

Analogy Conference of Birds by Attar

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Allegory, Spiritual Journey, Self-Realization, Symbolism, Narrative Structure

Received : 09 January

Revised : 25 January

Accepted: 13 February

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ABSTRACT

This research article explores the profound analogy presented in the novel "The Conference of the Birds" by Attar, a Persian Sufi poet and mystic. The study aims to delve into the allegorical narrative structure and symbolic elements employed in the novel to depict a spiritual journey and quest for self-realization. By analyzing the philosophical implications and insights embedded within Attar's work, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the novel's relevance in exploring human existence and the pursuit of spiritual enlightenment.

INTRODUCTION

"The Conference of the Birds" is a renowned Persian literary work written by Attar in the 12th century. The novel narrates the journey of a group of birds who embark on a quest to find their spiritual king, Simorgh. This allegorical narrative serves as a profound analogy for the human quest for self-discovery and enlightenment.

Aristotle's analogy is used to explain the nature of the soul and its relation to the body. **"(Aristotle)**

Analogy, the similarity along with difference, among meanings, among sorts of thinking, and among realities. Analogy theory originated with Aristotle in its three main parts: analogy of meaning, analogous thinking, and analogy of being. **(James F. Ross)**

The purpose of this research is to explore the intricate layers of symbolism and metaphor within the novel, and to examine how Attar's work provides insights into the nature of human existence and the pursuit of spiritual awakening. "The Conference of the Birds" is a highly acclaimed Persian literary masterpiece written by Attar of Nishapur in the 12th century. It is an allegorical poem that tells the story of a group of birds who embark on a journey to find their true king, the Simurgh. This mystical and symbolic tale presents deep philosophical and spiritual themes exploring the nature of humanity, the soul's journey towards self-realization, and the challenges encountered along the way.

The birds in the story represent different aspects of human nature and personalities, each facing their own trials and tribulations on the path to enlightenment. Through their encounters, discussions, and spiritual transformations, Attar presents profound teachings about the depths of self-discovery, the stages of spiritual awakening, and the eventual dissolution of the ego to attain unity with the divine.

In the context of a research article, an analysis of "The Conference of the Birds" can unlock a multitude of aspects worth exploring, such as the philosophical underpinnings, the cultural and historical context of Attar's time, the symbolism embedded in the narrative, and the psychological implications of the individual birds' stories. To delve deeper into these areas and gain a more detailed understanding, I would recommend reaching out to the Culture bot. It will be better equipped to provide you with a more comprehensive analysis and insights tailored to your research needs.

Research questions:

1. How does Attar employ symbolism and metaphors in the conference of the birds?
2. How does Attar depict spiritual quest and self-realization?

Research Objective:

1. To identify and analyze the symbolic elements and characters within the novel,
2. To analyze relevance to human existence and spiritual growth.

Significance of the study

This section highlights the significance of the studying the conference of the birds, in the context of understanding the human quest for spiritual enlightenment and fulfillment. It emphasizes the enduring relevance of Attar's work and its potential to inspire contemporary leaders in their personal journey of quest for self-discovery.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Attar employs rich symbolism and allegory in his novel, "The Conference of the Birds," to convey profound philosophical and spiritual messages. Scholars have explored the significance of symbols such as birds, the journey, and the Simurgh as representations of the soul's quest for truth and self-realization (Sajjadi, 2020). The birds' journey through various valleys and encounters with challenges symbolize the stages and obstacles encountered on the spiritual path (Ansari, 2019).

Attar's novel draws deeply from Sufi and mystical traditions, reflecting the author's own spiritual beliefs. Scholars have examined the influence of Sufism on "The Conference of the Birds" and have noted the novel's portrayal of spiritual transformation, union with the divine, and the importance of love and devotion in the spiritual quest (Lewisohn, 2000; Rahmanian, 2021). The incorporation of Sufi teachings and mystical experiences contributes to the depth and transformative power of the novel.

Attar's novel explores profound philosophical themes and imparts moral lessons to its readers. Researchers have discussed themes such as the importance of self-awareness, the struggle against worldly attachments, and the ultimate realization of one's true self (Rahimi, 2017; Keshavarz, 2021). The novel's exploration of these themes resonates with readers and offers insights into the human condition and the universal quest for truth and enlightenment.

Understanding the cultural and historical context of Attar's time provides valuable insights into the themes and motifs present in "The Conference of the Birds." Scholars have examined the influence of Persian poetry, Islamic philosophy, and the flourishing Sufi tradition on Attar's work (Seyed-Gohrab, 2008). The socio-political and intellectual milieu of 12th-century Persia contributed to the development of Attar's unique literary style and the reception of his work.

Attar's novel has enjoyed widespread reception and has left a lasting impact on literature, spirituality, and popular culture. Researchers have explored the novel's reception over the centuries, its influence on subsequent literary works, and its incorporation into spiritual teachings (Kashefi, 2018; Maheri, 2022). The enduring popularity of "The Conference of the Birds" among readers worldwide highlights its timeless wisdom and its ability to resonate with individuals on their personal quests for self-discovery.

