

BOOK REVIEWS

A JUNGIAN INTERPRETATION OF THE PHENOMENON OF HEAVY METAL

Ana Stefanova. *Khevi Met"l Kulturata: Izsledvane po analitichnopsikhologicheska antropologiia*. Ruse: GAIANA book&art studio, 2017. 360 pp. In Bulgarian.

The book titled *Khevi Met"l Kulturata: Izsledvane po analitichnopsikhologicheska antropologiia* (Heavy Metal Culture: A Research into Analytical Psychology and Anthropology) is another Bulgarian step in the field of Jungian studies and cultural anthropology. Here the Jungian theory and some of its key psychological terms (archetypes, individuation, collective unconscious, introversion, projection, Shadow, etc.) meet the reality of a phenomenon very challenging for impartial analysis – Heavy Metal culture. In this sense the research intervenes in the world of Heavy Metal with a psychological and anthropological approach and directs the reader to think about Heavy Metal as a social phenomenon with a specific and universal structure and dynamics, which have their own rules.



I would start with the words of Ana Stefanova, written at the end of the book, which reveal her committed and deep interest in the phenomenon, as well as the meaningfulness of the deep analytical psychological approach, through which the phenomenon is read and interpreted: “Metal seems to be loud, but in fact it is too quiet, introverted, and tolerant to be noticed easily as an important factor in the social and cultural evolution of the contemporary times” (p. 336).

Is this statement true? Is it a proper interpretation that the dark side of Metal is more connected to its introversion, introspection, and Romanticism than to harmful activities? Is it true that Metal is a very tolerant human-centred culture, that respects the personality? Is it really true that Metal has archetypal introverted nature and authenticity? Which are the main reasons for the arousal of interest towards Heavy Metal culture? Why does Metal have so intense impact? Why do the fans love this music? May Heavy Metal culture be considered as aggressive or dangerous for the society and individuals? Is it possible for Metal to be vivid, melancholic, and aggressive, to search for the borders of whatnot and at the same time to be contemplative?

Is it reasonable to state that Metal subculture emphasises the sacred reality, the symbolic perspective, and is not related with the material standard of life and prosperity? Is it convincing that Metal is not an ideology of evil and of doing harm, but a symbolic system of art creations, which are gates for experiences; that it is a worldview, but not a set of prescriptions and instigations? Is it true that Metal is exciting, but not happy? What is a Metal concert and how is it connected with some archaic and traditional rituals? What kind of similarities does Heavy Metal culture have with traditional culture and

in what way is Metal related to folklore, Romanticism, and classics? Answers of these and some other questions can be found, to a different extent, in the content of the book.

The research is innovative with respect to the chosen material: the author's attention focuses on challenging, controversial, popular, and exciting, yet poorly studied phenomenon in Bulgaria – the Heavy Metal culture. The book is an intriguing and worthy response to this challenge.

With its observations and psychological interpretations of the archetypal and cultural expressions of Heavy Metal, read as an “inner sacred territory, which is the source and purpose of the soul” (p. 273), the book provokes thoughts while it touches the reader's heart and helps to understand this subculture on a deep psychological level.

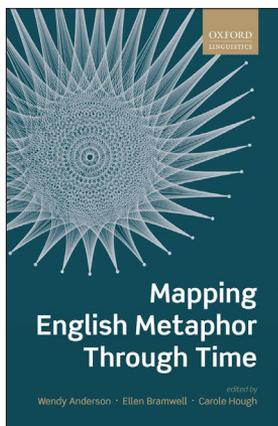
Last but not least, I would like to add that with this intriguing and exciting book full of ideas, observations, and details, with its well chosen original way of conceptualisation of the researched material, Ana Stefanova has proved herself once again as a leading and productive Bulgarian researcher and expert in the field of the Jungian (analytical) psychology and folklore studies.

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THE HISTORY OF METAPHORS?



Wendy Anderson & Ellen Bramwell & Carole Hough (eds.) *Mapping English Metaphor Through Time*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. 321 pp.

