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**Re-Reading the Dialectics of Female Victimhood through the Archetypal Lens  
in Banu Mushtaq’s Select Narratives**

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**Article Received:** 11/03/2026

**Article Accepted:** 26/04/2026

**Published Online:** 28/04/2026

**DOI:**10.47311/IJOES.2026.8.04.319

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**Abstract:**

This paper explores the manifestation of Carl Jung’s archetype of the Animus in two female characters from Banu Mushtaq’s text *Heart Lamp: Selected Stories*. The Animus is the unconscious masculine energy in women and it includes traits like logic and assertiveness. The Animus is explored through the psychological development of the characters Zeenat in “Stone Slabs for Shaista Mahal” and Mehrun in *Heart Lamp*. Zeenat speaks out about the traditional patriarchal norms and refuses to obey any of them, which shows an improved Animus. On the other hand, Shaista’s silent acceptance to domestic roles shows an underdeveloped Animus. Mehrun’s journey from silence to self-acceptance shows the awakening of her Animus, which happened due to betrayal from her husband and negligence of her own family. Her gradual realization of self-worth reflects her psychological empowerment. This paper examines how the development of Animus in Mushtaq’s characters is shaped by personal struggles, cultural and patriarchal rules and relational dynamics. Through Jungian analysis, this paper explains how patriarchal rules and internalized masculinity makes women reclaim agency, resist oppression and redefine their roles as independent individuals.

**Keywords:** Animus, Banu Mushtaq, Carl Jung, Patriarchy, Victimhood

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**Introduction**

It has been established through various studies and research that women are equally equipped as men to carry forward their societal roles and responsibilities. Yet, women occupy an inferior position even in the contemporary Indian society confining them only within the four walls of the house. They are treated as mute objects, only suitable for marriage, childbearing and domestic life that too without their consent. They are expected to obey their husbands silently, work diligently and never question the men of the house but treat them as supreme. Despite the developing world and the fact that women are proving their worth in every field, still they are treated as the second sex. They are forced to give up on their studies, ambition and passion and sacrifice themselves for the sake of the family.

Banu Mushtaq, one of the most famous of Kannada-language writers, an activist and a lawyer, is deeply engaged with violence faced by women, social justice, women's rights and the marginalized strata of the society in her works. Her book *Heart Lamp: Selected Stories*, was written across three decades, from 1990 to 2023. Initially, it was written in Kannada and was later translated into English by Deepa Bhashti who is the winner of The English PEN Translated Award 2024. This book won The International Booker Prize in 2025. The stories in this book were selected from Banu Mushtaq's six Kannada short story collections.

This research article talks about the lives of Muslim women and how they face marginalization in the domestic sphere. It shows how society has always treated women as mere objects, males are shown as superior and that they can treat women however they want. The struggle of women starts from the periphery of their own homes. Women have nothing to call their own and they are not even allowed to speak their own hearts. Women are stopped from getting education and are forced into marriages. After all the sufferings and insults, women finally realize what they deserve and what they are capable of.

Banu Mushtaq's stories deal with how, at the end, women realize their worth and take a stand for themselves. Mushtaq's stories focus on the Muslim women who navigate religious orthodoxy, patriarchy and societal expectations. She explores thoughts and opinions that always clash with the male dominated society. Her works, including *Heart Lamp: Selected Stories*, show how class, gender, caste and religion intertwine and how all these forces are used to oppress women.

The women in her stories are not just passive victims who mourn over their fate, but they are the ones who resist and assert independence in a quiet way. They show resistance through their everyday actions without fearing the consequences. Mushtaq's

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portrayal of these themes feels timeless. Her stories do not just address the issue of a single woman but deal with the struggles of women universally.

Even though the world is moving forward, women are getting higher education and are fulfilling their dreams, there are still places where girls are buried just moments after their birth and those who survive are struggling every day to realize their worth. Mushtaq, through her text, addresses those women to take a definitive stand for themselves and to leave behind the toxic environment. She wants women to be independent and to live with self-respect and dignity.