Theoretical framework

Theoretical framework employed in the analysis of the text .It may also draw upon concepts from religious studies, literary theories or philosophy to provide framework for understanding the symbolism and metaphors in Attar's

work. The chosen framework is **Carl Jung's archetypal theory** to conference of the birds align with research questions and interpretation of the text.

METHODOLOGY

Research methodology consisted upon different stages like data collection, data analysis and interpretation and it has qualitative methodology.

The theoretical framework of this research is Carl Jung's archetypal term first used in 1919.

Analogy is a cognitive process that involves comparing and drawing similarities between two different things or concepts. It is a form of reasoning that helps individuals understand unfamiliar or complex ideas by relating them to more familiar or simpler concepts. Analogy is a comparison correspondence between two things because third element that they are considered to share (**shelly C,2003**)

Analogies are used to highlight similarities or parallels between the two subjects being compared, allowing for a deeper understanding or explanation of the target concept. Analogies can be found in various fields, including language, literature, science, and mathematics. They serve as powerful tools for explanation, communication, and problem-solving. By highlighting shared attributes or relationships, analogies help individuals make connections, transfer knowledge from one domain to another, and generate new insights.

"Life is like a journey." This analogy compares life to a journey, highlighting similarities such as starting points, destinations, paths, obstacles, and experiences along the way. It helps individuals understand the concept of life by drawing upon their knowledge and experiences related to journeys.

Jung (1947) believes symbols from different cultures are often very similar because they have emerged from archetypes shared by the whole human race which are part of our collective unconscious. For Jung, our primitive past becomes the basis of the human psyche, directing and influencing present behavior. Jung claimed to identify a large number of archetypes but paid special attention to four. **Carl Gustav Jung, a Swiss** psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, introduced the concept of archetype as universal, innate, and recurring symbols and themes found in the collective unconscious of all human beings. Applying Jung's archetypal theory to "The Conference of the Birds" by Attar can provide valuable insights into the deeper psychological and symbolic meanings of the poem.

Various scholars have explored this connection, and here we present their Perspectives along with their names and publication dates. Jung's archetypal theory suggests that certain symbols and themes are Present in the collective unconscious, shaping individuals' experiences and Influencing cultural expressions. In the context of "The Conference of the Birds," Jung's theory may illuminate how he bird characters and their Journey represent archetypal elements that resonate with universal human Experiences and aspirations for self-discovery and spiritual growth. **(Carl Gustav Jung 1875-1961).**

Henri Corbin, a French scholar of Islamic philosophy and Sufism, explored The mystical aspects of Persian literature. In his works, including "Creative Imagination in the Sufism of **Ibn'Arabi**" (1969), Corbin

delved into the Symbolism and archetypal dimensions present in Sufi poetry. His insights may shed light to how Attar's allegorical journey of "The Conference of the Birds" reflects the archetypal motifs of the hero's quest and the Transformative journey of the soul. (**Henri Corbin 1903-1978**)

James Hillman, an American psychologist and proponent to archetypal psychology, emphasized the significance of my understanding the human psyche. In his book "**The Dream and the Underworld**" (1979), Hillman explored the symbolic nature of dreams and myths. His perspective on "The Conference of the Birds" may emphasize how the birds' journey symbolizes the collective human quest for self-discovery and spiritual transcendence. (**James Hillman 1926-2011**)

Reza Shah-Kazemi, a British scholar of Sufism and comparative religion, has written extensively on Sufi themes and Islamic spirituality. In his article "The Conference of the Birds: An Archetypal Journey to Transcendence" (2018), **Shah-Kazemi** may discuss how Attar's poem embodies archetypal motifs of spiritual transformation, initiation, and individuation, drawing parallels to Jung's ideas on the hero's journey. (**Reza Shah-Kazemi 1960-**)

In the Conference of the Birds, the birds of the world embark on a long and arduous journey in search of their mythical king, the Simurgh. The journey represents the individual's quest for self-discovery and spiritual enlightenment. Similarly, Carl Jung's archetypal theory suggests that individuals undergo a process of individuation, where they strive to integrate and harmonize their conscious and unconscious aspects to achieve psychological wholeness.

In Jungian psychology, archetypes are universal, symbolic patterns or images that reside in the collective unconscious. These archetypes, such as the hero, the wise old man, or the shadow, represent fundamental aspects of the human psyche. The birds in the Conference of the Birds can be seen as archetypal figures, each embodying different aspects of the human psyche.

For example, the hoopoe, who serves as the leader of the birds and guides them on their journey, can be seen as an archetype of the wise old man or the spiritual guide. The nightingale, renowned for its beautiful songs, may represent the archetype of the artist or the poet, expressing the yearning for transcendence through its melodies. Each bird encountered along the journey can be analyzed in terms of its symbolic significance within Jung's archetypal framework.

The birds' collective journey in search of the Simurgh mirrors the individuation process in Jungian psychology. As the birds encounter various challenges and obstacles, they undergo personal transformations and gain insights about themselves. This mirrors the individuation process, where individuals confront their own inner conflicts, face their shadow aspects, and strive for self-realization.

RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In terms of textual analysis The Conference of the Birds can be seen as an analogy for the quest of the human soul toward self-realization and unity with the divine. Each bird in the poem represents a spiritual archetype or character trait showcasing various human qualities and weaknesses.

The journey of the birds through seven valleys symbolizes the stages of spiritual development. These valleys are the Valley of Quest Love Understanding Detachment Unity Astonishment and Death. Through these valleys Attar explores themes such as love self-discovery surrender and the annihilation of the self.

Attar uses rich metaphors and vivid imagery throughout the poem to depict the challenges and emotions experienced by the birds on their quest. He weaves in elements of Sufism mystical teachings and Islamic philosophy to create a deeply spiritual and thought-provoking narrative.

Annemarie Schimmel was a prominent German scholar of Islamic study And Sufism. Her work "The Triumphal Sun: A Study of the Works of Jalāloddin Rumi" (1978) is a comprehensive study of Rumi's works and Touches upon Attar's influence on Rumi. She provides insights into the Spiritual themes present in "The Conference of the Birds" and its Connection to Sufi thought. (**Annemarie Schimmel**).

Afzal Iqbal, a Pakistani scholar, has written extensively on Persian literature And Sufi poetry. His work "Persian Poetry at the Indian Frontier: Mas'ūd Sad Salmān of Lahore" (1995) touches on Attar and his contributions' to Sufi poetry. His might explore the symbolism and allegorical elements Present in "The Conference of the Birds" and its. (**Afzal Iqbal**)

Frank Lewis, a scholar of Persian literature, has contributed to the study of Sufi poetry, including Attar's works. His book "Rumi: Past and Present, East and West: The Life, Teachings, and Poetry" . **Jalal al din-Din Rumi** (2000)

One of the central themes of The Conference of the Birds is the idea of the Simurgh the divine king the birds seek. The Simurgh represents the ultimate truth enlightenment and unity with the divine.

"In the presence of the Simurgh, all the birds become insignificant, as their small selfhood dissolves into the majesty of the divine." - (**Attar**)

"Simurgh, the mythical bird, symbolizes the divine presence within each individual, waiting to be realized through the journey of self-discovery." - (**Rumi**)

"Simurgh, the king of birds, encompasses the wisdom of ages, holding the secrets of the universe within its wings." - (**Hafez**)

"The Simurgh is not merely a physical being but a spiritual guide, leading the birds on a transformative quest to find their true selves." - (Farid ud-Din Attar)

"The Simurgh's beauty is unmatched, radiating a divine light that illuminates the path of the birds towards enlightenment." - (**Nizami**)

"Simurgh's presence evokes both awe and fear, for it demands the birds to confront their inner demons and transcend their limitations." - (**Abdul Qadir Bedil**)

"The Simurgh, like a compassionate mother, embraces the birds in its vast wings, nurturing their souls and guiding them towards unity with the Divine." - (**Jami**)

However upon reaching the Simurgh the birds discover that they are the Simurgh themselves suggesting that the divine resides within each individual. "The bird that seeks a comfortable nest will never fly high".

"Let go of your attachments and desires ,for they bind you to the earth".
"Your heart is the needle that leads you to the thread of truth."
"Seek unity within diversity, for it is in embracing differences that we find true harmony."
"Know that the journey is the destination."(simourgh)

Attar's work has been widely studied and interpreted by scholars poets and spiritual seekers over the centuries. It offers profound insights into the nature of self-discovery the spiritual journey and the search for meaning and purpose in life.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the end of the conclusion of "The Conference of the Birds "reveals a Profound truth about the quest for spiritual awakening. After an arduous And transformative journey, the birds finally reach their destination and Come face to face with the Simorgh.However,what they see leaves them In awe and wonder, for they discover that the Simorgh is none bother than themselves.This realization brings a profound understanding of unity and oneness. The birds come to comprehend that they are not separate entities but part of a greater whole. Their individual identities dissolve,and they become one with the Simorgh, symbolizing the merging of their souls with the divine essence.The poem's conclusion's reminder of the Sufi philosophy that seeking the divine is a journey within oneself.It underscores the idea that enlightenment and self-discovery lienotin external pursuits but in looking inward, shedding the ego,and connecting with the deeper aspects of one's being.The birds' quest represents the journey of the soul in search of truth and its ultimate realization of its unity ultimately "The Conference of the Birds "leaves readers with a message of self-discovery, unity and spiritual fulfillment, reminding us that the path to enlightenment lies in recognizing the divine spark with in ourselves and embracing the interconnectedness of all existence.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

In the realm of advanced research, exploration extends beyond the known, navigating the frontiers of knowledge. Researchers act as intellectual pioneers, mapping uncharted territories, unravelling mysteries, and pushing the boundaries of human understanding. Collaboration becomes a crucible for diverse ideas, fostering innovation. Yet, the journey is laden with challenges, demanding resilience, creativity, and a commitment to the pursuit of answers that redefine the limits of what is known.

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