

**TRIBHUWAN UNIVERSITY**

**Mythologizing of Animal Power in Ted Hughes's Poetry**

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requirement for the degree of Master of Arts in English**

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This Thesis titled **Mythologizing of Animal power in Ted Hughes's Poetry** submitted to the Central Department of English Tribhuvan University by Madhu Giri has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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## **Abstract**

The main objective of this study is to show how Ted Hughes uses animal imagery to counter Christian ethics. To see how animal imagery challenges orthodox values, the sense of his poems has been analyzed in detail-against natural setting. The duty of God is supposed to rescue all creatures but in his poems God seems helpless in front of his creation. Crow's frequent opposition to say "love" is big blow to modern humanity. The poet wants to revive pre-Christian era where nature's power governed. His desire for purification or regeneration of human beings through renovation of myth is expressed through animal instinctual imagery taken from deep past.

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## I. Introduction

Ted Hughes, by name of Edward J. Hughes, was born in South Yorkshire, England in 1930 and was raised in Mexborough, a coal-mining town in Yorkshire. He won a scholarship to Pembroke College, Cambridge but served two years in the Royal Air Force before matriculating. In his later years, he changed his course of study from English to archaeology and anthropology, pursuing the extravagant mythic structures, which were later to inform his poetry. He worked as a gardener, night watch man, zookeeper, script writer and teacher.

In 1956, he married the American poet Sylvia Plath, and the couple spent a year in the United States before moving to England in 1959. Plath committed suicide in 1963. Plath was a young American genius horribly wronged and survived many years by her silent husband. Hughes's *Birthday Letters*, a long sequence of eighty-eight poems written and kept private over that period, and all addressed to Plath, after thirty-five years revealed his long silence over his life with Plath. He portrayed Plath as a kind of feminist victim, even literary martyr. Plath's fame is Keatsian, a postmortem acclaim, a poet later transformed autobiography into mythology. Hughes's fame is Wordsworthian, the slow and steady accumulation of horrors.

In addition to poetry, he wrote essays, plays, short stories and books for children. He also edited numerous collections of verse and prose and was a founder editor of modern poetry in a magazine called *Translation*. He became the poet laureate of England in 1985, and remained so up to his death. As a multi-disciplinary person, his subject matters also derive from diverse fields of mythologies, natural and animal world. He has written many series of volumes of poetry like *The Hawk in the Rain* (1957), *Lupercal*

(1960), *Wodwo* (1967), *Crow* (1970), *Gaudete* (1977), *Moortown* (1979), *Cave Birds* (1981), plays like *The calm* (1961), *Beauty and Beast* (1968), *The Iron Man* (1972), *Orghast* (1971), *The House of Aries* (1960) and other different books about language and techniques like *Poetry in the Making* (1967), *A Choice of Shakespeare's Verse* (1971), etc.

He is best known for creating powerful poems that depict myths and animal imagery. Among contemporary poets, Hughes is regarded as "a kind of 20th century Aesop whose fables lack on explicit moral because it is precisely unreflective spontaneity of his creatures, their "bullet and automatic/purpose," which constitutes their primary lesson for man" (765).

He often presents the primal forces of nature as mythic animals such as the pike, the hawk and crow as central characters in a long cycle of poems. He, as commented in *The Norton Anthology* comments, explores the world of 'raw sensation', nature 'red in tooth and claw', a world that Hughes's poems tend to view through the eyes of the predator. He tries to communicate post-world war human sensibility through the use of natural animal imagery that creates new myths.

His early works, *The Hawk in the Rain* and *Lupercal*, show the influence of D.H. Lawrence's *Birds, Beasts and Flowers* (1923) and he is electrifying description of Jaguar, Thrushes, Pike similarly generates metaphors that create such creatures to force underlying all animal and human experience. In both volumes, as Sanders comments, his works "express a rapt fascination with animal energy and independence and an awareness of the affinities between animal and human life, between human aspirations to freedom and power and instinctive animal achievement of both" ( 605). A caged Jaguar in the zoo

is compared to a solitary visionary pacing his cell. He develops a mythological structure for his poems which remind William Blake's "Tyger." Charu Sheel Singh and Kasi Vidyapist summarize Charles Tomlinson's criticism about the Movement poets for their:

Singular want of vital awareness of the continuum outside themselves, of the mystery bodied over against them in the created universe...Hughes leans towards a certain Non-Christian premise, as Blake, Yeats, Eliot and Tomilson do, where art does not belong to this or that school, but to the primitive cult of ritual and magic in which the ancient religion plays a very important role.  
(56)

The influences of Hughes are not so much literary, religious and mythological. His reading of "The Tibetan Book of the Dead", and "Shamanism", his early acquaintance with the work of Yeats, which opened his eyes to his own system and to Indian Mythology; his readings of myth and Religion of the North by Turville petre, form part of numerous influences on the formal in his themes and ideas.

In an important essay entitled "The Rock", Hughes recalls that his childhood company was a dark cliff, which was "my spiritual midwife at the time and my god-father was since or one of my fathers" (122). He further explains:

From my first day it watched. If it could not see me direct, a towering gloom over my pram, it watched me through a species of periscope... from my home near the bottom of the south focusing slope of the valley, that cliff was both the curtain and backdrop to existence. All that happened, against it or under its supervision. If a man's death is held in place by a stone, my birth

was fastened into place by that rock, and for my first seven years it preserved its shape and various moods into my brain. (122)

Hughes's early surroundings shape his mental formation. His life is set all over against this cliff and the cliff is exercising a certain hypnotic spell upon the poet.

In the early years, Hughes also enjoyed shooting animals, catching fish, which explains Hughes's celebration of wild force of nature in his early volumes. In an article published in *Guardian*, he compares man and beast who he said of his portrayal of animals. "Each one is living the redeemed life joy. They are in a state of energy which men only have when they have gone mad. This strength arises from their complete unity with whatever divinity they have" (58). Madness here should not be associated with abnormality. It derives its strength from, and has its source in, the divinity within man. "The madness denotes ecstasy and not blindness" (58). The Indian-Nepali concept of Shakti would be better explained by what Hughes means here.

*The Hawk in the Rain* is the most distinguished volume of verse of Hughes's generation. The immediate influences are Hopkins and Dylan Thomas because like these poets, Hughes is concerned to recreate and participate in experience, not to reflect upon it from a distance. The major theme in the poems is power, and power thought not morally, or in time but absolutely in a present which is often violent and self-destructive, but isolated from motive or consequences for Hughes power and violence go together, his own dark gods are makers of the Tyger not the Lamb.

In *Lupercal*, having been thrown up against a subject and having learned to see and hear it where it lives most purely in animals, Hughes becomes a poet. Here, imagination and strict observation are merged so subtly that it would be arbitrary to separate them.

The richest poems in *Lupercal*, "An Otter", "Pike" and "November" share an unusual and bold type of organization. Seemingly random, in fact, they possess a delicate, contingent unity, each impression facing the same way, an arrow pointing to some fountain head of miraculous adaptation, horror, or patience. Indeed, this method shows up throughout *Lupercal* as if after the *Hawk in the Rain*, Hughes was determined to throw away the strong brutal cables of disquisitions for more subtle and vibrant threads.

In *Lupercal*, Hughes tightens himself like a spring. In his third volume, *Woldwo*, he lets the spring go. He does not alter his truths but his relation to them: he throws himself on universal will, riding, not simply observing, and the energy of the world.