Her book also shows how, in the name of religion, society is imposing all patriarchal rules on women. The struggle against patriarchy and religious misinterpretation is an ongoing struggle, and her text represents this with clarity. Her narratives represent the experiences and feelings of women who are denied basic rights and autonomy. Her texts do not solely talk about feminism, but also examines the struggles faced by Muslim women. It reflects that the pain of women goes beyond culture and religion.

Banu Mushtaq empowers all women by giving them a voice, which also globally inspires women to not give anyone the control of their lives. Banu Mushtaq's *Heart Lamp: Selected Stories*, translated by Deepa Bhashti, has been taken as the primary text for this study. To examine the text on a deeper, psychological level, her work has been framed through the lens of Jungian theory of archetypes which is a critical approach on the 'unconscious' of the human mind originated by Carl Jung.

This textual analysis will mainly focus on the "Animus" archetype. The objective of the paper is to explore how Jungian Animus manifested in the select characters of the select stories of Banu Mushtaq. Banu Mushtaq's short stories collection *Heart Lamp: Selected Stories* offers a nuanced portrayal of the Muslim woman and how they navigate through the issues of patriarchy, religious orthodoxy and socio-cultural marginalization in India.

The collection of short stories captures the emotional and psychological pain of women that has always been overlooked in the male dominated society. This article mainly explores these stories through a lens of Carl Jung's theory of archetypes, with more emphasis on the animus archetype, which is the unconscious masculine aspect within the female psyche. Through this Jungian archetypal criticism, this article aims to explore how the animus has been shown in Mushtaq's female characters. It is shown not just as a psychological construction but also as a symbolic power that shapes identity, resistance and transformation.

According to (Vibhute, Suresh Kumar) Carl Jung's work on analytical psychology

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has had a very lasting impact on how we perceive human psyche. The idea he has delivered about the collective unconscious and archetypes, explains the shared symbols and patterns that are found across various cultures. His process of individuation means becoming the true self, which is still seen as a powerful path for personal growth. Jung always believed in balancing the different parts of ourselves, it's also reflected in modern therapy. He was interested in myths and symbols, which has helped us grasp the deeper layers of the unconscious mind. Jung's theories influence therapy, self-help and studies across different fields in today's world. His thoughtful approach has not only enriched literature but also art, philosophy and culture. In conclusion, Jung's thoughts and analysis continue to guide us and help us discover the complex human nature.

(Das J) says that Carl Gustav Jung was a Swiss psychiatrist who gave his views on analytical psychology. His fundamental works include unconscious psyche of human mind, association tests, archetypes, anima and animus, the self, the persona, introverted, extroverted, synchronicity, psyche, complexes and individuation; all these works have a really huge impact on the field of psychology and that is why he is known as the father of analytical psychology also known as Jungian psychology. Jung has worked under Eugen Bleuler as a psychiatrist at Zurich University during the World War I. He was closely linked to Sigmund Freud but due to their different point of views it didn't last long. One of his exceptional works include *Psychology of the Unconscious*. One of Jung's famous quotes includes that a person cannot conquer his passion without first enduring its intensity. As per the opinion of (R. A. Jones) Jung's theory might sound true to few people as it feels scientific, while for few others it might be false as it sounds scientific. Instead of questioning its truthfulness, one should think if anyone is getting any benefits from it and in what situations and if those benefits occur from using scientific methods. Even though Jungian therapy has helped million people, we can't say that it can be used for scientific experiments. Jung himself has differentiated between his analytical psychology and experimental psychology. Moreover, analytical psychology isn't just one system, it includes various branches. It's all about getting an idea of the whole inner world of a person. This is the reason it doesn't fit well with natural science methods. It doesn't belong in behavioral science category either, as it is actually about the deeper inner self. For Jung, a psychologist is someone who applies his own inner experiences to understand people's connection to their existence.

(St. Hilaire), in his view, Jung had a different vision of the world around him. His theories are still relevant in the world of modern psychology. Even though individualism is highly followed in today's world, still there are few deep personal experiences like intense

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imagination or spiritual vision that have great importance.

As Jung says, no theory is really perfect and his works take efforts to be understood. Instead of trying to make analytical psychology into scientific fields, it can be used to explore deeper facts about culture, personal healing, and society.

