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Animal Archetypes in Pakistani Folk Tales



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Abstract

The Pakistani folklore is the product of centuries of oral tradition which also has a central place in the moral and psychological training of children, due to its symbolic use of animal characters. They are stories that use animals as an archetypal character who depicts common human qualities, moral principles, and some psychological struggles. The paper examines the existence of animal protagonists in some Pakistani folktales through the theoretical approach of the collective unconscious and the archetypal symbolism by Carl Jung. The study adopts a qualitative and textual approach in which it examines a collection of animal-based folktales that are obtained by visiting credible folklore archives such as the Folkloristan web archive. Revolving around close reading and comparative analysis, the study establishes recurring archetypes of Jungian characters, including: the Hero, Trickster, Caregiver, Shadow and Wise Figure, which can be embodied by such animal kingdom figures as sparrows, crows, foxes, dogs, goats, and horses. The results indicate that these animal archetypes play the role of symbolic intermediaries whereby children are in a position to externalize and mediate intricate feelings of fear, grief, loyalty, greed and resilience in a psychologically safe way. Moreover, animal folklore is a cultural identity formation tool in Pakistan as it passes on values of the indigenous, collective memory, and social norms between generations. The combination of psychological understanding and cultural interpretation thus underlining the significance of Pakistani folklore as an effective system of psychological development and moral education for children.

Keywords: *Folklore, Jungian psychology, archetype, Animal folklore, collective unconscious*

Introduction

The multifaceted and rich Pakistani folklore is the product of centuries of oral tradition. Its central features are animal characters, which are archetypal and broader than entertainment. They bear the universal human experiences that are universally described as patterns of behavior and psychological development. In this research, Jung's theory of the collective unconscious (1918) is used to examine the archetypal character of animal characters in some Pakistani folktales and their role in framing children's psychological and moral development (Batoool et al, 2023, 564). Pakistani mythology is also a phenomenon that results from the syncretism of diverse cultural traditions that cover multiple ethnic groups, languages, and regional identities. The animal protagonists in these stories are symbolic representations of the passing on of cultural values, moral values, and psychological understanding between generations (Dundes 1984, 150). Most importantly, these characters develop into archetypal characters that identify with essential human experiences and phases of evolution.

The value of meaningful animal images in folklore is their psychological and cultural impact on individual, collective consciousness. This is highly relevant to the understanding of ancient stories. The idea of collective unconsciousness by Jung provides a theory base for this interpretation. Current studies continue to recognize folklore as a means of indigenous knowledge that informs educational, psychological,

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and cultural development (Goodwyn, 2010, 510). The finding of archetypal patterns in Pakistani animal folklore is a prime example of how these ageless stories facilitate psychological development, moral development, and cultural identity construction, particularly in children (Nakawake & Sato, 2019).

Recent studies in folklore research have increasingly emphasized the dynamic ontological status of animals in folk belief systems. Magliocco (2018) shows how contemporary folk discourse increasingly ascribes spiritual personhood to companion animals, illustrating how folklore is a dynamic site where emotional investment reconfigures the boundaries between human and nonhuman entities (45). Instead of conceptualizing animals as symbolic or functional characters, this approach highlights the growing narrative and moral agency of animals in cultural imagination. These findings are particularly helpful in decoding animal characters in Pakistani fairy tales, where animals often appear not only as narrative tropes but also as ethically invested and meaningfully cultural actors. By locating animal representation within this larger “animal turn” in folklore studies, the current study investigates animal archetypes as sites of affective investment, moral communication, and ideological work rather than as fixed folkloric themes.

This study’s relevance goes beyond theoretical abstraction. By unearthing the archetypal nature of animal characters in Pakistani folklore, the analysis testifies to the timelessness of traditional narratives in contemporary society (Sun et al., 2024, 850). Folkloric wisdom remains to offer real-world utility in education and psychology, encouraging self-knowledge, moral development, and cultural preservation amidst increasingly dynamic social environments (Green et al., 2019, 100). Folklore tends to use symbolism and archetype to convey universal human experiences in a powerful and frequently culturally and psychologically universal manner. Archetypes, Jung’s term, refer to universal patterns of human psyche that crop up in myth, legend, and narrative across the board. Pakistani animal folk tales’ animal characters like sparrows, dogs, and crows possess a force of symbolic purpose and represent key human qualities like strength, wit, fidelity, and guile (Kline, 2017, 190). Through such archetypes, audiences, including youngsters, can respond to a tough emotional and ethical lesson while reflecting broader cultural imperatives that shape personal growth and create identity (Naqvi et al., 2025, 120).