The poems in *Crow* develop from the newer style with content. Hughes, in *Crow* poems, writes songs, which the Crow would sing. Yet a closer look at *Crow* shows that the poet uses of traditional mythology. Instead of developing a parallel between present and past, the poem evokes a supratemporal world of global religious dimensions in which western myths figure side by side with the Tibetan Buddhist womb Door or an Eskimo Genesis. And, far from giving order to the chaos of modern life, classical and Biblical myths for the most part appear as the very roots of this chaos. Naturally for a sequence about Crow "created by God's nightmare's attempt to improve on man", the poems with pseudo-Biblical content follow the pioneer example of "Theology" by inverting the orthodox Christian doctrine. In the beginning was screaming instead of the word:

No, the serpent did not

Seduce Eve to the apple.

All that's simply

Corruption of the facts. (1-4)

Even the smile of relaxation in death only lasts for a moment before life suffering continues. "And while the Crow is alive he is prepared to answer the guffaws of fate with his own defiant laughter to the point of emulating the cosmic Phantasmata in their every antics.'Crow's Battle Fury' or defiant laughter in the face of life's agonies suddenly turns into a shamanistic ritual of self-disintegration and renewal" (176).

*Cave Bird* is Hughes's finest book. "The Executioner", "The Knight", "Bride and Groom", and "The Risen" are among Hughes's greatest achievements. The terror that is essential to its subject is never far removed from a sense of splendour, and a promised or actual joy. Hughes permits a much greater richness and sensuousness of language than in *Crow*, yet the poems are more disciplined than many in earlier sequence. The living suffering spirits, capable of happiness emerge from the reductive questioning of metaphysical discovery in Crow's final poems, the discovery of the universal in the self is the basis of cave birds. The sequence begins with a kind of psychic trauma in which the hero's complacent view of the world and his place in it is shattered by the visitations of various terrifying bird-begins who confront him with the evidence of his material nature and morality. The Cave Birds sequence is an extension of the central concerns of Hughes's work. The following lines show the juxtaposition of laughter and agonies in his "The Scream."

There was the sun on the wall-my childhoods  
Nursery picture. And there was my grave stone  
Which shared my dreams and ate and drink with me happily.  
All day the Hawk perfected its craftsmanship. (1-4)

The Crow poems are the turning point in the Hughes's spiritual journey from his unspoken allegiance with the mythical life of devouring predators to the poetry of the scapegoat, a poetry of humilities that celebrates and embraces the symbolic death of his former self. In *Gaudete*, we see self confrontation returning to the world of modern day England, returning the struggle to the sphere of the everyday world, after a temporary retreat to inaccessible regions of cage or cave and after a temporary withdrawal, in *Cave Birds*, using animal forms to mirror the sub humanity of his protagonist. Charu Sheel Singh and Kasi Vidyapish view Hughes's poems by relating outer reality with inner power:

Hughes poetic process works in terms of perceiving, analogues and discovering the archetypal significance of things. The principal of vitality in life already discovered, Hughe's perception, as it work upon the objects outside, reduces things into gyrating currents; he draws out things from their outer reality and relates them to their vital essence. (58)

Ekbart Fass, however, compares *Crow* with Eliot's *The Waste Land*:

Although *Crow*, like *The Waste Land*, is bound to send critics on a wild goose chase after crows and the Holy Grail, the author's intention was 'to produce something with the minimum cultural accretions of the museum sort ... as, it might be invented after the holocaust and domilition of all libraries'. Naturally this pursuit found its prime model in primitive song which Hughes ... discovered to be full of the qualities of 'ideal poetry'. (165)

Calvin Dedit argues Hughes's poems closer to Schopenhauer's will to power: "Hughes's is primarily a poet of the will to live at the phenomenal level of the leaping

blood which is almost to say at the poetic rather than the philosophical level of his theme" (104).

Andrew Sanders's has a more supportive argument about Ted Hughes's crow. "Crow is a survivor, a blacky comic specular about the inadequacy of the old definitions of the relationship of creator to his creation, and a waves of new myths about a god who sometimes sleeps and who occasionally perversely co-operates in the negatives of his adversaries" (606).

Hughes marshaled a language of nearly Shakespearean resonance to explore themes which are mythical and elemental. Hughes writes that "words are tools, learned late and laboriously and easily forgotten, with which we try to give some part of our experience a more or less permanent shape outside ourselves" (56). Hughes's poetic process works in terms of perceiving analogues and discovering the archetypal significance of things. The principle of vitality in life already gets discovered, Hughes's perception, as it works upon the object outside, reduces things into gyrating currents; he draws out things from their outer reality and relates them to their vital essence. Things then acquire the texture of a rhythm, and this rhythm is mad without being insane, energetic without being violent, for it celebrates the joy of creation. His poetic process is a kind of meditational activity, whereas in yoga, the consistent looking upon the object reduces object into a quality, this quality partakes or shares something of the object and something within the perceiver, which Hughes calls the divinity, when the two are related they are part of a vital rhythm of the universe, this rhythm is Hughes's discovery, and the liberation that it gives is not theological but artistic, where the spirit derives its delight from the form and the form had its root in the spirit.

Memories, images, sounds and feelings are raw materials to the poetic fire, and just the heat of the sun gives life to and unites its objects of creation. What is important in Hughes's poetics is that the world of the poem, apart from being self-contained to ensure stability, should also point forward to a world beyond, outside, where the poem should have its existence in the improbable, the unknown the mystery that is our existence, and consequently, the poet can bring it back to life again by giving each word, image, sound, tone, its due in the scheme of verbal structure: "The result should be a free poems of sorts where grammar, scheme structure etc; are all sacrificed in an attempt to break fresh and accurate perceptions and words out of the reality of the subject chosen" (119). Echoes of the Anglo-Saxon alliterative tradition in Hughes's first book *The Hawk in the Rain*, the poet's interest in shamanism, the poetry as fishing metaphor in the early poem "Pike"-all here seem absurd , no longer adequate to Hughes's meaning ,which has now effectively overshot the limit of language.

With *Crow* and *Gaudete* , Hughes abandoned at once the semblance of realism and the tradition forms-metrical patterning of his early work, in the belief that the "sound of meter calls up the ghosts of the past and it is difficult to sing one's own tune against that choir" (ibid).

The description generates metaphors, and the metaphors relate the creature to all other creatures and to human experiences and concepts. In nearly all his poems, Hughes strives to find metaphors for his own nature. His own nature is of peculiar general interest not because it is unusual, but because it embodies in an unusually and contradictions of human nature and nurture itself. His metaphors are so often animals because animals live out in such naked extremity, the primary struggle between vitality and death.

Many reviewers and later critics have assumed that the territory of Hughes was rapidly staking out was the world of animals. No poet has observed animals more accurately, never taking his eyes from the object, capturing every characteristic up to the limits of language. Hughes used animal imagery to create new myths which are antichristian values and antiliberal humanity. Hughes's Crow as a sadistic imagery challenges the normal human ideas by crossing the physical boundary of the cosmic world. Through animal energy, Hughes fights against rationality and Christian morality and Christian myth itself.