(McGovern, Hutchinson, Jackson et al.) states that Jung's theory of archetypes has always been a controversial topic within the study of analytical and academic psychology. By putting this with the lens of brain science also called free energy, it can be considered as shared mental images that made our ancestors survive and adapt. Archetypes are not just mystical thoughts but are practical tools that may have helped previous generations make sense of everything. Archetypes can also be viewed as natural outcomes rather than just as completely Jungian or symbolic. This creates a relationship of Jung's thoughts with modern science, showing that archetypes can also be displayed through scientific models of how humans think.

(Niu, Fauzi) emphasizes that the combination of Carl Jung's psychology with Taoist hermit traditions in studio art is a great journey of creativity, personal growth and spiritual exploration. This article discusses how Jung's ideas are present in various artistic works. It shows how creativity can also lead to individuation, mixing inner psychological and spiritual experiences. This is really helpful to many people like therapists, artists and spiritual learners as it shows how art benefits individuals and communities. It encourages healing, imagination and a shared connection among people.

(Firat) mentions in the research article that there is a parallel between Jungian psychology and Sufism, both focus on personal growth and self-realization. Conceptual and lexical analysis is the most important step towards such comparison. Religious practices could be integrated into therapy. The overlap between religion and psychology is full of potential as well as full of risks.

(Senthikumar, Gatluak, Lewoyechu et al.) explains that the main goal of his paper is to explore Carl Jung's ideas about archetypes, symbols and how they are linked with fictional writings. This paper talks about how symbols and theories explained by Jung appear in characters and various texts. It describes the importance of archetypal criticism and shows how Jung's theories and ideas are closely connected to literature.

(Lambert, Ferns) analyses what parts of archetypal feminine traits women should reject in postfeminist workplaces. Postfeminist work culture encourages women to break free from archetypal feminine traits such as intuition, slowness and cycles and embrace masculine traits like ambition, logic and constant productivity, but this stops the individuation process. This paper says that women should confront those feminine traits instead of

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suppressing them. Masculine energy is not always negative, but it has been overvalued while feminine traits are being degraded. True balance comes when both energies work together without dominating one another. Exploring archetypal feminine traits in all genders can challenge neoliberal and patriarchal workplace cultures.

(Francis) writes in the paper that archetypes play a key role for an author to write something innovative that will awaken the readers' collective unconscious. A reader is able to decode a text's meaning only because he possesses the collective unconscious. Archetypal criticism is based on the theory of the collective unconscious stated by Carl Jung. All literary works are the results of certain archetypes and archetypal criticism can be used to examine them.

(Dino\*) talks about the connection between Eros and Psyche. He mentions psychologist Edward Edinger and his view that love is central to the process of coniunctio, the inner union. The journey of love and soul continues for the whole life. Eros means to focus on how our actions impact others. Psyche means to develop through love and be secure in it.

(Khan, Khattak) explores the complex theory of anima and animus in *Heart of Darkness* of Conrad. Conrad motivates everyone to study the presence of both masculine and feminine traits within the human soul. This highlights the psychological path towards self-exploration. This paper is also an acknowledgement of Conrad's psychological analysis which relates to Jung's theories.

As per (Chaudhary), hybridization and creolization are gaining more prominence along with the financial stability of the middle class. Many social problems like honor killings are getting solved because of this. People are less worried about regional traditions. Every change involves good and bad, and this change can never be stopped. Jungian literary theory gives us a reinterpretation of Carl Jung's thoughts. It uses imagination to deal with modern challenges. It regards texts as ways of healing and insights.

(Marceline, Satria) shows in the paper that "Girls Man Up" explores animus archetype through the main character. Anima/animus does not have complete relations with gender identity as seen through the character Pen, a masculine girl with feminine psyche. Her animus made her courageous enough to confront every issue. Archetypes are the works that explain few particular patterns and images and thus they help in literary text analysis.

(Jamalinesari) explains that in *Six Characters in Search of an Author* not all characters get their selves as the wise old man was unable to create identity of them. The wise old man is considered as producer here. His actions misguide them. The author is not present which

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makes him less important and he is not considered as a motivational source. The characters of father and mother are also not able to connect with their inner anima and animus, which are the key sources for the growth of identity.

