

Archetypes in Literatures and Cultures

Cultural and Regional Studies

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From Archetypal Situation to Archetypised Words or Words as a Unit of Semantic Reinterpretations

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The word “archetype” as a carrier of the meanings “primary” and “module-type”

Etymologically the word “*archetype*” in Greek means initial, primary sample; the first part of the word *arche* means primary model; a *type*, a pattern supposing reiteration.¹ Classification cannot be made without repetition, so type implies the recycling of a pattern. Any recycling, even an imitative recycling cannot present an identical copy of the primordial type or any previous type, namely the archetype. Time, space, and the individuality of the author are inevitably imprinted on the new version, thus creating variation. Thus archetype presumes both an archaic type (an invariant) and the modification of the type.

Regarding the term *primary*, it means *the first* not only in time, but in rank as well. The second meaning is reflected in such words as archangel (a principal angel)² archbishop, archeries (the highest rank in the Eastern Orthodox and Catholic Churches), archon (the chief magistrate in Ancient Greek city-states).

“The term “archetype” occurs as early as Philo Judaeus, with reference to the *Imago Dei* (God-image) in man. It can also be found in Irenaeus,³ who says: “The creator of the world did not fashion these things directly from himself, but copied them from archetypes outside himself.” In the *Corpus Hermeticum*, God is called ... archetypical light (Harrison, Charles 2003: 379). In some of Plato’s dialogues, Socrates describes the material world only as an image or copy of the real world. The forms are types of real things. Therefore, a type is the core recurring and repeating in different forms.

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- 1 Online Etymology Dictionary. <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php>. “Archetype – original pattern from which copies are made”, 1540s, from L. *archetypum*, from Gk. *arkhetypon* “pattern, model, figure on a seal”, neut. of adj. *arkhetypos* “first-moulded”, from *arkhe-* “first” (see *archon*) + *typos* “model, type, blow, mark of a blow” (see *type*). The Jungian sense of “pervasive idea or image from the collective unconscious” is from 1919”.
 - 2 Usually the archangel Gabriel has been viewed as a mediator and messenger between God and the human race; he related the text of the Quran to the prophet and announced to Mary that she was to be the mother of Jesus.
 - 3 Saint Irenaeus, bishop in Gaul, Roman Empire, 2nd century AD, circa 130- 202.

Types of archetypes

Archetypes can be sub-divided into several *types or groups*:

- archetypal *sujets (plots)* from ancient times (in religious books, such as in Bible, Koran and through them in classic and contemporary literature; Leila & Majnun)
- archetypal *situations* (three tests for marriage, keeping a promise, etc.)
- archetypal *melodies* (Mozart's *Alla Turca March* and Beethoven's *Marcia Alla Turca* based on *Yanussary March*; *Bayati-Shiraz*, Bach's *Toccata D Minor*); *dancing* (*Caucasian type*, *Central Asian* structure, plastic motions of arms and hands in Indian dancing in modern Indian dancing and Arabic belly dance, their recycling-improvisations, imitating the plastic gestures, of ancient temple dance rituals.⁴)
- archetypal *symbols* (mirror, apple, treasure, underground, invisibility, fire, water, magic wand, etc.)
- archetypal *images* (Biblical, mythological, realistic; Virgin Mary, Faustus/Iblis/Devil/Mephistofeles, beloved /ashig/Majnun, King Arthur/ knight, holy fool/man of motley, geisha/vestalis)
- archetypal *genre* (imitation – *mimesis* (in Western culture)-*nezire* (in classic Islamic literature); *mirror for princes*-hagiography-didactic; *metqel* (devoted to Kerbela martyrs in VII century, from Arabic *qetl* – execution;⁵ *Panchatattra* (Indian) or *Khamsa* (five framed in Islamic literature), *divan*;⁶ *mugham* or *makam*,⁷ sonatina, rhapsody in music; *manga* (Japanese drawing style for comics-cartoons))
- archetypal *words* (shabbat-subbota-sabbatical; sacral words, distributed in different languages through a dominant people-or a carrier of a dominant religion)
- archetype as textual *method* (travel, ascension to the heaven, three tests for the hero before marriage, slumber, retrospection; five-frame composition in Islamic carpet and narrative)

4 For example, Киноконцерт – Махмуд Эсамбаев. “Золотой бог”. [Kinokonsert – Mahmoud Esambayev. “Zolotoy Bog” – Golden God]. 28 май 2010. http://rutube.ru/tracks/32_82375.html.