“Examination at the Womb-Door” is one example to present Crow as a new mythic figure like Oedipus, Ulysses etc. who succeeds to pass the boundary of this temporary world. Hughes's Crow challenges the power of death that means it challenges Christian morality and rationality:

Stronger than Love? Death;  
 Stronger than Life? Death;  
 But who is Stronger than death?  
 Me, evidently  
 Pass, Crow. (16-20)

Crow denies learning 'Love'. The Christian idea of love as God is challenged by Mythic figure, Crow.

D. H. Lawrence wrote of animal joy, a lighter, perhaps fanciful thing. Robinson Jeffers picked up the topic occasionally, a hawk on his wrist, but was too eager, too clumsy, to master it. Hughes is its master and at the same time is mastered by it. The subject owns him; he is lord of the animal imagery.

The tradition is that animal energy once invoked will destroy an impure nature and serve a pure one. In a perfectly cultured society, one imagines that Jaguar-like elements would be invoked only by self-disciplinarians of a very advanced grade. Blake's great poem "Tyger", Tyger is an example of a symbol of this potentially dangerous type which arrives with its own control-it is yoked with the Lamb, and both draw the creator. Yeats's poem about the "Second coming" is very close and the control there is in the direction given to the symbol in the last line-towards Bethlehem.

In this manner, Hughes' poems have been studied from different perspectives. Hughes animals are anti-love, anti-god and anti-human. The present study will attempt to illustrate how the animals including the Crow replace the old mythic figures. The detail study of animal imagery and animal myth is required to understand Hughes's mastery over animal imagery and myth. That's why the discourses on imagery and myth will form the theoretical tools to facilitate the textual analysis in the present study.

## II. Theoretical Tools

### Imagery

The 'imagery' is the derivation of the word 'image'. Although there is a great difference between an 'image' and 'imagery', it would be better to know first what an 'image' is. The word 'image' has many connotations, and it is used in the fields like art, architecture, philosophy, theology etc. Our main concern of the term 'image' is to know how and from where the word originated especially in the literary field, to find what the concept can be generalized from various interpretations. *Princeton Encyclopedia* defines it as "the reproduction in the mind of a sensation produced by a physical perception" (363). If a man's eye perceives a certain color s/he will register an image of that color in his/her mind-'image' because the subjective sensation he experiences will be an ostensible copy or replica of the objective color itself. The mind may also produce images when not reflecting direct physical perceptions, as in the attempt to remember something once perceived in the undirected drifting of the mind over experiences but not longer present or in the combinations brought out perception by the imagination or in the hallucinations of dreams. In poetry, it implies the mental picture drawn by the disciplined wording.

According to C. Day Lewis's statement as quoted by M. H. Abrams, "An image is a picture made out of words and that a poem may itself be a word composed from a multiplicity of images" (86). In poetry, the image is presented through imaginative description of comparisons that stands for something and that produces a picture in the mind of the person reading or listening. The image may be animate or inanimate.

The sets of descriptive details in a poem or any work of art which create a kind of picture in the mind are called imagery. It may be defined as the word picture exhibited in

the written work. "Imagery" is the equivalent of imageries. The images in general is taken collectively are imagery (image). Cuddon says, "Imagery as a general term covers the use of language to represent objects, actions, feelings, thoughts, ideas, states of mind and any sensory or extra sensory experience" (322). The use of imagery in any work of art helps to bring pictures to the reader's mind.

The study of imagery has been the major concern of new critics after 1930s. They delight in the close analysis of imagery and metaphor and they lay stress on the careful working out of imagery. In the poem, the consistencies of imagery, single dominant images or a pattern of multiple but related images help to have a complete texture. For Chishlom and Milic, poetic imagery tries to communicate something more. "Poetic imagery is a special kind, however, it is created for the occasion and its intention is very specific to intensify the message of which it is a part" (357). The poet searches for words that have not been worn out in everyday life and tries to find out new combinations to put them in.

The images are categorized according to the use of language, way of presentation, and signification. The images can be generally divided into three groups: "Literal, Perceptual and conceptual" (Cuddon 413). The Literal images are presented without the use of figurative language. The perception and conceptual images are expressed through figurative language.

Imagery involves the sense qualities like visual (see) auditory (hear), tactile (touch), thermal (heat and cold), olfactory (smell), gustatory (taste), and kinesthetic (sensations of movement). "Imagery is used to signify all the objects and qualities of sense perception referred to in a work of art, to describe the visible objects and senses

and to present the objects through figurative language" (Abrams 87). The usage of imagery to signify visual objects concerns the vivid descriptions in the work of art. The usage of figurative language includes the linguistic devices like simile, metaphor, synecdoche, metonymy, allusion and personification.

Here are the lines from Dylan Thomas's especially when the "October Wind", which contains many of the images discussed above:

Especially when the October wind  
 With frosty fingers punishes my hair,  
 Caught by a crabbing sun I walk fire  
 And cast a shadow crab upon the land,  
 By the sea's side, hearing the noise of birds  
 Hearing the raven cough in winter sticks,  
 My busy heart who shudders as she talks

Sheds the syllabic blood and drains her words. (10-18)

The images in these lines are presented through personification, metonymy and metaphor. The October wind is personified and said to have frosty, icy cold fingers. The wind is thought to be capable of punishing the speaker. The word 'stick' is a metonymy for the leafless tree of winter time. The crabbing sun stands as a metaphor for the speaker who is about to write the poem. The speaker is troubled because he is going to face the difficult experience of writing poetry.

In the above quotation, the first two lines are tactile and thermal but the word 'hair' suggests literal, visual images. The third and fourth lines blend tactile, visual and kinesthetic images. The phrase 'caught by the crabbing sun' is both tactile and visual

while 'walk on fire' is both visual and kinesthetic. The fifth and sixth lines are both auditory and visual. The literal images 'noise of birds' and the metaphoric image 'raven cough' are auditory while 'winter sticks' is visual. The seventh and eighth lines are kinesthetic which picture the poet as a pregnant woman struggling to have childbirth at delivery time.

Here are the lines from Ted Hughes "The Jaguar" which contain imagery.

Not in boredom-  
 The eye satisfied to be blind in fire  
 By the bang of blood in the brain, deaf the ear  
 He spins from the bars, but there is no cape to him  
 More than to the visionary his cell  
 His stride is wildernesses of freedom  
 The world rolls under the long thrust of his heat  
 Over the cage floor the horizons come. (13-20)

In the above quotation the combination of different images of beast and visionary are linked in the triumph of will over circumstance. "Iron cage" is the most important image referring to the animal. It is also the image of the "Iron cage" of rationality and morality. The words boredom and wildernesses of freedom juxtaposed both perceptual and conceptual images through figurative language. "Eye satisfied", "bang of blood", "brain", "deaf the ear", "bars", "visionary", "cell", "world rolls", "long thrust", "cage floor", "horizons come", "spine", "stride", "come" are images. Eye, blind in fire visionary are visual, deaf the ear is auditory, fire is thermal, satisfied, thrust are gustatory images.

The poet looks at the caged Jaguar as it hurries 'enraged.' Through prison darkness after the drills of its eyes, and finds victory in its untamed will. Caged Jaguar in a zoo on a shout fierce fuse is compared to a solitary visionary pacing his cell.

The usage of imagery to signify figurative language, especially the vehicle of metaphor and simile, also concerns the homogeneous grouping of images: physiological, animal, aerial, arboreal topographical, etc. Hughes's imagery includes the homogeneous groups of images like animal, aerial, physiological Biblical topographical etc.

