

CHAPTER - V

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Ted Hughes and Manohar Shetty belong to two different religious and cultural backgrounds, however, their animal poems have always attracted the scholars and critics in the country as the poems rightly explore various shades of human nature and thereby one perceives totally new realization of life. The different phases of human life and struggle of an individual is no doubt the major concern of these poets, but their intention is to unfold the deeper meaning of the life through the images of animals. In the present dissertation modest attempt is made to decipher the meaning of life conveyed by these poets through the world of animals.

The poems related to the world of animals are studied in Chapter II and III. The introductory chapter deals with life and works of these poets. The chapter number four provides comparative study of the animal world depicted in the poems under study. An attempt is made to arrive at certain findings in the fifth chapter.

Ted Hughes's reputation as a poet of international stature was secured in the late 1950s with the publication of his first poetry collection *The Hawk in the Rain*. To read Hughes's poetry is to enter a world dominated by nature, especially by animals. This holds true for nearly all of his books, from the *Hawk in the Rain* to *Moortown*. Apparently, Hughes's love of animals was one of the catalysts in his decision to become a poet. He began writing poems in adolescence, when it dawned upon him that his earlier passion for hunting animals in his native Yorkshire ended either in the possession of a

dead animal, or at best a trapped one. He wanted to capture not just live animals but the aliveness of animals in their natural state : their wildness, their quiddity, the fox-ness of the fox and the crow-ness of the crow.

Hughes's enterprise is to examine the isolated and shaky position of man in nature and man's chances of overcoming his alienation from the world around him. In pursuit of these interests Hughes focuses frequently upon animals. Through animal imagery, Hughes exalts the instinctive power of nature that he finds lacking in human society. He observes in modern man reluctance to acknowledge the deepest, instinctual sources of energy in his own being, an energy that is related to the elemental power circuit of universe and to which animals are closer than man. His poetry moved on to express a sense of sterility and nihilism in modern man's response to life, a response which he connects with the dominance of man's rational, objective intellect at the expense of the life of emotions and imagination.

Hughes's animal poems are among the best in his work and among the finest in the whole range of English poetry. The imagery in these poems has its own appeal. This imagery shows Hughes enormous powers of observation and an exceptional capacity to embody his observations in words. It is at once graphic and realistic and the language which Hughes has employed in describing the various animals shows a striking originality and felicity. The emphasis in this imagery is on the vitality or energy of the animals concerned and also on the violence, the fierceness and the cruelty of most of those animals. This animal imagery, has largely contributed

to Hughes's reputation as a poet specializing in the poetry of violence. At the same time, it has to be noted that, while the primary purpose of this animal imagery is to convey to us Hughes's visual impressions of the animals that he has actually observed, there is a symbolic purpose behind this imagery.

The symbolic significance imparts a certain depth and profundity to this imagery. Hughes does not write about animals as if he regarded them as mere animal. He finds them certain qualities which link them to human life. The symbolic animal imagery thus yields a significance which can enhance our understanding of ourselves. Hughes believed that the strength of animals lay in their instinct and precise function. The animals, according to him are much more adapted to their environment than human being. Thus in the poem *The Hawk in the Rain*, the bird sits effortlessly at a height, while the speaker in the poem is assailed by the ferocious wind which thumbs his eye, throws his breath and tackles his heart, while the rain hacks his head to the bone. Hughes puts a human being at a disadvantage by comparison with a bird. Besides, Hughes also believed that animals were not like man, undermined by a false morality by doubt. A hawk is a hawk, whereas it has ambitions to be God-like and is therefore permanently frustrated. A hawk is always in its own element even when it dies an elemental death. In the poem "The Jaguar" it is made clear to us that, while man may imprison an animal, he cannot imprison an animal energy and instinct, especially the energy and instinct of Jaguar. Even in a man made cage, a jaguar remains true to itself. Evidently Hughes believes that man human beings are more caged in their domestic and social environment than animals are in their cages. In the poem "Hawk Roosting" the poet

does not praise the hawk so much as he denigrates man by comparison. The hawk is here seen as vastly superior to man who is unable to accept Nature for what it is and instead tries to fame it by giving it philosophical names. The hawk does not have man's debilitating intellectuality or man's slavish obedience to rules.