(Prabhakaran) analyzes “Sethji” and deals with the concept of anima and animus in both genders. Though this text is often called a political drama, it mostly deals with the psyche of men and women.

(Karkun, Suparna and Kumar Tiwari, Anoop) investigate in “Women and Brain Go Together” about the highest form of individuation process of Carl Jung. The character Sophia is completely aware of the power of her animus psyche and uses it to challenge the male-dominated society. She inspires every other woman to find their inner strength. Nowadays, many women are aware of their animus. From the time of Sophia to the contemporary world, there is a challenge to traditional gender norms.

(Prakoso, Toyib) explains in this paper about the development of anima in Logan and animus in Rachel. Logan goes through four stages: Eve stage, Helen stage, Mary stage and the last one is Sophia, where Rachel helps Logan get inner peace by being his spiritual guide. On the other hand, Rachel also goes through four stages which include Man of Power, Man of Action, Man of Word and Man of Meaning, where she is no longer connected to her feminine side and treats herself as a person blinded by anger.

(Nehal Kakroda, Nagendra Ambedkar Sole) note in this paper that feminism represents a movement regarding women and other repressed genders. Feminism made it possible for women to vote, to get education and to take action against marital rape, domestic violence, sexual harassment and discrimination. It was feminism that helped men express their feelings without being called weak or overly emotional. Feminism makes society a more secure place for both genders.

(Mohajan, Haradhan) comments on feminism and its categories. Feminism became recognizable around the 17th century. The second wave of feminism includes liberal feminism, Marxist feminism, socialist feminism, radical feminism and ecofeminism, all of which questioned patriarchal male behavior towards women’s personal lives. During the third wave, many other ideologies like cultural feminism, black feminism and postmodern feminism were included. All types of feminism have only one goal—to create a society free of gender bias. As of now, women have gained educational rights, but there are many fields where equality is not yet achieved. In the near future, change and equality are expected across all fields and societies.

(DeFelice, W. Diller) emphasizes that both behavior analysis and feminism lacked diversity, but now they are progressing significantly. Both McCall, an expert in

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intersectionality, and Skinner, a behaviorist, argue that more factors need to be studied to comprehend everyone's experience. Factors like gender, race and sexual orientation create bias even today, and behavior analysis can help by highlighting the effects of such biases on people.

(Ferguson) mentions in this paper that the actual mission of feminist theory is to question patriarchal power dynamics and work together to create a better-developed world. It does not seek to alter academics but aims to change people's mindset. Thinkers like Haraway and Hemmings suggest remaining engaged with issues rather than seeking easy solutions. The Crunk Feminist Collective inspires engagement through tension and creativity at the intersection of academia and real life. Morrison talks about "earned optimism," which means hope can be found even in the most difficult situations.

(Paul, Goswami, Nandigama et al.) show in the paper the multiple ways women are fighting for their progress and bringing change. They combine activism and ideas to maintain unity in South Asia and beyond. This intersectional feminist approach offers new perspectives on history and space and reveals how collective action can resist patriarchy, communalism and capitalism.

(Prajapati, Naresh and Chauhan, Deepak Kumar) declare in this paper that women need to be leaders in decision-making to improve climate resilience in South Asia. Women face many limitations such as unpaid labor and lack of land ownership, even though they possess significant ecological knowledge.

The society and government should promote things like gender quotas, access to resources and digital tools. Creating scopes for learning and mentorship can make women more motivated to be leaders and bring change. Women's involvement in climate decisions can lead to far more stronger and improved solutions.

(Kien, Trung, Son et al.) explore the feminist thought in Vietnam and how it has changed in many ways through Facebook confession groups. In these groups, women stand against traditional gender roles. These groups also show different cultural barriers and talk about oppressed voices like LGBTQ+ individuals. Digital media is helpful, but it also makes people feel excluded sometimes. This paper aims to address social change and empowerment through social media.