The animal imagery concerns all the vertebrate and invertebrate animals, which are used in poetry. The tradition of using animals in poetry writing is very long. William Blake, John Keats, W. B. Yeats, T. S. Eliot, and Dylan Thomas are a few poets to use animal imagery. William Blake's juxtaposition of Lamb and Tyger points not merely power and domination but it transcends human good and evil. 'Tiger' represents energy which can be curbed but it can nit be destroyed, and when it reaches the limits of its endurance, it burst form in revolutionary wrath. In W. B. Yeats', this echo coming through Beast's-with lion's body and man's head-arrival will change everything and that it will appear are disorder and destruction.

Ted Hughes is best known for animal imagery. His poems are the product of strong individual thought and feeling about birds and animals. Hughes animals challenge Christian morality, and create new myth. Hughes's Crow's first Lesson is the best example of anti-Christian attitude of the Crow-animal energy.

### **Myth**

Myths are stories of our search through the ages for truth, for meaning for significance. *Encyclopedia Britannica* defines, "myth is a collective term used for one

kind of symbolic communication and specifically indicates one basic form of religious symbolism, as distinguished from symbolic behavior and symbolic places or objects" (793). It concerns god or superhuman beings and extraordinary events or circumstances in a time that is different from ordinary human experience. For Abrams "myths are systematic stories of ancient origin, which were believed to be true by a particular cultural group, and which serves to explain why the world is as it is and things happen as they do, to provide a rationale for social customs and observances" (170). Joseph Campbell focuses on "a manifestation in symbolic images in metaphorical images of the energies of the organs of the body in conflicts with each other" (39). The images of myth are reflections of the spiritual potentialities of every one of us. Through contemplating these, we evoke their powers in our own lives. People living in world of nature (tribal) or poets experience and live in the recognition of something there that is much greater than the human dimension. Poets "tendency is to personify such experiences to anthropomorphize natural forces" (206). Campbell compares western and oriental myth:

West sees God as the final source or cause of the energies and wonder of the universe. But in most oriental thinking, and in primal thinking, also the Gods are rather manifestations and purveyors of an energy that is finally impersonal. The god is vehicle of energy. And the force or quality of energy that is involved or representation determines the character function of the God. There are Gods of violence, there are Gods of compassion, unite the two worlds of the unseen and the seen, protection of kings or nations in their war. These are all personification of the energies in play. (207)

Myths in ancient civilizations are known only by virtue of they became part of written tradition. In the case of Greece, virtually all myths are literature, in the form in which they survived the oldest source being the epic of Homer. Scholars are in a better position to understand the importance that myths for literary artists and the mythological function that literature inherited. "The heroes and heroines of epic literature are narrative rejuvenations of gods and goddesses in myths. Among the mythical themes that have appealed to poets are themes of the culture hero or bring of salvation and of shamanism" (*Encyclopedia* 798).

Myths are interpreted historically too. They are about human beings, divinities and superheroes, warriors who had been changed into gods by their admirers and followers for example, Hercules, Aeneas, and Zeus and so on. But Christian writers like "Milton believed that those mythical figures were devils before the revelation of Zeus" (Gupta 20), which is narrated in his epic *Paradise Lost*.

In 19th century, there was school which believed that myths cannot be interpreted simply as events but they are the symbols of philosophical truth. The processes of myths have been linked with reproduction, sexual and agricultural. This theory was put forward by G. S. Frazer in *The Golden Bough* (Ibid). But it does not mean that mythology is a weapon to search the truth in fact truth may be searched through mythology. When Christianity flourished in Europe Greek mythology was condemned as inversion of the Prince of darkness.

### **Christian Values and Animal Imagery**

The basic idea that Christian faith creates a new life has led to the fact that Christianity, during the course of its history, has constantly contributed to the creator of

new cultural trends and has produced new cultures in its field of influence in attempt to change its whole environment. God and Love are synonyms in Christianity. The Christian understanding of nature goes back to God's biblical command for man. In Genesis God's introduces the created world and its creatures to man and says: "fill the earth and subdue it" (*Encyclopedia* 521). Man is taken as God's co-worker because-man is the only creature that has been creates after the image of God and that that God has introduced his creation to him. The emphasis of man over creation can be seen in the fact that animals have hardly received any attention in Christianity. Man and other all animals have been separated. The concept of brotherly fellowship of man with his fellow creatures is largely lost. Man is supposed "to use God's creatures to know, praise and glorify God, so that in all things God may be praised through Christ Jesus, our Lord" (*ibid*). The creatures that surround man are understood as God's hands and messenger. Christian commandment of love for all creation is fundamental ethic. This universal realization of the Christian commandment of love has caused revolutions and reformations in the history of Christianity (*Ibid* 522).The new factor in Christian ethic was that it crossed all social and religious barriers and saw a brotherhood in every suffering of all creatures.

The secret cause of all suffering, Campbell said, "is morality itself which is the prime condition of life it can not be denied if life is to be affirmed" (xii).

This universal commandment of "love" is shattered in Ted Hughes's poetry through the use of animal imagery Crow became mythic character because he opposed orders and normal human-rationality. Crow can be compared with Oedipus or Ulysses in term of creating new myth from unimportant creature.

In this manner, the above theoretical discussion over the imagery and the myth has laid the foundation for the analysis of the text in concern. Likewise, it briefly remarks how Hughes's imagery contains diverse but inter-related myth-animal images, which create both pictorial and sensuous effect. In this study, the textual analysis of the poems is concerned with mainly animal imagery and myth. The textual analysis will attempt to prove how Hughes' poems consist of the anti orthodox-animal imageries, which turn into mythical characters.

### **III. Textual Analysis**

Ted Hughes, as a poet of animal and natural power, countered Christian orthodoxy and rigidity of rationalist outlook. He blames middle class people having psychological stupidity, the ineptitude to see the alternative to the machinery of religion. To counter western value system, animal imageries in new mythic forms are tools to understand his poetry.

"The Jaguar", "Hawk Roosting", "Pike", "Examination at the Womb-Door", "A Childish Prank", "Crow's first lesson", and "A Horrible Religious Error" are among a few chosen poems for textual analysis to claim the above mention propositions.

#### **The Jaguar**

"A Caged Jaguar" in a Zoo repeatedly mocks the stroller with the nut. The Jaguar is supposed to be inside the 'cage' and under control of human authority but the Jaguar feels wilderness of freedom and horizon of the world. The Jaguar, as a rebellion against modern orthodox, is poet's vehicle of meaning to express his strong opposition of Christian ethics. The 'cage' imagery has multiple meanings. It is animal imagery and imagery of orthodox morality, values and cage of rationality.

The poem begins from the description of zoo animals. Zoo gives newly constructed idea of imposing human laws and control wild animals inside boundary ignoring their natural habitat. The apes yawn, the parrots shriek. Tiger and lion lie still as the sun. The visitors observe them as a decorated show piece. They may be stink and sleeper as if they are painted on a nursery wall. Here the poet compared indolence of Zoo animal with wall painting. This is what visitors (crowd) observe and mesmerize. Like a child in a dream,

these zoo animals are taken as only means of entertainment for the crowd. This attitude of middle class Christian ethics is opposed by Jaguar.