Furthermore, Dundes (1984) sees folklore as a major cultural device through which community groups develop and express their collective identity (150). The narrative traditions that carry shared values, norms, and symbolic meanings are essentially folklore and these, in turn, help in defining social boundaries and group belonging. This view is very much in line with the current research, where Pakistani folk tales use mothers and animals as embodiments of cultural and moral identities. Additionally, Gatling (2016) shows how post-Soviet Tajikistan uses folklore to reinterpret historical stories in order to preserve cultural continuity and mediate changing group identities. Likewise, this research reveals that Pakistani fairy tales view maternal characters as adaptable cultural icons whereby regional moral and philosophical values are discussed (50).

Archetypal analysis, particularly the representation of animals’ significance, has become more prevalent in folklore studies (Byghan, 2020, 74). The concept of the collective unconscious, as proposed by Jung, provides a framework for comprehending how universal animal motifs influence both global and local psychological patterns. These themes encompass varying animal characters that

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symbolize human values, anxieties, and dreams (Brown et al., 2013, 678). Additionally, some animals such as scorned snakes, crow seed redheads in North America represent exotic game ideas. In folklore, it is believed by scholars that animal forms serve multiple purposes: they represent human characteristics, provide a secure symbolic boundary for studying conflict, and disseminate cultural principles throughout history (Magliocco, 2018a, 45).

Methodology

Carl Jung's theory of the collective unconscious, which was introduced in 1916, is an appropriate method to analyze the distinctive nature of animal characters of Pakistani folktales. According to Jung, "there existed a collective memory and experience beneath individual consciousness that differed across cultures and was reflected in myths, dreams, and tales" (Jung, 1959, 22). These archetypes transcend geography and time and are symbolic blueprints that guide human behavior. Examples are universal themes such as the Hero, Trickster, Shadow, or Mother. In folklore, these archetypal beings are extremely symbolic, and their identification with native culture is deeply psychological. The terms archetypes are not symbolic per se, but are instead different modes of human experience.

In Jungian analytical psychology, "Symbols are a bridge between conscious and unconscious content by expressing increased self-knowledge" (Jung, 1959, 55). Folklore's animal-origin symbols sometimes stand for bequest or aggression; it is these qualities that have to be found and included for healthy psychological growth to occur. Far from being side-trips, the animal figures are actually psychological clues revealing an ongoing struggle between intuition and logic, shadow and ego, chaos and order. Folklore's effectiveness as a symbolic framework for resolving shared human experience, including conflict, development, and transformation, is explained by this archetypal process.

Pakistani mythology's animal characters act as the classic ones speaking to the subconscious. These narratives are symbolic means of communication and negotiation for typical difficulties, as well as instruments of cultural psychology understanding (Afridi, 2025, 2567). They continue to be important as carriers of cultural continuity and psychological stability even if they are old. Several recent studies have found concrete support for Jung's claims about archetypal symbolism's universality. Nakawake and Sato (2019, 1) show steady patterns of symbols in cross-cultural evaluation of folk-zoological mythology. They have discovered in their study that classic symbols are signs of sophisticated kinds of human thinking rather than random inventions. They also show how universal themes are expressed in local examples when the emblems are infused with their cultural environment (Vaughn Becker & Neuberg, 2019, 65). Through an organized Jungian archetypal analysis of animal characters in folk stories, this research offers a forward-looking view of the understanding of Pakistani folklore. By doing this, it not only meets a key need of the scholarly community but also creates the conditions for folklore to be included into modern-day academic, teaching, and psychological areas.

The study gathers data through a methodical collection and analysis of Pakistani folktales with animal characters from various authenticated sources. Books, sources that include collections of Pakistani folklore, scholarly compilations and cultural repositories are the main sources of primary data. The compilation procedure centres on items substantiated by cultural experts and folklore practitioners to uphold cultural

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authenticity and correctness. Scholarly interpretations, cultural analysis, and comparative studies are all part of secondary sources that provide contextual insight into the chosen narratives. By analyzing documents and systematically reading folkloric texts, the primary means of gathering data is to identify archetypal patterns and symbolic meanings. The process involves analyzing documents for general comprehension, thorough analysis to identify archetypes, and comparing them across multiple accounts. All three are separate processes. Each folktale story is chosen by its readers through multiple readings to identify different layers of meaning and ensure a complete comprehension of the symbolic content. Analytical analysis preserves detailed documentation of developments and emerging patterns in terms of interpretation and pattern formation.