According to (Naidoo), theological training centers have vital roles in church leadership and social justice. However, many institutions exclude women from getting basic knowledge. This piece of writing shows the importance of religious movements in bringing change and also talks about the Christian community's role in challenging patriarchal rules. It mainly focuses on Africa, showing the advantages and disadvantages of

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theological education. Mercy Oduyoye's model shows a collaborative way between men and women. This paper advises rethinking religious and institutional practices to create equality.

(Chatterjee) says in this paper that Islam has been represented negatively by Western feminists most of the time. However, judging the whole Islamic religion based on a few countries like Saudi Arabia and Iran simplifies the relation between religion and gender. It does not show the full picture. Scholars like Amina Wadud argue against misinterpretations of the Quran. She states that the Quran supports equality and dignity. She challenges stereotypical mindsets about Islam and encourages women to understand their true strength and the teachings of the Quran.

As said by (Bahar, R.), globally women face sexism shaped by society and culture over a long period. However, Islamic feminism raises its voice against these unacceptable ideas. This movement is not against Islam, as true Islam prioritizes equality. Islamic feminism argues that earlier women's opinions were ignored, but Islam provides them respect and equality. However, due to patriarchal misinterpretations, women are often given less value. Muslim feminists argue that society should return to the original teachings.

(Jones) talks about the Indian Muslim feminist organization BMMA. This group has worked to improve women's rights by using Islamic values and the Indian Constitution. According to them, equality and justice exist both in law and in the Quran. BMMA has opposed practices like instant divorce. These actions have influenced movements like the anti-CAA protests of 2019–20. This reflects how such movements have empowered Muslim women in India.

(Schneider, Nadja-Christina) discusses two key challenges faced by Islamic feminists in India. The first is that many feminists are not labeled as Islamic feminists, and the second is distinguishing between global Islamic feminism and earlier local movements. Achieving gender equality under Muslim Personal Law is difficult, but several organizations advocate for women's rights. One such organization is AIMWPLB, which promotes reinterpretation of the Quran and discusses the future of India's Muslim minority. (Mir-Hosseini) explores how political Islam has unintentionally created space for feminist discourse, making injustice against women more visible. The division between rights and religion has shifted. The real conflict is between those who seek equality and those who seek control. Contemporary feminist scholars challenge patriarchal norms as human-made and changeable. The Muslim community can bring significant reform by rethinking law and ethics.

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(Fahm, AbdulGafar Olawale) highlights how digital technology and social inequality influence Islamic learning in Nigeria. Digital tools help marginalized groups but also expose issues like poverty and poor infrastructure. There are risks in using digital platforms. For digital Islamic education to be effective, society must focus on digital literacy and infrastructure.

(James C. Overholser) discusses his interview with Carl Gustav Jung. The interview reveals Jung's belief in the subconscious and its ability to provide wisdom and emotional truth. He emphasizes dream interpretation, symbolism and self-reflection to understand the subconscious. According to Jung, healing requires a deep understanding of the human psyche, not just observable behavior. The interview also mentions Jung's separation from Freud and the development of analytical psychology.

(Leigh) discusses the connection between Jung's archetypes and literature and philosophy. He explains the roots of archetypal psychology and individuation. Jung viewed archetypes as essential for understanding personal growth. Literature and myths reveal deep psychological truths. The article also explores Jung's perspective on religion and its connection to literature, highlighting their intersection.

(Pei Wang) reinterprets the legend of Emperor Shun through a Jungian lens. It presents a journey of individuation, where Shun faces trials from paternal figures and receives support from feminine archetypes before confronting his shadow. This represents transformation and self-realization. The analysis highlights the importance of individuality within family structures, especially in contexts like China where filial piety can limit personal development.

Scrutinizing all the reviews so far, it has been observed that there is a noticeable research gap, as none of the works have explored the characters in Banu Mushtaq's *Heart Lamp: Selected Stories*. This has prompted the present research to substantiate the existing body of work on archetypal criticism.

Among all the reviews studied, the absence of detailed analysis of characters in *Heart Lamp: Selected Stories* remains evident. This gap has motivated the current study to contribute to and expand the field of archetypal literary criticism.

### **Analysis**

Carl Gustav Jung, a Swiss psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, was the founder of analytical psychology. It is a school of thought that explains the importance of individual psyche and the way to achieve wholeness. His contribution to the field of psychology includes the theory of collective unconscious, archetypes and personality types.

