

WHY WE HAVE SPIT IN OUR INTESTINES: A STORY OF DEATH ASSISTING LIFE

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ABSTRACT

The motif of the devil or death lord destroying the creation is present in many nations across the globe. The present study takes into account the version in Siberia. The high god Ulugan creates man in his own image and leaves him in the protection of his dog, the death lord Erlik comes and bribes the dog with a golden coat to take a look at the creation by Ulugan. Since the dog was on guard he marked the creation with his spittle. When Ulugan came and saw what had happened he was not left with many options so he turned man inside out. Since then, man carries the death substance inside him. The story has been analyzed using the tool of archetypal amplification given by Carl Jung. Carl Jung was a Swiss psychiatrist who gave the school of Analytical psychology. It focuses on the study of archetypes in understanding the deeper layers of the psyche. The mythic datum is of significance in studying the archetypal patterns of behavior and the psychic functioning of people who live by them. The symbolic meaning of the story comes to light on analysis. The story sheds light on how man is an amalgamation of both life and death forces and was completed by the contribution of both.

Keywords: *Death, Siberia, Ulugan, Erlik, Spit, Instinct*

Introduction:

The motif of devil or death lord destroying the creation is present in many nations across the globe. The present study takes into account the version in Siberia. The high god Ulugan creates man in his own image and leaves him in the protection of his dog, the death lord Erlik comes and bribes the dog with a golden coat to take a look at the creation by Ulugan. Since dog was on guard he marked the creation with his spittle. When Ulugan came and saw what had happened he was not left with many options so he turned man inside out. Since then, man carries the death substance inside him. Erlik was created by Ulugan himself and later on punished to be the Lord of the dead or the ones who do not have souls. The story is analyzed using the tool of archetypal amplification. Amplification of the symbols helps in understanding the historical and cultural variants of the symbol and its significance in context. The mythopoeic imagination visible in the story talks in metaphors and constellates the psychic experiences of man. Amplification allows to circumscribe and allows to shine the light on the symbol.

Dataum:

“Why we have spit our intestines- Siberia

The creator lord called Ulgan had Erlik, the water being, bring him mud from the bottom of the ocean. However, Erlik kept a piece hidden in his mouth when Ulgan began expanding the mud, the piece inside Erlik's mouth also began to expand and he started to choke. Finally he had to spit out that piece of mud. Ulgan was very angry by this treachery and cursed Erlik to be the king of soulless ones.

When the piece of earth had expanded enough, Ulgan waved his arm and the earth took the shape it is today. Now Ulgan decided it was time he created beings who would live on this newly formed earth. So he set about fashioning men and women, birds and beasts....

First Ulgan experimented with beasts. He made a dog with a smooth skin and gigantic jaws and breathed life into it. The dog shook itself and growled ferociously and this made Ulgan happy.

He then decided to create mankind. But he discovered that while he could fashion faces and limbs, teeth and eyes ... get them to breathe and move, see and hear, they were no different from the dog. They needed souls. And he couldn't give them souls as that was beyond his powers. The awful thought also occurred to him that he had once told Erlik that all soulless creatures would belong to Erlik. What shall I do, he asked himself again and again. Is this what I went to all this trouble for? Then Ulgan knew. He would ascend to the world above the skies, to heaven where the most supreme of all gods lived and he would ask him for help. Having made up his mind, just as he was about to set off, he realized that if he left mankind unprotected, Erlik might take them away. So he put the dog on guard and said to it, 'When I return, I shall reward you. But you must take good care and not move from here or let anyone take the humans away.'

Ulgan then left and as he had expected, Erlik arrived. When he tried to go near the incomplete mankind, the dog growled. 'Beware, I am on guard,' the growl said.

Erlik thought for a moment. Then he said, 'You are a very handsome animal. But when winter sets in, you are going to be very cold. Have you thought about that?' Just then icy wind blew and the dog shivered. Erlik sat down next to the dog and said 'I could give you a beautiful golden coat but I need something in return.'

'What do you need?' the dog asked

'Nothing much. Would you let me go there and take a close look at what Ulgan has been creating?' Erlik said with an innocent face.

The dog thought awhile. 'I can't do that. I would be failing my duty.'

Erlik then said, 'I'll tell you what. You let me take one quick look and you can have your coat—a beautiful golden coat that'll keep you warm during cold days.'