Folkloristan, a digital repository that collects, preserves and disperses South Asian folklore, particularly Pakistani oral traditions, is an essential methodological element of this investigation. An invaluable collection of animal tales, including *Podna and Podni*, *The Two Sparrows*, *The Cat and the Spurgeon*, *the Fox and his Crow*, and *The Dog's Grave* (1915) were obtained for this study by Folkloristan. The picked folktales span a wide spectrum of animal archetypes and psychological topics. Stories including crow characters, including *A Crow Humbles King Ra Trakhan*, *The Fox and the Crow*, and *The Sparrow and the Crow* offer chances to investigate trickster and wisdom archetypes in Pakistani society. Stories about sparrows like *The Cat and the Sparrow*, *The Clever Little Sparrow*, *The Two Sparrows*, and other sparrow-related stories help us understand things like how to be resourceful, how weak we can be, and how to stay alive. The addition of a variety of animal characters, including cats, foxes, goats, and dogs, guarantees thorough coverage of several archetypal patterns and psychological functions

Analysis

Observing Pakistani animal folktales offers a singular perspective on how morality, psychology, and culture interact. Folktales are bearers of cultural knowledge and symbolic models by which people live; they are not merely entertainment for children but carriers of cultural knowledge, experience fear, establish values, and create opportunities. The animal protagonists of the stories—sparrows, crows, foxes, goats, dogs, and horses—are not fictional decisions from a book. These characters are chosen with great consideration to portray human virtues and vices that result in becoming what Carl Jung called archetypes.

Archetypes and Children's Psychological and Moral Development

Jung (1959, 55) argued that folktales serve as symbolic bridges between the unconscious and consciousness, allowing children to project fears, desires, and conflicts onto non-human figures while safely engaging with them. By offering characters that embody loyalty, betrayal, resilience, and trickery, Pakistani folktales give children symbolic tools for psychological growth and moral instruction. In this sense, animals act as mediators of meaning, providing the safe distance necessary for young audiences to process complex emotions and ethical dilemmas.

Projection, Instruction, and Resilience in Archetypal Narratives

The sparrow, as one of the most prominent figures in these folktales, provides repeated opportunities for projection and identification. In *The Cat and the Sparrow*,

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the she-sparrow resists both the betrayal of her husband and the demands of a predatory cat. The cat insists on being rewarded with food, but instead she is tricked into sitting on a burning plate:

“As soon as the cat sat on the hot iron plate, she got burned. She leapt up in pain and yowled, ‘I got no pudding, and my backside has been burned! I bow down to luck; my lesson has been learned’” (*The Cat and the Sparrow*, para. 17).

For a child listener, the moral message is immediate: greed and exploitation are punished, while cleverness provides defense against stronger forces. Psychologically, the story enables projection of anxieties about betrayal and predation onto the cat, providing safe symbolic distance. The sparrow becomes an identification figure, modeling resilience and quick thinking. Jung observed that children learn unconsciously through such symbolic figures, integrating lessons of vigilance and justice without overt didacticism (Jung, 1969, 176).

A similar dynamic occurs in *The Clever Little Sparrow*, where the bird cleverly manipulates a lion into delaying its plan to eat her. Stuck in cow dung, she pleads: “Stop, stop, if you’re going to eat me, why do you want to eat me like this, why don’t you wash me first?” (*The Clever Little Sparrow*, para. 11). For children, the lion is a projection of raw power and danger, the archetypal predator. Yet the sparrow’s wit demonstrates that intelligence can overcome physical helplessness. Jung (1959, 45) emphasized that archetypes teach through contrast: here, the shadow of domination is transformed by the sparrow’s cleverness into a lesson of resilience. For children, the psychological gain is twofold: fear is externalized into the lion, and self-efficacy is reinforced through the sparrow’s escape.