5 Metqel literature started in Arabic literature from the time of the battle of Kerbela between supporters of Imam Hasan and followers of Muaviya –bin-Abu-Soufyan in 680 AD. It was written as narrative, describing significant stages of the life of the hero and the social-political core of these historical events.

6 A Divan is a collection of works in Medieval Islamic literature.

7 Mugam or makam is a system of slow melody types, borrowed with Islam, based on the technique of improvisation. It appears somehow also in the music art of non-Islamic people, such as Greeks and Assyrians.

- archetypal *ritual* (Friday, Saturday or Sunday in monotheistic religions for revival and recreation, sacrifice both in paganism and monotheism, zikr-prayer-sacralized remembrance days)

Some *methods of formation* of archetypes are:

- canonization (the Bible's standards for approving texts, images)
- representation of historical fact or belief in fiction or art
- adaptation (depiction of depicted texts, units in different texts and art genres)
- translation (into different languages)
- plagiarism (in the light of the above, as the borders between copying and new interpretation are fluid)
- hypertext (borrowing the known archetype and making a new interpretation)
- fan-fiction (continuation of a known text, or character, by fans in their reinventive creation)

Archetypes can be conditionally divided into the following *several categories*:

- collective unconscious (K. Jung) – prototypes, something inherent to the psyche of a person, rather than acquired through experience, thus forming a particular behavior mode
- conscious application, adaptation of a known example or pattern
- even copying, such as the modern movement's of *appropriation* existing in the visual arts.

Traditionally, the field of research of archetypes includes notions of symbols, motifs, plots, and situations. Another type of research comprises archetypes in the different art forms. Thus we can talk about different forms of archetypes, which embrace images of religious motifs in *pictures* in church and palace walls and ceilings, in ritual and/or hunting rock *paintings*; *situations, elements of plot*, images, and symbols recurring in folklore, mythology, literature, music and cinema; *verbal units* reflecting the semantic transformation of beliefs in different periods, indiscernible at first sight.

One can consider as a form of archetype the reappearance of myths, lore, legends in literature, films, music, sculpture, and most importantly its layering with the atmosphere of a current time, so the new reappearance could be termed as an *adaptation, recycling culture, convergence, or fan-fiction*.⁸

The formation of an archaic image occurs from time to time through the practice of beliefs, traditions, and rituals. Beliefs integrate into religions, and

8 Adaptation—adjustment of the text for television, music, movie, painting; fan-fiction—continuation of the text by amateurs or professional writers, recycling culture – combination of these two points, interpretation of known content in the new text.

migrate from one religion to another, gradually forming the primal image, which is usually defined as an archetype, at times leading to alterations in words, reflecting basic semantics. This image or motif reflects not only the ritualistic or symbolic on the plot level, but it reveals also cultural layers that appear as semantic carriers, transmitted on the verbal level. Myths, rituals, and beliefs affected the formation of the academic and professional as much as colloquial language and dialects.

The archetypes mentioned above are expressed in language through proverbs, phraseology, words. The purpose of this essay is to reveal and identify the expression of archetypes, that is, the scheme of a primal image and motif, enclosed in words, or to be precise, in the roots. To distinguish the archetypal words from pure lexical loans and coincident words in related languages we used both examples, thus making an attempt to *disclose their archetypal-prototype* culturological meanings, those enclosed in the word, which sometimes appear unusual at first glance.

Interestingly, in various religions the repetition of the same rite with some variations (for example, the types of 'zkr'-rhythmic repetitions of certain *actions* (such as rhythmic motion of heads) and words in Buddhism, Islam, shamanism, or rites in Zoroastrianism, Greek mythology, and Christianity, related to the belief of purging fire) result in repetition with the same regularity in *language*. In this sense, the *history of language* is not merely a *linguistic* science, since at the same time it reflects the *history of an ethnos and a nation, their cultural cross-roads and encounters*.

Any plot, situation, or image can be archetypal or not. Consequently, a word can be (or not be) an expression of a primal image. The primal images are created and transformed in any particular period of time, including the modern.⁹ Tracing the archetypal function of a word allows for discovering how it originated or is related to a primordial belief system. The interesting fact is that, the same type of a semantic footprint can be observed in ethnicities of distinct language groups and distant geographical areas, and their semantics can be identified as a carrier of an archetype. The objective of this research is mostly a study of the form of ***expression of archetypal ideas in certain words*** rather than their chronological appearance. The material for research consists of words encountered by the author on numerous occasions and in different places and checked in dictionaries, including online sources, wherever possible.