He believes in purity of animals, which also functions as their strength and also as their superiority to man. Hughes's animal imagery is most used as a symbolic comparison to human beings and it puts forth how animals are in fact closer to the natural source of the universe. Portraying animals as ultimately strong creatures, Hughes draws the picture of man as limited and distant from natural instincts.

Comparing Hughes's animal imagery to D.H. Lawrence's animal imagery, it would be possible to say that Hughes was deeply inspired by D.H. Lawrence and that both their animal imageries are based on the same theme of man's ignorance and animal's wisdom. Especially in one of D.H. Lawrence's most famous poem *The Snake*, the poet adopts a similar attitude to Hughes's *Roughly speaking* in the poem *The Snake*, the poet comes across a snake and harms him and later feels regret for having done this. He puts the blame on his education for being a human being and describes the snake as a King at the very end of the poem. Here, the theme of animal's superiority to human being is once more seen similar to Hughes poetry. The similarity of the theme of animal poems links these two poets together. One other similarity that these two poets use is pathetic fallacy which is the treatment of inanimate objects or animals as if they had human feelings, thought or sensations. Both of the poets use

their empathical power to reveal the feelings of their animals through this technique. However, there are also some differences which can be mentioned about these two poets. While Hughes draws the picture of his animals in a spiritual and a supernatural manner. D.H. Lawrence's animals appear in a more natural form. One other difference can be regarded as the destructive and aggressive appearance of Hughes animals, while D.H. Lawrence chooses to use a mild and soft appearance for his animals.

The Goa based poet - Manohar Shetty influenced by Ted Hughes has explored human nature and the struggle in the life through different animals. Manohar Shetty's three verse collections and are studied here in critical perspective. Shetty considers animal images as fitting to bear upon the ills because he perceives man still carrying animal instincts. After immense scientific and technological progress, man has not achieved a state of perfection. He is still ruled by atavistic urges.

Shetty's animal poems are his private projections on domestic creatures. Still they have a greater significance when one discern the issues behind them. The major concerns that they deal with are struggle for existence, loss of innocence as man grows, disharmony and inner ugliness. The uncertainties of growing up, of emerging from the sheltered world of school and college into the harsh reality of the real world of jobs, career, earning a living for himself. These are ills of modern competitive world. Shetty considers the animal images as filling to bear upon these ills because he perceives man still carrying animal instincts. After immense scientific and technological progress, man has not achieved a state of perfection. He is still ruled

by atavistic urges. Environment is changed but man remained animal. It does not mean that his animal poems are negative photographs of human world. His poems show his belief, in man's attitude to proceed despite innumerable impediments, the necessity of which arises from struggle for survival. In a nutshell, the key-note of his animal poetry is positive.

The study of these poems reveals that the ultimate concern of Shetty is man and the universe around him. It is not that Shetty is the first to write animal poetry or to use animal imagery in order to comment on the human condition. Unlike Ted Hughes's direct connection with the primitive and violent world, Shetty is very sharp and reflective. His animal poems serve as a meditative parallel between the world of men and that of animal.

The recurring motif in Shetty's output are animal's. These acquire human appearance in his poems. They symbolize human suffering and joy. However, the keynote in Shetty's poems is positive and assuring. Experience helps people learn and gives them an opportunity to see life with greater profundity and scope. His poems assure us of the process of humanization of the animals. The activities of animals and people are part and parcel of the great movement of nature. His verse reflects concern for the preservation of nature, but also a confidence in its ability to heal itself and recover from damage inflicted by man.

The study of animal poems of Ted Hughes and Manohar Shetty will open new horizon to perceive human life in the present century. Thus the present dissertation could be treated as modest

comparative study on the poems of Ted Hughes and Manohar Shetty for the kind of appeal all the animal poems hold on various aspects of humanity and dilemma pertaining to the postmodernist condition of living.