The tale of *Podna and Podni* elevates the sparrow into a heroic symbol of loyalty and love, modeling moral values that are crucial for children’s development. When Podni is captured, Podna vows: “With a cart of sticks and frogs to pull, the king captured my Podni; now I’m ready to fight and die!” (*Podna and Podni*, para. 9). The narrative demonstrates how loyalty motivates courage, even when the odds are overwhelming. For children, the story teaches devotion and persistence, but it also dramatizes the value of collective strength. Podna does not succeed alone; he is aided by ants, frogs, and water, each playing a role in defeating the king’s forces. In Jungian terms, the helpers represent unconscious resources, the “small but potent forces” that individuals can mobilize in moments of crisis (Jung, 1969, 121). For young listeners, this becomes a metaphor for resilience: one does not face hardship alone, but with support from community and unseen strengths.

Not all sparrow tales emphasize triumph; some emphasize nurture. In *The Two Sparrows*, Chirra’s repetitive task of carrying grains of rice until the child listener falls asleep dramatizes the parental archetype:

“He flies back and forth again, and again, and again... until the child you are telling the story to falls asleep” (*The Two Sparrows*, para. 12).

The story functions almost as a lullaby, soothing the child into sleep while reinforcing the security of parental care. Jung (1959, 72) suggested that parental archetypes provide psychic anchoring for children, embodying reliability and comfort. Here, the sparrows’ endless effort conveys the archetypal message that children are cared for continuously, even when they are unaware of it. The tale’s open-ended structure mirrors the rhythm of caregiving itself, reinforcing emotional security in young listeners.

While sparrows highlight resilience and nurture, the crow provides moral lessons in

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discernment and humility. In *The Fox and the Crow*, the fox tries to deceive the crow with flattery:

“Oh, dear Mr. Crow... you are such a beautiful bird! I’m sure your voice must be as lovely as your appearance. Won’t you sing a song for me?” (*The Fox and the Crow*, para. 7).

The crow resists, declaring, “Flattery might work on some, but I’m too smart to fall for your tricks” (*The Fox and the Crow*, para. 15). For children, the lesson is straightforward: flattery can be a tool of manipulation, and discernment is necessary to protect oneself. Psychologically, the fox externalizes the unconscious fear of deception, while the crow embodies the ego’s capacity for judgment. The story thus functions as a rehearsal of critical thinking, giving children symbolic practice in recognizing deceit.

The crow’s role as moral guide is expanded in *A Crow Humbles King Ra Trakhan*. When the king boasts of his unmatched power, the crow reminds him of mortality:

“I was displeased by your boasting at a place I know to be the grave of a man far more powerful than you” (*A Crow Humbles King Ra Trakhan*, para. 22).

For young listeners, the lesson is not only about humility but also about the impermanence of power. Archetypally, the king represents the inflated ego, while the crow embodies the Wise Critic who punctures arrogance. Jung (1969) argued that wisdom archetypes often appear in paradoxical forms, including animals, to remind audiences of truths the conscious ego resists. For children, the psychological value lies in learning that pride has limits and that wisdom can emerge from unexpected places.

Other tales emphasize grief and the confrontation with loss. *The Goat with a Hole in Her Heart* narrates the story of a goat whose sorrow is made literal:

“A long time ago, this goat lost two of her kids. My mother used to say that when a mother loses her children, her heart breaks, and she becomes so sad that it can leave a hole in her heart” (*The Goat with a Hole in Her Heart*, p. 2).

When slaughtered, the goat is found to indeed have a hole in her heart. For children, the tale provides a symbolic encounter with grief, externalizing emotion which is overwhelming. Jung (1959, p. 133) described such images as projections, whereby unconscious pain becomes visible and manageable. By embodying grief in the goat, the tale enables children to witness sorrow without being consumed by it, fostering emotional resilience and empathy.

The dog in *The Legend of the Dog’s Grave* carries lessons of loyalty and sacrifice. When the dog helps recover the merchant’s stolen goods, he is released to return home: “Go,” he whispered, “return to your true master” (*The Legend of the Dog’s Grave*, para. 12). Yet his faithful return is met with rejection, leading to his tragic death: “The dog was so heartbroken, that it could walk no longer, and slipped off a hilltop, never to rise again” (*The Legend of the Dog’s Grave*, para. 18). For children, this story dramatizes both the pain of misunderstanding and the nobility of fidelity. Jung (1969, p. 235) observed that Companion archetypes embody the qualities of devotion and sacrifice, shaping moral imagination by showing that love can endure even in the face of betrayal. For young audiences, the tale reinforces the values of loyalty and the tragic costs of mistrust.