Jung elaborated on four core archetypes that is the self, shadow, persona and

anima/animus. Anima represents the unconscious feminine traits in men. It includes qualities like intuition, receptivity and deep emotions. It shows how men relate to women and their emotional states. Animus includes the unconscious masculine traits in women like logic, assertiveness, authority and independence. It shapes how women engage with power, reason and autonomy. The animus is awakened in women through life experiences and inner psychological development. According to Jung, it improves through a dynamic process that is shaped by personal and cultural influences. Life challenges like career or domestic struggles can trigger animus. Animus develops the inner authority and clarity and with its help women can engage more actively in intellectual and political life.

After going through contemporary research on animus, an archetype, propounded by Carl Jung, it has been found that a research gap exists in the way animus is portrayed in the two characters of *Banu Mushtaq's Heart Lamp: Selected Stories*. The objective of this paper is to examine and critically interrogate the manifestation of the animus archetype in two select female characters. Using Jung's theory of the animus as outlined in his key text "The Archetypes and The Collective Unconscious", this research explores how internalized masculinity shapes the psychological development, self-expression, and relational patterns of Mushtaq's female protagonists. The first chapter named "Stone Slabs for Shaista Mahal" is narrated by Zeenat, a newly married woman. From the beginning, her animus is awakened as she asserts

I use the term *yajamana* and call him owner, then I will have to be a servant, as if I am an animal or a dog. I am a little educated. I have earned a degree. I do not like establishing these owner and servant roles. (p.7)

This reflects her resistance to patriarchal gender roles. Zeenat and her husband, Mujahid visit one of his friends, Iftikhar Ahmed. There, Zeenat meets Shaista, Iftikhar's wife, who's pregnant with the seventh child. As the story progresses, Iftikhar claims that he would build Shaista mahal as a symbol of love for his wife. In response, Shaista says:

My grandmother used to say when a wife dies, it's like an elbow injury for the husband. Do you know, Zeenat, if the elbow gets injured, the pain is extreme for one instant; it is intolerable. But it lasts only a few seconds, and after that one does not feel anything. There is no wound, no scar, no pain.... (p.13).

This shows how the patriarchal society has always treated women as someone inferior and secondary. Unlike Zeenat, Shaista's animus isn't developed yet as she's unable to understand her worth and is confined by traditional gender norms. After few days, Shaista dies after giving birth, once the fortieth day *fatiha* is completed, Iftikhar marries another woman, who is barely eighteen years old and claims he only married her for the sake of

children. This agitates Zeenat, she is disturbed by the sudden remarriage of the man who once vowed to build Shaista Mahal for his wife. At the end, Zeenat says:

‘oh, of course... she... she is looking after the children well, that is very evident. Iftikhar bhai, no matter what you do, it is all right. But do not repeat the declaration of love you made to Shaista with her. It is OK if you not get a Shaista mahal built, or make arrangements for stone slabs to be put all around her grave... but if your eternal love reaches her where she is and she were to wake up and come back, you will be in trouble’ (p.22).

This shows how women often become visible only in the spaces of labour, reproduction and silence. Her agitation reflects a developed moral compass and emotional depth which is considered a hallmark of an awakened animus. Shaista has completely accepted that she only has a role of a mother and a wife and not any individuality, it shows how deeply she has been brainwashed by patriarchal values. Iftikhar acts as the sole provider, decision-maker and emotional gatekeeper. His actions and words reveal how male animus can be quite oppressive without empathy and accountability. Zeenat’s animus is conscious and evolved. She questions and challenges the patriarchal gender norms, unlike Shaista who is trapped in tradition and domesticity. Thus, the first chapter highlights the traditional gender ideals as well as Zeenat’s protest against such ideals due to her developed animus archetype.

