideas, weaknesses, desires, instincts and shortcomings which exhibit the psychological factors. The predatory instinct of animals, the repressed ideas of human beings, the weaknesses and desires of human beings, the instincts of animals and human beings, and the shortcomings of human beings also lie on the archetype called the shadow. The shadow is often reported as the darker side of the psyche which represents wildness, chaos and the unknown. Jung believes that shadow is commonly found in all human beings and suggests that the shadow can appear as a snake, a monster, a demon, a dragon or some other darker wild or exotic figure, in addition, it consists of the sex and life instincts. It is applicable for both human and animal worlds; it is said that the creatures of animal world have more concern for sex and life instincts rather than the creatures of the human world. Life instinct yearns for survival, and survival is associated with interdependency and exploitation.

Ted Hughes portrays the life instinct found in animals pretty well in his animal poems; the struggle for survival is the chief objective of the creatures of both animal world and human world. Actually, the creatures of animal world divulge their life instinct in an aggressive and cruel manner. "Thrushes", "Hawk Roosting", "Pike" and "Crowego" elucidate exertion of survival with regard to ruthlessness, vigour and supremacy. Thrushes have merciless predatory nature which is explicit in "Thrushes," and the poem also delineates the determined slaughtering trait of the creatures. The lines: "... Nothing but bounce and stab / And a ravaging second." "Thrushes" (7, 8) discloses that they crave for blood and flesh in order to sustain, this reflects their psyche.

"Hawk Roosting" portrays a wild and dark image to the interpreters, and the self-confession of the hawk draws the bird as a monstrous creature of Hughes' creation. It is elucidated as a monster to the weaker creature and, as a dark image to the readers with regard to its instinctual and wild nature. As the creatures of the animal world endeavour to sustain by depending on the ecosystem, the creatures of the human world also strive to sustain by exploiting one another and vandalising the environment.

"Crow's Fall" clues the archetypal figure shadow, and it refers the dark image - the Crow. The poem makes the archetypal image apparent by sketching the colour of the crow with respect to quite a few comparisons. Like "Crow's Fall", the poem "Crowcolour" too degrades the colour black by making various comparisons and it sketches the Crow as an inferior image. The Archetypal theory which is applicable for colours have referred the black colour as a sign of 'Chaos'; means a state of complete confusion and anarchy. The symbolic treatment of black is derogatory and degrading and the following extraction illustrates the underestimation of the black colour by various comparisons:

Crow was so much blacker
Than the moon's shadow

.....

He was as much blacker
Than any negro

As a negro's eye-pupil

.....

Blacker

Than any blindness. "Crowcolour" (1-2, 4-5, 8-9)

The black colour is described in an inferior manner with reference to Negro: using the term Negro has proved that the poet wants to incorporate human world in his animal poetry which supports the view that human world is not unconnected from the poet's writing. Negro mentions a group of black people who are considered inferior to the Whites and also as slaves to the white race. It also highlights the dominating nature of White race and submissive nature of the Black race. Typically, the nature of submission and domination is present in their blood and submissive nature refers the weakness of the Negro people.

Analysing "Pike" throws light on its existing archetypal image, shadow, which also discloses the instinctual nature of the creature. The poem pictures the pike as a dark image and labels it as a monster; in fact, it is a monster to the creatures of its world because it does not spare anyone. The archetypal image explicates the psyche of the pike in "Pike" by emphasizing its vigorous nature. The vigour that pike possesses stands for the potentiality to survive, and the poet accentuates the potentiality to survive as vigour. Vigour to predate is commonly found in all creatures of the animal world but Hughes' description of the vigour of the hawk in "Hawk Roosting" is extreme to an extent of cruelty.

"Crowego", another animal poem, has an archetypal image like that of "Pike". The poem sketches the Crow as a dark and monstrous image which divulges its psyche and traits. It has the characteristics of demon and snake, and thus the Crow is depicted as a wily creature and the lines: "crow followed Ulysses till he turned / As a worm, which crow ate" "Crowego" (1-2) elucidates it. Having pictured as a brutal and cunning creature, the poem reasons covertly that survival is the primary reason for its cruel predation. Since prey is the primary need for the Crow, it seeks to find the vulnerable creatures to which the Crow appears as a monster. By this, the poem elucidates the shadow in a psychological standpoint.

Conclusion

Interpreting the poems of Ted Hughes validate that they do retain archetypal images and these images do not deviate away completely from the psychological perception. The poet has intertwined the psychological aspects with each animal image; the ferocity and vigour of the creatures have assisted in learning their psyche. Hughes emphasises on the psychological aspect of the each image by considering their instinct and traits. Encompassing the human world in the animal poems highly appreciates the witty nature of Hughes: composing such poems has paved a path to psychology study of the two worlds with the assistance of the archetypal theory. The poems of Hughes give an undisclosed image of a human world in all the perspectives and marks the similarities and dissimilarities between both the worlds, especially, in the light of psychological approach.

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