The horse in *Whatever Happens is for the Best* provides moral lessons about fate and acceptance. The farmer’s repeated response to the villagers,

“Not everything has to be good or bad fortune, some things are written. Don’t be in a

hurry to jump to conclusions. Whatever happens is for the best” (*Whatever Happens is for the Best*, para. 29).

This teaches children not to rush to judgment. Archetypally, the horse embodies endurance and paternal protection, but psychologically, it represents life’s unpredictability. For children, the story fosters tolerance for uncertainty and resilience in the face of disappointment. Jung (1968) emphasized that individuation requires the reconciliation of opposites. This tale provides precisely that: fortune and misfortune are shown to be part of a larger unity, encouraging children to develop patience and acceptance.

Finally, *Haari and Hass Pakhi* warns against greed through the image of the golden bird. When the farmer slaughters the bird in hopes of wealth, he finds “there were no golden eggs in its stomach—only regret” (*Haari and Hass Pakhi*, para. 11). The golden bird, as a maternal provider, is destroyed by human avarice. For children, the lesson is stark: greed destroys the very source of blessing. Archetypally, the story externalizes the Shadow, dramatising the danger of unchecked desire. Psychologically, it allows children to rehearse the consequences of greed symbolically, reinforcing the moral that patience and gratitude safeguard sustenance.

Taken together, these folktales frame children’s development through a range of archetypal experiences. They provide projection for fears of betrayal, loss, and power; they offer symbolic victories that model resilience, loyalty, and cleverness; and they embed moral lessons about humility, patience, and gratitude. Archetypal images are formative, shaping the unconscious foundations of personality (Jung, 1959, p. 136). In these stories, Pakistani children encounter archetypes not in abstract form but through sparrows, crows, foxes, goats, dogs, horses, and golden birds. Each animal becomes a symbolic teacher, shaping psychological growth and moral imagination through the safe and memorable medium of story.

Humility, Parental Care, Loyalty, and Acceptance of Fate

The cumulative effect of these archetypal tales is to create a symbolic environment where children can learn not only what is valued by their culture but also how to navigate the universal dilemmas of human life. Jung (1959, 99) described folklore and myth as “the collective dream of humanity” and in the context of Pakistani animal tales, this dream becomes a moral and psychological curriculum for the young. The characters’ triumphs and failures, their wisdom and follies, provide models of behaviour and warnings against destructive impulses.

One of the most powerful ways in which these folktales frame psychological development is through the process of projection. Children often experience fear, jealousy, anger, or grief in ways they cannot articulate. By watching such emotions embodied in animals, they can externalize and safely explore them. In *The Cat and the Sparrow*, for instance, the cat functions as an external projection of greed and exploitation, demanding food as a reward. The punishment that follows, burning on the hot plate, symbolizes the containment of destructive impulses: “She leapt up in pain and yowled, ‘I got no pudding, and my backside has been burned!’” (*The Cat and the Sparrow*, para. 17). For children, the externalization of greed onto the cat and its symbolic punishment provides a psychic rehearsal of justice, reinforcing the idea that harmful desires must be checked.

Similarly, in *The Goat with a Hole in Her Heart*, grief is externalized in the goat’s body. Abdul Ghaffar explains:

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“A long time ago, this goat lost two of her kids. My mother used to say that when a mother loses her children, her heart breaks, and she becomes so sad that it can leave a hole in her heart” (*The Goat with a Hole in Her Heart*, para 2).

When the villagers slaughter the goat, the truth is revealed: her heart indeed carries a literal hole. For children, this powerful symbol provides a way to see sorrow embodied outside themselves, making it approachable rather than overwhelming. Jung (1968) noted that projection allows unconscious emotions to be recognized and integrated indirectly. Through the goat’s heart, children learn that grief, while painful, is a part of life that can be acknowledged without fear.

Beyond projection, these tales also provide instruction. Jung (1959) wrote that archetypes serve not only to reflect psychic contents but also to “instruct the psyche in its own nature” (102). In Pakistani folktales, moral lessons are woven into the narrative fabric. In *The Fox and the Crow*, the fox’s deception through flattery warns children of the dangers of vanity: “Flattery might work on some, but I’m too smart to fall for your tricks” (*The Fox and the Crow*, para. 15). The lesson is not abstract; it is dramatized in the crow’s discernment and the fox’s humiliation. For children, the message is clear: self-respect and vigilance protect against manipulation. Similarly, in *Haari and Hass Pakhi*, the farmer’s greed destroys the source of his prosperity: “When he cut it open, he found nothing inside. There were no golden eggs in its stomach—only regret” (*Haari and Hass Pakhi*, para. 11). The golden bird’s death is a symbolic instruction in patience and gratitude. By embedding these lessons in dramatic imagery, the stories ensure they are memorable and emotionally resonant for children.