In the next part, the poet depicts anger of Jaguar towards crowd "As a child at a dream at a Jaguar hurrying enraged through prison darkness after the drills of his eyes" (11-12). The Jaguar shows his opposition through the drills of his eyes. Jaguar is not passive because it has revolutionary power. "Fierce fuse", "blind in fire", "bang of blood", "no cage to him", are main phrases to associate the feelings of Jaguar toward humanity or the ethics to impression animals. The contrast between fatigued is with indolence of other animals and fierce fuse on the drills of eyes of the Jaguar.

On a short fierce fuse not in boredom

The eyes satisfied to be blind in fire,

By the bang of blood in the brain deaf the ear

He spins from the bars, but there is no cage to him. (11-16)

The Jaguar has so much strength and will man made bars can control his desires of freedom. His eyes can see the far away time and space. His eyes are compared with fire. Fired eyes are compelled to be blind. The bang of blood in the mind communicates animals' furoosity under control of modern humanity.

In the last stanza of the poem contrasts with the beginning lines it turns up side down of the readers' expectation about Jaguar. The Jaguar inside the cage is supposed dead living, but he rolls world under his feet, in the floor of cage he sees horizons. Visionary cell, wildernesses of freedom, long thrust, world rolls, and horizons are main images to express Jaguar's counter ability.

More than to the Visionary his cell

His stride is wildernesses of freedom  
 The world rolls under the long thrust of his heel  
 Over the cage floor the horizons come. (17-20)

Here, the Jaguar challenged the system of knowledge which was created by crowd. A caged Jaguar is composed to solitary visionary pacing his cell. Dyson said, "Poet looks Jaguar, as it hurries enraged through the prison darkness after the drills of his eyes and find victory in its untamed will" (117). The poet wants to roll the world and create pre-historic order. His desire to visit uncovered territory of the past is evoked on the images of "fossil", "rest past" and "world rolls". His ambitions of pre-Christian revival can be observed with his style and use of alliteration and assonance.

The images "cage", "yawn", "fleas", "shriek", "ear", "blood", "cell", are related to animal and physiological.

### **Hawk Roosting**

"Hook" is one of the best imagery of power, ruthless unsupported by any kind of legality or morality and devoid of any mercy or humanity. Hawk is free from any orthodox boundary. He has own rules and logic. He can control the whole creation under his feet. It clarifies that he has denied ultimate power of God and created parallel power to chase God.

"Top" and "perfect" are dominant images to signify strength of the Hawk in the first stanza. The Hawk is at the top of this universe. There is nothing above him. In terms of power, Hawk is perfect, he can achieve whatever he dreams. The poet gives the images of night and death. "Eyes closed", "wood", "dreams" and "sleep rehearse" give the picture of darkness of present world. "Hooked head", "Hooked feet", "kill and eat" are further

supported to the destruction and deterioration of modern values systems. "Wood" gives the images of Blakean forest where tiger is the most powerful animal.

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. (1-4)

Here, Hawk sits at the top of the wood makes clear about his power-hierarchy and status quo. "Hooked head and Hooked feet" suggest Orthodoxical rationality of modern societies. The Hawk wants to "kill and eat" all creatures irrespective of boundary and Orthodoxical values.

The Hawk's pride expands in the second stanza: he is pleased with himself being perfect and top of the trees. He became perfect because of back force of air and sun. Hawk can see all activities of all creatures because he can see earth face. Here earth and air are personified. The poet speaks to the people through hawk. "High trees", "air", "sun", "earth face" are symbols to communicate further meaning of the poem. Poet observes the earth face, human activities, deteriorate environment and becomes arrogant with authorities and rulers.

In the third stanza, the Hawk claims that his hooked feet as they tightly grapple the branch signifies its absolute power over the whole creation. He realizes his duties to hold creation. H.L.B. Moody comments on the attitude of modern human beings. His argument becomes clear in the following words:

And as time goes on, the view seems to become more and more plausible; as  
 modern man forges ahead, extending his scientific and technological powers,

eliminating a disease here, synthesizing a new form of life there; restoring fertility to deserts, throwing his satellites out ever deeper into space, there is great tendency for man to adopt the view that they do in fact 'hold Creation' in their grasp. (96)

Poet wants to communicate to the readers that Hawk holds the whole of creation. This challenges modern science. "Rough bark" and "locked" are imageries of feableness of orthodoxy.

"Feet" and "Feather" are animal imagery of power that Hawk had confidence of his feet and each of his feathers. "My feet" and "My each feather", manifest hawk's consciousness and confidence of whole body.

"Fly up and revolve it all slowly" gives the clue of the revival of pre-Christian civilizations. Hawk sees the whole process is revolving slowly toward prehistoric era. Hawk also represents as tyrannical ruler another incarnation of God. Hawk claims that he possesses whole world. Hawk satirizes the modern rules and values to control "people": "I kill where I please because it is all mines/ My manners are tearing of heads"(14-15).

Sense of ownership of the creation is repeatedly presented. There is no sophistry, no discussion, no deliberation, no dispute of what is good or not, no question of truth or justice of any action. His "manners" referring to his habits go further than ruthless "tearing off heads", "kill" and "tearing off heads" are imagery of dark side of the world. On the other hand "mine", "manners" and "please" are imagery to mock modern human manners and sense of ownership.

"Path of my flight" and "bones of living" refer to the uncovered past. There is no doubt about the direct path of Hawk's flight. Hawk wants to fly direct path to prehistoric

world. In the last stanza Hawk again warns about his strength. The sun also supports him and encouraging him to hold all creation. "The sun is behind me/nothing has changed since I began". (21-22)

Sun, the life giving force is behind him and Hawk did not find any changes on human values and rules. Hawk wants to keep on killing and tearing until and unless Orthodox rules and values are changed. "I am going to keep thing like this". It is warning to the people and religions Orthodox. The ancient Greeks in their tragedies made frequent use of the idea of the chastisement of "hubris" the disaster and punishment which befell men of excessive pride. Moody depicts the condition of humanity as following:

Certainly a more sober look around the world with its problems of cynicism, superstition, intolerance, war racial strife, mental disease, suicide and trivial aimless living should be a salutary check to any human being inclined to be too pleased with the progress of the human race: and he may realize that far more difficult problems confront the human race than can be solved by the "manners" of the hawk, determined merely to keep things like this. (96)

The images used in the poem are "Top", "eyes", "hooked", "perfect", "eat", "sleep", "ray", "face", "lock", "rough", "bark", "revolve", "tearing", "path", "bones" and "creation". "Eat", "sleep", "fly", "rough", "hooked", produce the sensuous effect especially physiological. The images are metaphorically presented.

The imagery in this poem concerning is the homogeneous group of images of physiological, animal, aerial and Biblical. Tree, Sun, creation, sleep, and bones are Biblical imageries used to mythologize Hawk (animal) power. Hawk is omnipresent. "There is no sophistry in my body: I my manners are tearing off heads" (15-16). In "Hawk

Roosting", Sanders argues, "Hughes represents the consciousness of animal, the hawk expresses its animal single mindedness with an unmistakably human arrogance" (606).

Dyson argues, "The Hawk's victorious moment of triumph is explored in vividly memorable phrases and remains the embodiment of one possible mode of being" (119). These lines, too, reflect the same thing: "Privilege without responsibility, energy without consciousness of end/I kill where I please because it is all mine" (13). Hawk holds such a moment of triumph, and timeless-where the poet enters imaginatively into the hawk's victory.