The dog couldn't make up his mind. 'See here. You are not to cross this line. If that's fine, you can take a quick look. But first my coat, if you don't mind.'

So Erlik gave him a fine coat of fur and then waited while the dog drew a line. Erlik knew he couldn't take the people but he had another idea. He would taint and ruin them so that Ulgan would be forced to abandon them. So while the dog sat and admired his coat, wasn't looking at him and then gathering all his strength, he spat on the people and sped away.

When Ulgan returned, he saw his beautiful creation was quite spoiled with all the spittle that ran over them. He knew that Erlik had caused this. 'I am not going to give this up,' he thought, and he turned the bodies inside out. Then he blew into their mouths and whispered in their ears; he ran his hands over their skins and caused light to enter their eyes. Thus he infused souls into the creatures. When he was done, he commanded them to awake and rise and they became beings who used their senses to distinguish between right and wrong. But there was something that Ulgan could not change. Since he turned his creations inside out to Erlik's spit, mankind has always had spittle in his intestines" (Nair, 2017).

Hypothetical Interpretation:

Ulgan is able to create mankind out of clay like a potter but he cannot give mankind a soul. He is able to give dog life but he could not provide the fur or the skin. Ulgan, the creator lord creates outside of himself, taking the clay as matter from which to create man. It is the earth or the basal matter which is being used to create mankind. The creator himself stands outside of his creation. The dog is deployed to look after mankind. The dog stands at the boundary. Dogs have been performing the function to watch and guard boundaries in the mythopoeic imagination as well as in real lives of men. The dog has been associated with dead and the underworld. It not only protects the living but shows the way to the dead. The dog is an animal which is relied upon and trusted for its sole powers of discretion. "The hell-hound is the moment of death, the great crossing over, the ultimate turning point. Animal knowledge is a true mystery; it reaches further than human consciousness. To every god belongs an animal, that is, an instinctual knowledge far exceeding human those aspects of the god that are accessible to human consciousness. In Egypt the animals themselves are the gods—that is, the *knowledge* of the animals is the *numinosum*" (Schweizer-Vuellers, 2008). The three headed dog, Cerebrus guards the entrance of Hades. "...the three heads of cerebrus are

respectively, infancy, youth and old age, through which death has entered the circle of the earth” (Bloomfield, 1904).

The dog helps to guard the creation. “...the instinct was bound to betray us or there would have been nowhere for consciousness to develop” (Hannah, 2006). The god relied on an animal to guard or draw line between the world of living and the world of the dead. The instincts were given a prerogative to decide what’s right and what’s wrong. Not allowing the devil to pass. The instinct however tamed it is will always look for its own fulfillment and work towards what’s good for itself. The dog behavior is governed by instincts or self- preservation above all else. It displays similar logic. The dog receives the gift of fur from the devil. He is able to protect himself from cold using the fur. The creator however much he creates, when treating the universe as dead matter outside of himself lacks the warmth that protects. The fur of the animal is not just skin but it is also a sense organ via which an animal understands his environment better. It is also a means of communication via which the dog learns about his surroundings and act accordingly. To get under somebody’s skin is to know someone or to touch a nerve; the devil gives the golden colored fur to the dog. He is able to give a protective layer to the instinct, thus he is also able to govern or bind it. The fur completes the creation of the dog. ‘Only by being transformed could the dog survive. Only by attaining the *numinosity* to itself was the dog able to live on’ (Schweizer-Vuellers, 2008). It is exactly what it needed and that was given to him by the devil. The devil adds substance to the being created by god and is able to sense the incompleteness of his creation. He sees through the flaws of creation by the god.

“...the dog allowed man to fall into the hands of the devil. The dog was responsible for this fall, just like the snake in the Bible. The dog had extricated man from his union with God (paradise) and forced him into the awareness of his own imperfection. ...the dog, even in his dark aspect, serves the development of consciousness” (Abt, 2006). The dog even though failing is at the higher service of man. He is part of the unconscious. He makes a bargain with the devil before he lets him see through. The ego cannot rely too much on the ability of instincts to differentiate between the right and wrong. “The dog is the image of the *anima animalis* in humans, the animal soul, or an aspect of it that opens and protects the way as well as accompanies men and women through that which we call psychic transformation” (Schweizer-Vuellers, 2008). He did not fail because he did not allow anyone to be taken away but he failed because the instinct is not able to see through the intellect of the devil.