Equally important is the way these folktales cultivate resilience. In *The Clever Little Sparrow*, the bird’s repeated clever appeals to the lion delay her fate until she escapes: “Stop, stop, if you’re going to eat me, why do you want to eat me like this, why don’t you wash me first?” (*The Clever Little Sparrow*, para. 11).

For children, the story demonstrates that even in moments of helplessness, creativity and intelligence can open a way out. This is not simply a moral lesson; it is a psychological one. Jung (1969) argued that archetypal figures often carry compensatory functions, balancing the psyche’s fear of helplessness with images of resourceful survival. The sparrow models the archetypal truth that weakness can be transformed into strength.

Podna and Podni similarly cultivates resilience by showing how small and humble allies can defeat overwhelming forces. When Podna summons ants to attack the elephants, the story conveys that size and strength are not ultimate measures of power: “The ants swarmed out of his ears and crawled into the trunks of the elephants. They bit the elephants so much that the massive beasts fell unconscious” (*Podna and Podni*, para. 17).

For children, this moment dramatizes resilience through cooperation, showing that collective effort and faith can overcome tyranny. Jung (1968) described individuation as the integration of opposites, and in this tale, the tiny ants triumphing over elephants symbolize the integration of weakness and strength into a balanced whole (254).

The role of humility also figures prominently in shaping children’s moral development. In *A Crow Humbles King Ra Trakhan*, the crow’s challenge to the king’s arrogance provides a memorable archetypal lesson:

“I was displeased by your boasting at a place I know to be the grave of a man far more powerful than you” (*A Crow Humbles King Ra Trakhan*, para. 22).

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The king represents the ego inflated by pride, while the crow embodies the Wise Figure who exposes vulnerability. For children, the lesson is psychological as much as moral: strength is temporary, and pride invites downfall. By witnessing the king's humiliation, children internalize humility as an essential value.

Parental archetypes also shape moral development through modeling. In *The Two Sparrows*, the parental labor of Chirra carrying rice grains again and again until the child listener drifts into sleep is itself a performance of care: "He flies back and forth again, and again, and again... until the child you are telling the story to falls asleep" (*The Two Sparrows*, para. 12). The narrative rhythm mirrors the repetitive acts of caregiving in daily life. For children, the story instills not only comfort but also the moral expectation of reciprocal care, parents provide, and in turn, children learn to value nurture and perseverance. Jung (1959) argued that parental archetypes stabilize the psyche by embodying continuity (78). Here, the sparrows anchor children in the archetypal assurance of care, reinforcing both psychological security and moral responsibility.

Loyalty and fidelity, likewise, are central to children's moral development in these tales. The dog in *The Legend of the Dog's Grave* demonstrates absolute devotion, even in the face of misunderstanding. His sacrifice is immortalized in landscape: "That mountain is known today as 'Jabal Kuttey ji Kabar'—the Mountain of the Dog's Grave" (*The Legend of the Dog's Grave*, para. 21). For children, the story conveys that loyalty is a virtue remembered beyond death. Archetypally, the dog embodies the Companion, but psychologically, he functions as a model of fidelity. By seeing his loyalty immortalized, children learn that devotion and faith are values that transcend immediate outcomes.

Finally, the horse in *Whatever Happens is for the Best* teaches acceptance of fate, an essential element of psychological maturity.

"Not everything has to be good or bad fortune, some things are written. Don't be in a hurry to jump to conclusions. Whatever happens is for the best" (*Whatever Happens is for the Best*, para. 29).

The farmer's refrain becomes a moral and psychological anchor. For children, the horse embodies the unpredictable nature of life, and the farmer's wisdom models patience. Jung (1968) emphasized that individuation requires reconciliation with destiny, the acceptance that life cannot always be controlled. In this tale, children learn to trust the larger order, preparing them for the inevitable uncertainties of life.