9 For example, iconoclasm appears with the Egyptian pharaohs, old Greek and Eastern gods, in monotheistic saints' icons and political leader's portraits.

Words, related to a religion, as the linkage point for different civilizations

Apostasy¹⁰ – separation from the main religion, beliefs

Apostrophe – separation of two syllables in Azerbaijani and other languages, using Arud rhythm, for construction of length of syllables in the words; in Latin rhetoric: to *interrupt* speech to address to someone; *apostropha* (Latin) in court to address to the adversary

Apostle – eventually the apostles changed their beliefs, *differed*, *separated* from their fellow countrymen by *conversion* to a new religion. The mission of the twelve Christian apostles was a branching off from Judaism, to convert people to another religion.

Apostolic – synonym of *papal*, because the pope is a chief successor of Apostles.

This group consisting of disparate lexemes, such as apostle (12 apostles of Jesus Christ, or an indicator of the length of a syllable in Azerbaijani and other Muslim alphabets, and a sign of English alphabet, reflects an *archetype of differentiation*.

Schism – division, rupture, breaking out

Shiism – one of the confessions, which separated, broke out from the main Sunni movement of Islam

Schizophrenia – mental illness, characterized by the *breakdown* of thought,

Sacrifice – священный, что и предполагает суть – *sacrum* – священный предмет, facio (fact) – делать

Sacral – related to ritual

Sacred – religious

Sacred mushroom – English name of a hallucinogenic mushroom, used in religious rituals of American aborigines. In this sense insane can be understood as a quality of being close to God.

Sacrament – a religious symbol or a rite, such as Baptism and the Eucharist.

Секрет (Russian) – *secret*

Rites and prayers are used for calling on sacred power, to reveal intentions. This group of words consists of sacred, mystic, secret symbols. The word *zikr* (*secret*) related to the above mentioned group is worth considering.

10 Here and after most of the references are checked from ABBYLingo-12 Online dictionary.

Zikr (or *Dhi-kar*)(Arabic, remembering, reminding) – an Islamic *religious ceremony*, a devotional practice representing a way of *reminding oneself of God* used in Islam and *especially by Sufis*.

Zikr – In Sufism, Islamic Mysticism, a term used both for the regular activity of remembrance and for the litanies and prayers involved in the acts of remembering. The act of rhythmic recital accompanied by head movements from left to right is close to that of shamans and Buddhist rituals. (To achieve a higher consciousness one is required to repeat) The partial loss of consciousness in this practice brings closer to the *sacred* group of words another archetypical word *insane*.

Ziggurat – a temple of Sumerian origin in the form of a pyramidal tower, consisting of a number of stories and presenting the appearance of a series of terraces (to achieve a highest pinnacle one required to repeat steps).

The archetypisation of *zikr* related to the 28-th Ayat of the 13 Surah of the Quran: Those who believe, and whose hearts find satisfaction in the remembrance of Allah: for without doubt in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find satisfaction. The fourth Surah shows the importance of *zikr* practiced by a group: When any group of men remembers Allah, angels surround them and mercy covers them, tranquillity descends upon them, and Allah mentions them to those who are with Him. (Muslim) Quran (Surah 4: Verse 190) (Qurani-Kərim 2006: 131).

Each Sufi order has its own distinctive *zikr* practice. The tradition of *zikr* implemented not only Sufis and dervishes devotions, but also funeral rituals. Relying on personal experience, even in Soviet times, funeral rituals in some areas of Azerbaijan, i.e. Zagatala, were performed with use of *zikr* practices of the Naqshbandi order. This tradition with some deviations continues nowadays in different parts of Azerbaijan and in the areas of Georgia and Armenia inhabited by Azerbaijanis.¹¹ We can compare the origins and the primal meaning of *zikr* with the word *ziggurat*. One of its meanings is related to the *weird* group of words.

Weird – involving or suggesting the supernatural; unearthly or uncanny, fantastic; concerned with or controlling fate or destiny.

Weird – a region in Southern Sweden

Wyrđ (German) – a destiny

Wert in Indo-European languages – cyclic rotation

11 For example, in the novel “The Violent Kur-river” (1967) Ismail Shykhly describes *zikr*, inherent in the Nigarits order of Sufism, still popular in Kazakh region of Azerbaijan.