The second chapter titled “Heart Lamp” talks about Mehrun’s struggle and her resistance through the awakening of animus archetype. Mehrun is both a wife and a mother, who lives within a patriarchal and socially constrained environment. Mehrun returns to her parental home after her husband Inayat cheats on her with a nurse who works in his hospital. Instead of supporting her and respecting her decisions, her family urges her to go back to her husband and blames her for his actions. Mehrun speaks up for herself before her family-

I fell at your feet, saying that I didn’t want to get married. I begged you not to make me stop studying. None of you listened to me. Many of my classmates are not even married, and yet I have become an old woman. I have the burden of five children on me. Their father is roaming around, and I don’t have a life. When a man is doing such a haram thing, are none of you able to ask him why he is doing this? (p.101)

This shows the awakening of her animus, her inner masculine strength that pushes her to take a stand. But when she says this, her mother shuts her up by saying ‘Enough Meher, enough’ (p.101). This reflects the how even women are completely brainwashed that they

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support and defend the traditional gender roles willingly. Instead of supporting her own daughter, she tries to suppress her issues. Later, Mehrun is taken back to her husband's house by her brothers. For her family, her decision to leave her husband is seen as a source of shame and a threat to their honor, while they completely ignore the fact that her husband is cheating on her and treating her poorly. Upon reaching the house, they meet Inayat and speak to him about everything except the main issue Mehrun is facing. After having a good meal her brothers prepare to leave. Before that, Amaan, Mehrun's second eldest brother tells her

Use a little bit of smartness and manage all this, I will come and visit next week. He will behave like this for a few days and then come back himself. You must be responsible. What problems some women have to face, husbands who are drunkards, mothers-in-law who beat them. Thank God you are in a good situation.

He is a bit irresponsible, that is all. It is you who must balance all that. (p.107).

Saying this, her brothers leave, abandoning her in a deeply miserable situation. This shows how the grave mistakes of men are always overlooked, while women are expected to carry all the burden and maintain the household, regardless of how they are treated. Women are always blamed and silenced, while men are excused for everything.

That night, Mehrun reflects on her whole life, how drastically it has changed, how she has begged her parents not to stop her studies earlier, but all begging and pleas went in vain. Her elder daughter, Salma knows about her mother's struggle and pain. Although Mehrun's animus is awakened and giving her the strength to recognize the injustice, the weight of her suffering becomes unbearable. So, she reaches for the kerosene and matchbox, attempting to end her pain. Just in time, Salma comes and tries to stop her mother from committing such action. She says,

Just because you have lost one person, you will throw all of us at that woman's mercy? You are ready to die for Abba, but is it not possible for you to live for our sakes? How can you make us orphans, Ammi? We want you. (p.111).

This finally makes Mehrun realize that it is not worth ending her life just for a man and that she can live happily for herself and her children. This shows that Mehrun's animus is now fully awakened, pushing her to take a stand for herself. She has realized her worth. Her character shows how women are forced to leave their studies and accept their domestic, married life at an early age. Their pain is silenced by those closest to them and they are left to face everything alone. Mehrun's journey reflects the animus archetype, which plays an important role in helping women reclaim their agency and understand their intrinsic value.

## Conclusion

Banu Mushtaq's *Heart Lamp: Select Stories* deals with how women raise their voice against patriarchal norms through the awakening of the animus archetype. Specially, Zeenat and Mehrun refuse to tolerate injustice forced upon them and takes a firm stand. Through lived experiences marked by betrayal and oppression, both women develop animus as an inner source of resistance and moral strength. The animus, an archetype propounded by Carl Jung, is not just a masculine energy within the female psyche but also a way for self-recognition and defiance. It helps women think critically and logically within a society that tries to suppress their feelings and thoughts. Zeenat represents a fearless female character who consistently confronts patriarchal authority, boldly rejecting the norms that seek to confine her.

Mehrun goes from being just a suppressed daughter, betrayed wife to a woman who questions and confronts. Ultimately, she chooses to live for herself rather than completely losing herself for her husband. It reflects how animus helps in disrupting the internalized obedience expected from women. It awakens a consciousness that urges women to fight for their rights and to live for themselves. Both Zeenat and Mehrun's resistance is not loud or revolutionary, but it is internal as it teaches them self-worth and maternal agency. Animus is presented here as a force of psychological and ethical awakening. This paper investigates how animus is activated in the two characters of Zeenat and Mehrun and presents a feminist analysis of their journey towards self-recognition and realization.

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