### **Pike**

It is one of the famous and much anthologized poems of Ted Hughes on the theme of anti Christianity. Here, the poet depicts "pike" as an agent to show nature has greater power than what people supposed to Christianity. Existing value system does not govern in the world of nature where own rules and order are created.

The poet uses the images of killing. The images in this poem suggest hunger, horror, gloom, stillness, pain and death which are taken from nature and animal world to justify helplessness of creator in front of animal energy. He wants to revive pre-Christian world order.

In the first stanza of the poem, the poet presents the images of physical perfection of the "pike". The "pike" is counter perfection of what people called god (creator). The perfect pike in all parts can do whatever it likes. It opposes creator's dignity and power of controlling. "Pike" posses' derivative killing extinct from long ancestry which can not be Omitted .

Pike, three inches long, perfect

Pike in all parts, green tigering the gold  
 Killers from the egg: the malevolent aged grin  
 They dance on the surface among the flies. (1-4)

"Killers from the egg", "physical perfection", "flies" are animal imageries to present death and decay. This implies that "pike" is alternative mythic animal.

In the second stanza the ling history of submarine world is depicted. The images of "silhouette", "Submarine delicacy" and "horror", "bed of emerald" presents pike's grandeur history of power which is almost uncovered territory of existing knowledge. "Silhouette" and "horror" are best images to counter Christian ethics.

Or move, stunned by their own grandeur,  
 Over a bed of emerald, Silhouette  
 Of submarine delicacy and horror  
 A hundred feet long in their world. (5-8)

Silhouette represents uncovered territory of human mind too, where subconscious mind rules. Rosenthal's argument about "Pike" is "Hughes's supreme construct a series of descriptions, anecdotes, impressions building up the single theme..." (127).

In third and fourth stanzas picture the poets' objective observation of submarine world "Gloom", "stillness", "pond", "heat", "hung", "Jaws", "hooked", "fangs", "gills" are dominant images of death and painful situation. "Jaws", "hooked", "fangs and gills" are animal imageries of violence. These images subordinate life, love and protection. The world of "pike" can not be changed neither they can be controlled under moral order. Let's see these lines: The Jaws hooked clamp and fangs/Not to be changed at this date" (13-14).

This lines show of the predatory nature of the pike. No sounds disturb the quiet of the fish's waiting expectation beneath the water surface. Sagar comments, "the horror is in the pitch of specialization this fish has reached as killer: as though the whole creature existed purely to enable its jaws to go about their business" (135). This is a challenge for existing humanity. Human power imposition is worthless to change submarine world of animal.

In the fifth and sixth stanzas, the poet observes an experiment of human control upon pike. The image of aquarium gives the vivid picture of human efforts to control natural world. But pike again continues to kill other fellow pikes. At first there were three in the aquarium but finally there is only one means other are eaten. Human imposition of order is mocked. "Say belly", "dry", and "dead" are killing imageries. The poet juxtaposes a second scene of the pike as unstoppable killers by concluding this section with the image of two dead, six pound, two feet long pikes lying on a river bank. One jumped down the gullet of the other.

In the final section, stanzas eight through eleven brings the speaker direct contact with the pike. Here, the poet describes the evening encounter and monastery pond. By equating the pike with the legendry nature of the monastery pond, the poet makes it a creature of myth like the dragon: powerful, naughty and impervious to human need.

Stilled legendary depth

It was as deep as England it held

Pike too immense to stir, so immense and old

The past nightfall I dared not cast. (37-40)

Here, "legendary depth", "as deep as England", "too immense", "old" and "past nightfall" is clue images of poet's desires to go. Poet invites the reader to have positive attitude toward animal power.

In this section, the poet recapitulates the skulking, waiting nature of the submarine world and makes reader experience the fear that the pike engenders, even in the man standing on the bank afraid to fish for what he imagines to be monstrous pike.

"Frozen", "dark pond", "dream" are the images of negation of life and love. The juxtaposition of natural and human world pairing the images of the fish floating patiently in its nature and artificial world that impression's the fish presents the human desires to dominate and perpetuation of pike's opposition. At the end, the narrator fishes in terror at night. He is no longer fishing for pike, but for the nameless horror which night's darkness trees to rise up from the legendary depth of his dream.

In this poem, the poet uses the homogeneous images of decay and death of present and recalling toward pre-Christian era. The images are mostly animal and violent in nature. The images such as fish, egg, flies, silhouette, jaws, hooked gill, belly, and gullet, immense etc. present animal instinct of killing and to be killed. Those images are compared with modern world situation. The poet recollected the memory of the pre-historic era with the help of imageries "Monastery", "legendry depth", "as deep as England", "immense" and "old".

"Pike" is a highly visual poem, the description evoke sharp images of fish. One can see water, weeds, aquarium, belly, darkness, etc.

### **Examination at the Womb-Door**

In this poem, the examinee (Crow) at the Womb-Door is more powerful than Death. Even God (Death) can not cease Crow. It turns upside down of the whole world. Here, the interviewee opposes orthodox-rationality and modern Christian values. The title "Examination at the Womb-Door" gives a picture of an examination of life and death. Womb-Door is a Biblical and Physiological image.

The poem begins with series of questions and someone is answering. The examiner asks who owns different parts of body and answers are given as readymade, "Death" for all. Here, the poet speaks in the mind of the examinee and mocks the present human sense of ownership. Whatever human owns is temporary. The ultimate owner of all human property is Death. All human possession are transitory and in process of change.

In the first four lines, the poet presents the physiological images. "Scrawny little feet", "bristly scorched face", "working lunge" and "coat of muscles" are main phrases to present the horrible physiology of the animal (Crow). These lines, too, manifest the power of Death: "Who owns these scrawny little feet? Death /who owns this bristly scorched-looking face? Death" (1-2). Death possesses ultimately all these organs.

In the second stanza, the questions are concerned with the internal part of the body. "Guts", "brain", "blood", "eyes", "tongue", "and "wakefulness" are more powerful than external parts, also possess Death ultimately. "Who owns this questionable brain? Death /All this messy blood? Death" (5-6). These imagery are visual, tactile, thermal, gustatory and kinesthetic.

In third stanza, the questions are asked about external world and nature. "Rainy", "stony", "earth", and "space" is visual images of nature.

Again the poet moves into the internal side of the body. All these question satirize the modern values and orthodox. The Christian "hope", "will", "love" and "life" are not stronger than death. Whole orthodox dreams are fell down.

Who is stronger than hope? Death

Who is stronger than the will" Death

Stronger than love? Death

Stronger than life? Death

But who is stronger than death?

Me, evidently

Pass, Crow. (14-20)

But in the last stanza is poets higher expectation something different answer of "Stronger than Death". Crow claimed "me" is stronger than death. Crow succeed in examination. In this section crow challenged the omnipresent characteristics of death. The last line which seems a broken syntax reveals the reality of crow. The poet wants to present the regularity of the world is going to break. The monotonous questions and one word same answers of all questions are changed at last. Crow is ever going, omnipresent power that is presented "me, evidently" with much confidence. The word "pass" has multiple meaning-successful, go into, good, and history-that all meanings fit to the character of Crow.