In sum, Pakistani animal folktales frame children's psychological and moral development by externalizing unconscious fears, instructing through symbolic punishment and reward, modeling resilience and humility, reinforcing parental devotion, and teaching loyalty and acceptance of fate. Archetypes serve as symbolic teachers, guiding the child from helplessness toward resilience, from pride toward humility, from greed toward gratitude, and from despair toward endurance. As Jung (1959) observed, "the archetypes are the psychic organs of the human species" (p. 104), shaping development through images that are both universal and locally embodied. In Pakistani folklore, these psychic organs take the form of sparrows, crows, foxes, goats, dogs, horses, and golden birds, each one carrying lessons that shape the psychological and moral growth of children within their communities.

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Discussion

The archetypes offer a secure symbolic space for children to project their unspoken fears, desires, and emotions, enabling them to explore intricate psychological topics without being caught off guard. In Jung's view, symbols are the means by which the unconscious mind speaks, and they can be incorporated into consciousness through stories (Jung, 1959, 342). Children can use folktales to navigate their emotions and understand their place in the world thanks to psychic templates found in this study. The fox and crow, representing the Trickster archetype, provide children with a psychological exercise in recognizing lies and manipulation. When the crow challenges the timid fox's advances, *The Fox and his Crow* offer a moral lesson in self-reflection and independence: "Flattery might work on some, but I'm too smart to fall for your tricks" (*The Fox and the Crow*, para. 15). The crow's discernment reflects the emerging ego in children, as they learn to distinguish between truth and deception. The story teaches that wisdom and critical thinking protect against manipulation, allowing children to develop their self-reliance. Jung described the Trickster as an archetype that disrupts but also educates, and in this case, the crow's wisdom empowers children to confront their own fears of manipulation.

The Hero archetype, as embodied by the sparrow in *Podna and Podni*, teaches children about loyalty, perseverance, and courage in the face of adversity. Podna's vow to rescue Podni demonstrates a sacrificial love that resonates deeply with children's sense of loyalty and devotion to others. "With a cart of sticks and frogs to pull, the king captured my Podni; now I'm ready to fight and die!" (*Podna and Podni*, para. 9). By witnessing Podna's loyalty and his ability to summon help, children learn that resilience and community support are essential for overcoming challenges. This heroic journey encourages children to see themselves as capable of overcoming obstacles, teaching them the value of teamwork and shared responsibility. Jung suggested that the Hero archetype is central to individuation, representing the ego's struggle to reconcile with the unconscious. (Jung, 1969, 354). In Podna's case, it is the integration of both the conscious desire for justice and the unconscious need for communal support.

The Mother and Father archetypes in these folktales provide moral and emotional frameworks for children. In *The Two Sparrows*, the sparrows' endless flight to provide rice for their family reflects parental devotion:

"He flies back and forth again, and again, and again... until the child you are telling the story to falls asleep" (*The Two Sparrows*, para. 12).

This repetitive caregiving illustrates the archetype of nurturing and unconditional care. Jung described the mother archetype as encompassing both nurturing and shadow, and in this tale, the sparrows embody the nourishing qualities of the mother (Jung, 1959, 442). For children, this repeated image of care fosters emotional security and teaches the value of selfless devotion. On the other hand, the father archetype is embodied in *Whatever Happens is for the Best* by the horse, which the farmer refers to as his "own son" (*Whatever Happens is for the Best*, para. 5). The horse symbolizes strength, endurance, and protection.

"Not everything has to be good or bad fortune, some things are written. Don't be in a hurry to jump to conclusions" (*Whatever Happens is for the Best*, para. 29).

Through the father's wisdom, the tale teaches patience and acceptance. The archetypal Father figure provides a moral anchor, encouraging children to understand that life is not just about immediate rewards but also about learning to trust in the larger order of

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things. Jung observed that the father archetype often represents wisdom and guidance (1959, 224). In this story, the horse as the father figure is integral to helping children develop a sense of destiny and acceptance of fate.

The degree to which Pakistani folktales' archetypes offer youngsters a symbolic structure for their emotional growth is one of the most fascinating results of this study, and moral growth. These narratives give children a mechanism to externalize psychological conflicts via animal characters, hence projecting repressed emotions. This supports Jung's claim that symbols provide "safe confrontation with unconscious material," therefore promoting development free from quick risk in a regulated, nonthreatening way of emotional overload (1959, 543). For instance, in *The Cat and the Sparrow*, the sparrow's use of the cat to defend her home is not only a clever act but a psychic shield against exploitation and treachery:

"As soon as the cat sat on the hot iron plate, she got burned. She leapt up in pain and yowled, 'I got no pudding, and my backside has been burned!' (*The Cat and the Sparrow*, para. 17).