Why might metaphors be of interest to readers of this journal? Because “folk beliefs ... are often more influential than “real world” knowledge in determining the metaphors associated with particular animals and the ways in which these can be named” (Allen 2008: 145, cited here on p. 33). This observation holds true not just for folk beliefs about animals, but also for folk beliefs and concepts about plants, the weather, and the emotions, to name just three fields. The book under review derives from a project entitled ‘Mapping Metaphor’, which has now finished, but is survived by this book, and by an associated website, <http://mappingmetaphor.arts.gla.ac.uk/>,

containing “the single largest database of conceptual metaphors ever” (p. 6). This project in turn grew out of the *Historical Thesaurus of the Oxford English*

Dictionary (HTOED). Christian Kay, one of the editors of that thesaurus remarks in the book under review that, in assembling the *HTOED*, the editors aimed to produce “a folk taxonomy”, generated from “the intelligent average individual’s view of the world, based on pre-scientific general concepts made available by language” (p. 67). This is remarkably similar to the descriptions the people behind the Polish ethnolinguistic dictionary gave to their own work: Jerzy Bartminski also speaks of documenting the naïve “picture of the world suggested ... by language” (Glaz & Danaher & Lozowski 2013: 14). Clearly, folklorists need to address themselves to the recurrent metaphors in their material.

Following the introduction penned by Andrew Prescott, the book is divided into three sections containing a total of 16 chapters, a division that mirrors the division of the *HTOED*, namely into 1) The External World, 2) The Mental World, 3) The Social World. An appendix at the end of the book delineates what lies in each of these categories. For example, The Mental World consists of A) Mental Capacity, B) Attention and Judgement, C) Goodness and Badness, D) Emotion, E) Will, F) Possession, and G) Language. These categories are divided yet further, e.g. E) Will consists of 01 Will and personal choice, 02 Necessity and inclination, 03 Willingness and desire, 04 Intention and planning, 05 Decision making, and 06 Motivation, demotivation and persuasion.

Almost every other page of this book features an observation about the language that makes one stop to think. How did one not notice, until it was pointed out, that, when used figuratively, both ‘uphill’ and ‘downhill’ have negative senses? Or that descriptions of death tend to be euphemistic, while descriptions of killing tend to be hyperbolic? Or that while ‘seethe’ was first used in literal senses, it is now used only in figurative senses (no “seething pots”), whereas ‘burn’ was used both literally and figuratively in the Old English period, as it still is today? While the title describes mapping “through time”, the chapters often have more of a synchronic than diachronic character than might be expected, even though the synchrony discussed may be in the Old English period rather than in the recent past. But in fact that focus is not problematic. The book’s title, though, might have been ‘Mapping English Metaphor Using Historical Data’.

Two minor points which occur in reading the chapters are the following. Firstly, might the reference to the wen’s ‘head’ in the Old English ‘Wen charm’, which diPaolo Healey (p. 177) suggests is the tip of the wen on the patient, refer rather to the ‘body’ of the wen as a mythological character on an imaginary journey? And secondly, could the term “priest’s crown” for the Common Dandelion which Biggam (p. 48) suggests describes the ‘tonsure’ evoked by the few remaining seeds on a seed-head after the majority have been dispersed refer rather to the closed flower head (e.g. at night or before flowering) with the ‘tonsure’ being evoked by the flower’s bracts? If nothing else, these two questions illustrate the enduring difficulty that faces researchers in pinning down the referents of metaphor researchers.

If I have a misgiving with this fascinating book, it is with its frequent dependence on Lakoff and Johnson’s theory of metaphor, which is just one among several, and which may yet be superseded. Some of the most convincing chapters, such as Carole Biggam on metaphors for hats and other headgear in plant names and Marc Alexander on metaphors of power and authority, hardly use Lakoff and Johnson-type shorthand at all, and are none the worse for it. At other times, it seems that the handling of metaphor is a little too neat: the beauty of metaphors is that they are *wrong* – the feeling you get from a live metaphor is like the sensation you get from seeing green on red. Nevertheless, the book

is full of remarkable detail, and it will be interesting to see how future research in the invigorated field of the study of metaphor will deal with historical data.

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References

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