The dog draws the boundary between death and life; he does not allow death to take anyone with him even though he lets him have a sneak peek. “In some places the dog has a function comparable to that of St. Peter, who...decides who may go to heaven and who may not. Anubis also takes part in the divine judgment. In India the god Yama, in the form of a dog, is the guardian of the way to heaven” (Abt, 2006). The evil lurches around the corner but the faithful instincts do not let him in completely. He is able to look and he decides to spit on the creation. The spittle is also soul substance. So he shares the vital substance of himself with the mankind. With his essence the perfect creation stands defiled. The spittle is liquid in essence. It is the part of waters inside of man. It is what gives life and keeps everything working. The devil himself was given name and form by the creator lord first. Thus he himself carries something divine in essence. “Corresponding tales are met with among the Volga Finns, the Cheremiss, Votiaks and Mordvins. The purport of these tales also is to explain why the interior of God-created man is unclean. The Mordvin tale tells in addition that internal diseases are caused by the spittle of the devil. Certain diseases, a cough in particular, are given a similar origin in Russian tales. In the Samoyed tale...serious eruptions, pox, and gatherings are the results of the devil’s saliva” (Holmberg, 1927).

The creator turns the creation inside out and then breaths soul into the creation and they are able to distinguish between good and bad. The spittle of the devil forced the god to change the outlook he had towards his creation, it brought a shift in his design. The soul of man comes from the heavens in the form of breath and is given to man by Ulgan. It carries the essence of creator in it. “...The conception of the soul as breath may be followed up through Semitic and Aryan etymology, and thus into the main streams of the philosophy of the world. Hebrew shows *nephesh*, ‘breath’, passing into all the meanings of ‘life, soul, mind, animal,’ while *rauch* and *neshbamah* make the life transition from ‘breath’ to ‘spirit’; and to these the Arabic *nefs* and *ruh* correspond. The same is the history of Sanskrit *atman* and *prana*, of Greek *psyche* and *pneuma*, of Latin *anima*, *animus*, *spiritus*. So Salvonic *duch* has developed the meaning of ‘breath’ into that of soul or spirit...”(Eliade, 1967).

The breath from the higher god and the spittle from the devil combine to make it a living being. Whenever something is amiss we are able to feel it in our guts or our guts recoil themselves at the sight of evil is because of the essence of evil that plays an equal part in keeping one alive. The devil’s essence helps to digest or to take in life as it comes. It provides the source of vitality in life. It also becomes the substance which causes the decay and disease.

The spittle is what helps to churn but it is also a spot of vulnerability. Vulnerability means capable of or susceptible to being wounded or hurt. The man continues to carry the essence of the vital substance of both death and life inside of him. The life of man contains the essence of death in itself and lives through it. The creation of dog takes place before the creation of man. The instinctual psyche takes precedence over the rational consciousness or the ability to distinguish between right and wrong. “This authority looks at us from within and also from below. It knows what is right in us and what is wrong. And it knows the way. The inner dog symbolizes not only faithfulness to a relationship, but also faithfulness to one’s own true nature and to one’s own soul” (Schweizer-Vuellers, 2008).

Conclusion: God created man in his image and the image of god is also incomplete without the essence of the devil in it. Death completes god’s creation. If God provides the spirit then death provides the soul substance they complement each other and carry the essence of each other in them. Like Erlik was hidden from the view of the world and banished to the underground similarly his substance was driven inside of man closing working inside him and moving him. Erlik himself was found in water and dwells in it similarly his substance for mankind is the vital psychic fluid that runs inside the human beings. It provides what lacks. Life substance and death substance work in tandem with each other at every moment. The instinct in man is able to apprehend the devil and make its bargain with itself but the consciousness is unable to face it. Death flows in the veins of the body where the spirit of life dwells. The human being receives substances from both the high god and the lord of death, simultaneously gets molded in shape by Ulgan from the substance of the earth. The human life is an amalgamation of the four sources which come together to create the being. Anything material being created in itself is a concretization of matter and is bound to outgrow its form sooner or later and to continue the flow of life afterwards the spittle of death will help him consume life substances till he is alive and will lead the way to his consumption in the next phase.

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