For children, this symbolic act of turning the tables on the predatory cat offers an emotional release. The cat's greed symbolizes unconscious fears of exploitation, while the sparrow's resilience offers a path to self-efficacy. By identifying with the sparrow, children learn that when faced with betrayal or manipulation, they do not have to be passive victims (Amiot & Bastian, 2015, 32). They can take action, however small, to defend themselves, reinforcing the idea that agency and wisdom are within reach. Jung (1959) pointed out that folktales provide images of "the individuated self-emerging out of unconscious chaos" (1959, 234). In this tale, the unconscious threat posed by the cat (the Shadow) is transformed by the sparrow's wit into a victorious assertion of personal power.

This dynamic is similarly present in *The Clever Little Sparrow*, where the bird escapes a lion through dialogue: "Stop, stop, if you're going to eat me, why do you want to eat me like this, why don't you wash me first?" (*The Clever Little Sparrow*, para. 11). Here, the sparrow uses verbal cunning to overcome brute strength, teaching children that intelligence and adaptability are forms of psychological resilience. By encountering these archetypal figures, children are encouraged to identify and process their own fears, be it of physical danger, manipulation, or loss, while learning how to navigate those fears with wit, patience, and cleverness.

Similarly, in *Podna and Podni*, Podna's loyalty to his partner embodies the Hero archetype. When Podni is captured, Podna vows, "With a cart of sticks and frogs to pull, the king captured my Podni; now I'm ready to fight and die!" (*Podna and Podni*, para. 9). Here, the archetype of the Hero is active and communal. It is not the lone journey of a solitary figure, but rather the integration of community strength, represented by the ants and frogs, that leads to victory. This communal aspect highlights the importance of interdependence and shared responsibility in overcoming personal or societal challenges. Jung described the Hero as engaging the unconscious in the battle for the ego's survival (Jung, 1969, 345). In this case, the sparrow's heroic journey is bolstered by small and humble forces. For children, this teaches the value of cooperation and the understanding that help is often found in unexpected places. It is a psychological reminder that unity and community are necessary for growth and success.

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Story Title	Animal Archetypes	Jungian Archetype	Ethical/Moral Teaching	Psychological Impact on Children
Podna and Podni	Sparrow (male & female)	Caregiver, Innocent	Love, loyalty, and sacrifice	Encourages empathy and family bonding
The Two Sparrows	Sparrows	Hero, Martyr	Selflessness and resilience	Builds moral courage and altruism
The Cat and the Sparrow	Cat, Sparrow	Shadow vs. Innocent	Deception vs. innocence	Teaches caution and discernment
The Fox and the Crow	Fox, Crow	Trickster, Fool	Flattery and vanity lead to downfall	Promotes critical thinking
The Clever Fox	Fox	Trickster	Cleverness can be both useful and destructive	Encourages analytical reasoning
The Cow and the Lion	Cow, Lion	Caregiver vs. Shadow	Cooperation and betrayal in survival	Instills trust and social awareness
The Monkey's Justice	Monkey	Judge/Trickster	Justice can be biased or unfair	Builds awareness of fairness issues
The Loyal Dog	Dog	Caregiver, Hero	Loyalty and protection	Reinforces security and trust
The Legend of the Dog's Grave	Dog	Martyr, Hero	Gratitude towards loyalty and sacrifice	Inspires respect for devotion

Table 1: Comparative Analysis of Eleven Pakistani Animal Folktales

Conclusion

This study has uncovered that Jungian archetypes are not just theoretical abstractions, but also tangible depictions of individuals in Pakistani folklore. Additionally, Sparrows, crows and goats as well as other dogs and horses are examples of the animal protagonist's wide range of archetypal expressions that plays a crucial role in both the development of the mind and the moral education of young ones. These stories teach young children to articulate their fears, face their desires, and embrace the principles of resilience, humility, or balance. Another finding in this study is that archetype's function helps both children and adults navigate the richness and complexity of human experience. The psychological and cultural significance of these folk stories can be explored through this window, which highlights how timelessness has influenced human identification patterns, moral values as well as individual development.

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