In this poem, poet uses different types of imagery. Animal imageries are dominant "little feet", "bristly-scorched", "face", "womb", "muscles", "eyes", "blood", "guts", "tongue", are related to animals physiology. Images are this poem is almost homogenous

and they can categories in certain groups. "Blood", "Womb", "love", "death" are Biblical images. "Life", "will", "strength" is kinesthetic. "Earth", "story", "rainy", "space" is images of natural world.

By using all these images, poet demonstrates "crow" is as a symbol survival. Crow denied under controls of death. Crow has succeeded to cross the threshold where the examination of his power has been taken. "Crow" at the womb-door has own "ego" to tackle with the horror /burden of death.

### **A Childish Prank**

In this poem, God can not protect his own son from disaster and enemies. God became unsuccessful to solve the great problem. Crow went on challenging god by eating God's loved creature and touching human being. Crow directly opposes moral order and morality that are shaped on the basis orthodox.

In the first stanza, both man's and woman's bodies lay without soul gives clear images of "death". "Souls" also represents cruelty and ruthless. There is no sign of love. "Dully", "gaping", "foolishly", "starting", "inert", are words of negative connotation. Neither man nor women have power to move elsewhere nor they have will to do something great. The third line reflects the setting of "Eden" garden. This problem is so hard "God pondered". God takes long time to reach a decision." The problem was so great, it dragged him asleep / Crow laughed". (5-6)

The poet presents very contrasting images like "Eden garden", "soulless human bodies", "staring", "God pondered", "God asleep", "crow laughed". When God pondered and went on asleep, crow became happy and laughed on the helpless situation of God. Crow mocks not only rationality, values and religion but also whole myth of Christianity.

"Eden Garden" is heaven where God can do anything, solve problems and give punishment. But here God himself can not make decision like Shakespearean Hamlet and Greek's tragic heroes. Crow is free from problems and became happy. Crow wants to justify his mighty existence without any disturbance and none of power can compete with crow. "He bit the worm, God's only son, / Into two writhing halves" (7-8).

Crow eats God's only son in front of father. It is crow's counter attack to the God. Crow want to test God's power but he found God is very weak.

"He" refers to crow and masculinity of power. Crow gave fortunes by swallowing man from tail half and women from head half. The situation of the poem resembles with the situation of Eliot's "Waste land". "Tail half", "wounded end", "hanging out", "stuffed", "head half", "crept", "deeper", "peer", "eyes", "calling" are repetitive Chaotic picture of the human beings. "Calling its tail-half to join up/Quickly, quickly because O it was painful" (14-15).

These like recall the Eliot's "hurry up", "quickly, quickly" waste land. "Quickly, quickly", "O", "painful" are horrible situation when great disaster is going to happen.

In the fifth stanza, the poet reflects the picture of sleep and dream. The problem of the modern world is so bad both God and human being went on sleeping. "Man awoke being dragged across the grass / Women awake to see him coming" (16-17). Now man became aware about the situation but both man and women did not know what had happened. Just like dream they forget past and horrible picture of dream. The last two lines refer to the still chaotic situation of the world: "God went on sleeping/Crow went on laughing" (19-20).

God does not want to see the trouble and tortures of his sons and crow went on mocking feableness of God. The duty of father is to protect his children but here father can not save his children in front of the mouth of death. The mocking of the crow is the mocking of Christianity and western values and orthodox ethics.

From the opening lines, upto last stanza set the sense of dreaming and sleeping. "Bodies lay", "without souls", "asleep", "awake", are sensuous imagery of dream. "Staring", "hanging out", "peer", "eyes", "see" are usual images. "Laughing", "causing", are auditory imagery. "Coming", "dragged", "crept", are kinesthetic. These images can be categorized in homogeneous groups. "Bodies", "souls", "asleep", "laughed", "head", and "eyes" are physiological imagery. "Crow", "tail half", "head", "eye" are animal imagery. "Eden", "God", "son" are Biblical imagery.

The poet handles all of these images to show the horrible picture of the present world and mere pathetic observer of God. Crow became superpower; neither problem challenges his everyday life. Crow does not have fear with anyone. He can kill and eat whatever he likes.

### **Crow's First Lesson**

Hughes depicts the table talk between God and Crow where crow continuously denied whatever God ordered to do this and not to do. The poet uses crow imagery to show his strong disagreement with Christian myths, ethics and system of knowledge. He loves the world before Christian civilization.

In the first stanza, the poet gives the vivid picture of class room teaching. God as a teacher tries to teach "how to talk" with the crow. God wants to teach about "love". God orders crow to say "love". But crow negates God's order and gaps white shark. Crow

shallows it rolling downwards. Crow as a student does not follow god's rules and orders. Crow does not want to learn about love; rather he kills shark and eats. Crow's desire to go prehistoric era is mentioned through the images of "rolling downwards", "discovering own depth", and "sea", "God", "love", "teach", "white", are Biblical imagery. "Crow", "shark", "sea", and "gaped" are animal imagery.

Second stanza starts with god's attempt to improve crow's manners.

"No, no" said God, "say Love. Now try it. "LOVE."

Crow gaped, and a bluefly, tsetse, mosquito

Zoomed out and down

To their sundry flesh-pots. (5-8)

God is teaching not only word love but "LOVE". Bentley's argument on this is, "Crow's difficulty is that he can not adapt to the alien discourses in which he finds himself placed, he cannot normalize himself within any single cultural code (here the Christian idea of God as Love)-hence his trials and ordeals" ( 33). Capitalization of all alphabets of "LOVE" is the main lesson, having many meanings. The poet wants to give more emphasis to Christian morality, values, mercy and co-operation, friendship etc. God's intention is to develop the notion of friendship and co-operation among all creatures of God's creation. But again crow caught a bluefly, a tsetse, and a mosquito to present his disagreement to learn 'love' or Christian values. Christian commandment of love can not hold all the creatures. Crow zoomed down and attacked wherever he found flesh-pots. God seems tired to teach a lesson of love to Crow. "Crow", "bluefly", "tsetse", "mosquito", "flesh-pots", are animal imagery. "Tsetse" and "mosquito" caused sickness to human beings "zoomed", "down" are referring to deep past.

In the third stanza, the poet depicts the final attempts of God to teach "LOVE". A final try of God denotes by the phrase "NOW LOVE". This shows that God taught many time but he is not successful in his job. God can not control crow's movement and continue to eat. Crow made loud sound of vomiting. Crow angrily protest against God's interest.

"A final try," said God. "Now, LOVE."

Crow convulsed, gaped, reached and

Man's bodies prodigious head.

Bulbed out onto the earth, with swiveling eyes,

Jabbering protest- (9-13)

This stanza is full of images like "convulsed", "retched", "man's bodiless prodigious head", "Bulbed", "earth", "swiveling eyes", "Jabbering protest". "Bulbed" and "earth", refer to the past from where present civilization germinated. "Man's bodiless prodigious head" refers to the modern science and rationality. Body and head both are essential for survival but prodigious head modern people undermine the values of body. It is great satire for the rationalist. "Convulsed", "retched" and "Jabbering protest" are counterbility of crow in front of God. Poet implies these images to counter whatever thought humanity. The dash at the final line of this stanza shows that crow's protest is going on.