Vird (Azerbaijani, Turkish) – type of *Zikr*, one of the Sufi or dervish rituals, in other parts of the world it is called *wird* (Arabic)

Virtue – a good or admirable quality or property

Virtues – the fifth of the nine orders into which the angels are traditionally divided in medieval angelology

The words of this group come from different language groups united by symbolism of attaining a magic, secret, transcendental world. The Sufi ritual of *vird* is used for the achievement of a stability of heart. In this case, the most important thing is not a rotation of the body and head, but a certain repetition of the word “Allah” or names of Allah. *Wird* (Awrad – plural in Arabic) means source or place of return (compare with *zikr* or *dikr*). Another origin of this word according to dictionaries and encyclopaedias could be found in Indian and/or Saxon. The lexical line in Indo-European and Turkic languages indicates the same function as the of archetype of ritual.

Bog (Russian) – God

Bog – a swamp

Bhagavan (Sanskrit –literally “possessing fortune, blessed, prosperous”) – in some Hindu traditions used to indicate a Personal God

Baku – capital of Azerbaijan, *Bak* (*Bhagavan*) is associated with God and sun

Bogud (Latin) – Brother and companion of Mauritanian ruler Bokh¹² (circa 31 BC)

Богатырь (Russian) – a man of distinguished courage or ability, a personage from heroic myths and legends (compare to Turkic *bahadur*, *batir*, Sanskrit *Bhagavad-Gita* –(Song of God), sacred scripture)

Boguz (Chagatay), **bogaz** (Azerb., Turk. – throat) compare with aphorism “can *bogazdan* kecher” – “life (soul) goes through throat”, with the belief that the soul leaves a body through throat.

This group of words consists of such notions as the name of God – *Bog*, an extraordinary hero – *bogatir* etc. deriving from different language groups (from Sanskrit and Slavic to Turkic). It exposes a meaning that seems prior to monotheism.

The analogy to *Bog* – *God* also designates a certain cultural layers.

God – A Supreme Spirit

Good – morally excellent; virtuous, right, favourable etc.

Guten (German) – good, favourable, reliable

Gutlu – (Old Turkic) – happy, favourable

12 Compare: Bokh – Vakh lexical line.

Gutadgu – bilik (“The path to happiness”) – the name of the book by Yusuf Balasaguni

Gorgut – name of Turkic mythical prophet

Kutlu olsun (in modern Turkish and some Azerbaijani dialects) – be full of goodness

These examples show the positive qualities related to God, and godliuness.

Sabbath (Hebrew) – is the seventh day of the Jewish week and a day of rest in Judaism (like Friday in Islam, and Sunday in Christianity). It recalls the Biblical Creation account in Genesis, describing God creating the Heavens and the Earth in six days and resting on the seventh. It may also be the reason why the witches’ Sabbath happens on this day.

Sabbatical year – every 7th year in Bible,

Cyōōoma [subbota] (Russian) – Saturday

Şənbə [compare: *sabbath*] (Azerb.) – Saturday

In all cases, the archetypal plot reflects the abovementioned Biblical story of the Genesis of the world (Exod. 31: 17).

Shiva – one of the main *gods* in Hinduism, “the *Destroyer*,” the third member of the Trimurti (Holy Trinity in Hinduism), along with Brahma the Creator and Vishnu the Preserver.

Shivah (or siva) – the *mourning* period, following the funeral and lasting traditionally for seven days indoors, observed by Jews for a deceased (compare: *destroyer* function) parent, sibling, child, or spouse, sitting on low stool; *sit shivah* – to observe this period; to mourn (compare with the pose of a mediating *Shiva*).

Şivən qoparmaq (Azerb.) – to wail, to weep, to make a loud noise (not only during funerals and mourning periods).

The expression completes the semantic-archetypal line with changing details.

Mi’raj or **Meraj** (in Islam) – the ascension of the prophet Muhammad to heaven (661 AD) on the fantastic steed Al-Borak given by the archangel Jibril (Gabriel) to the throne of Allah, (Qur’an, sura 17 (Al-Isra), ayah1). During the flight God gave him ninety nine thousand revelations; (compare – the Ascension Day in Christianity, on the fortieth day of Easter, related with Ascension of Christ into a heaven). Another holy transportation occurs with Abraham, who was taken on Al-Borak to his wife Hagar and son Ismail (compare: the Ascension Day in Christianity, in fortieth day of Easter, related with Ascension of Christ into a heaven; Elijah’s rapture to heaven in order to save him; ascension of the Virgin Mary into heaven after her earthly life).