In the fourth stanza, poet gives different images that break the poem in terms of imagery. The poet wants to falsify the myth of creation of human beings. "Woman's vulva", "dropped", "over man's neck", and "tightened" present the sexual images of human being. Man and women have sexual intercourse that god observes. God tries to part them but he failed cursed them and wept. According to Christian myth, when god

found the mistakes of Adam and Eve, Eve felt shame and tried to hide her sexual organs with her hands. Adam frightened to talk in front of God. But here God can not separate human being having sex. This shows the failure of religious beliefs. People are madly engaged on sexual activities. Instead of man and woman God wept. Crow also was watching all activities of god and human being. At last crow felt guilty and flew off. Crow does not want to keep on looking such measurable situation of god and shameless manners of human beings.

"Vulva", "dropped", "neck", "tightened", "grass", "part", "cursed", "wept", "guilty" are images to give new interpretation of Christian myth and opposition of the control of god. At last instead of learning lesson about "love" crow knew that even human being, are created out of own image, reject god's attempt to separate them.

### **A Horrible Religious Error**

In the poem, Hughes communicates the reality of history and points out this misinterpretation of myth. His attempts to recorrect conventional mind set about pre-history and myth. This poem counters conventional mode of thinking and value judgment. Images are carried from prehistoric era, religious and animal world to illustrate "A horrible religious error". The title itself resents a blunder mistake has been done by modern people and the poet wants to give true interpretation of religious myth.

In the title three contrasting images are presented. "Horrible", "error", and "religious" are quite opposite words gave completely different images. The poet opposes with conventional orthodoxy by reminding religious could not be horrible and error. But, here claims that there is a mistake or error on orthodox belief system that causes horror.

The poem starts with the picture of serpent which, as poet claims, emerged "deep-down" of hatched atom of the earth. The existence of serpent is twisted around. "Serpant" is both animal and Biblical imagery. "Hatched" gives the imagery of bird. "Earth-bowel", "emerged" and "atom" is images of deep down of the history.

In the second stanza, "a long deaf" is auditory and neck and sphinx are visual images. "Sphinx" is related to the myth of serpent. People forget the body of the serpent or origin of it was earth mining. This is horrible mistake has been done by orthodox. The present Christian myth is like "sphinx", not true. "Lifting a long neck/And balancing that deaf and mineral stare/The sphinx of the final fact" (4-6).

Poet disagreement is orthodox forget the "fact", "the body", and "hatched atom of the earth". Myth makers keep on deaf about mineral stare and sphinx is the final fact.

Third stanza begins with the images of fire-breathing creature. "Flexing", "flame flicker tongue", "rustling" are images recalling "Beowulf" of Anglo-Saxon literature. Here, a "syllable" connotes to the writer myth with covers all spheres of the world. God also expresses pain knowing twisted reality. But reality remains like a leaf in the "furnace". "Furnace" is the image of warm and flick of reality.

The fourth stanza gives different images that are found before. "Man's and woman's", "knees melted", "collapsed", "neck-muscles melted", "brows bumped", "tears evacuated", "whispered", "your will is our peace" are main image making phrases. It pictures a modern indulgement of sex and that is great problem cause to death. "Collapsed", "melted", "bumped", and "tears" are death imagery.

At last stanza, poet reveals that all this human activities are peered by crow. Crow can not sit only peering. Crow's patience is broken and crow moved forward. "Grabbed this creature by the slackskin nape / Beat the hell out of it, and ate it". (16-17)

Crow caught on the back neck of above mentioned creature, gave torture and finally ate "crow", "rape", "slackskin", "creature" are animal imagery. Crow ate this creature that made false myth of Christian orthodox. "Beat", "ate", and "grabbed" are horrible images of the present society. "Hell" and "eat" are Biblical images. Crow threw this creature to the hell. It seems crow is ruler, who ever break the norms are punished.

Hughes used diverse images basically animal and Biblical to correct religious error made by orthodox thinkers.

The final line, "Beat the hell out of it, and ate it"(17), gives the clear images of Eden garden. When Adam and Eve ate apple then they were thrown in to the hell by God. Here, the Crow claims that he is superpower and decides to give punishment. The existence of crow becomes new myth. The poet, as a myth maker, tries to make errorless religious myth. This scrupulous analysis of the selected poems, too, upholds the fact that Hughes animal imageries, which turn into mythical characters, counter as well as subvert the western Christian orthodox values.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

In the present study, an attempt has been made to show how Ted Hughes uses animal imageries in his poetry to counter existing orthodox values and to mythologize animal power. In the foregoing chapters, it has been made clear that Hughes' poems are manifestations of pre-historic era in a unique way. He recalls his life experiences of zoo-keeper through his writing on the subject-matter of animal feeling, powers and manners. His poems represent thoughts in a kind of internal monologue, which the writer supposes to be running through the mind of his animal speakers. He idealizes the violence and glorifies the horror of the modern world through the series of animal imageries.

In the light of preceding chapters, it is apparent that Hughes, in his poems, is basically concerned with animals, their physical power, natural instincts and human perspectives towards animal world, which he tries to express objectively and economically rather than emotionally. Most of his poems deal with animal imagery to counter the myth of creation. The foregoing analysis of his poems shows that the images taken from the physiology of animals, birds and human serve to illustrate derivative instinctual characteristics which can not be controlled by religious beliefs, laws and orders, nor can be by the rationality.

Hughes's images are taken from diverse fields. The topographical images are concern with factual objects down to the earth and Biblical images are exploited in reverse form. This shows that Hughes challenges Christian myth by skillful handling of animal imageries. He observes trivial creatures of nature and inserts violent power of his feeling that could resist any form of socio-cultural barriers. His disagreement upon orthodoxy and discontent with modern human behaviors are depicted with the help of

violent nature of trivial animals. He implants heroic qualities of animals by deriving the references from different periods of history.

One of the remarkable points the images try to communicate is man makes rules, regulations, norms and values, which are not appropriate in the animal world. Today's people try to impose their own rules and orders upon animals for the sake of human welfare and it, as a result, grows worse from bad. Hughes, through the use of animal power, resists orthodox norms and rules.

Hughes' challenge to the Christian orthodoxies can be observed both in content and form of his poems. His abrupt break of lines and stanzas without tradition pattern of rhyme and rhythms match the content of poems. He is a renovator of language. He has shown amazing originality in his poetry with the unique sense of satire along with the unique coinage of words and phrases.

In his poems, animals are given individual characters, which are able to speak like human beings and which are often used to convey some kind of lesson. The intention of the writer can not be understood until we read the final line which often reveals completely different reality. His reality is subtle, tender, and immeasurable in terms of rational discourse of any verbal poetic devices. His visionary quest can be seen precisely because his words often fail to convey what his vision wants to unfold, as they can not capture the flight of the crow.

Although this research work has not been able to include all of Ted Hughes's series of volumes under analysis, the analyzed poems clearly project his unique handling of animal energies to oppose orthodox. In his poems, his imaginative quest goes beyond time and place. His desire of purification or regeneration of human beings is expressed by

using animal imagery and imagery of deep past. Hughes' poems convey us that to take part in a world lived by our ancestors millions years ago is like a blood-transfusion which refreshes and renews human race. His imagery is taken from this earth, heaven and under-world. His imageries of animal body, heart and brain manifest human predicament of autonomy of animal world, and this is also compared with the victory over death. By implying animal imageries, Hughes has subverted as well as reinterpreted Christian myths.

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