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## A Rereading Of Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha* In The Light Of Analytical Psychology

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**Abstract:** Juxtaposing literary works and psychological theories is one of the methods to assess the merit of any literary work. More than the merits, at times, this method is also employed to unearth the social, cultural, aesthetic and psychological aspects of the literary work at hand. Herman Hesse's *Siddhartha* bears a lot of psychological dimensions. The different facets of the protagonist's life can only be perceived by careful consideration of what is working inside his psyche. Analytical Psychology directs us towards a deeper understanding about the protagonist's deportment beyond the surface level of understanding. It leads us to a more intricate pattern of human behavior. Jung's theory offers an array of terminologies that can explicate intentional and unintentional acts. Collective unconscious is the central idea of Jungian psychology. It is considered as the reservoir of archetypes and universal symbols shared by all humanity. The protagonist in *Siddhartha* also comes across with various archetypal figures and symbols which mirrors his own mind and the collective unconscious. At times, the psychic forces are on a collision course, resulting a confused mixture of emotions. The spiritual quest in the novel is often disturbed by the shadow archetype of the protagonist. An insight can be gained from the mundane and spiritual quests of the life of the character by employing various postulates of Analytical Psychology. This paper tries to enquire justifications of human actions by taking Hesse's *Siddhartha* as specimen and placing it onto the plane of Analytical Psychology.

**Index Terms-** Collective Unconscious, Archetype, Self-actualization, Spirituality

### INTRODUCTION

Literature has always been subjected to psychological analysis on the basis of its themes, motifs, images and symbols. It is through these analyses, any work of art communicates its intended audience explicitly. It helps them to decipher the denotative and connotative meanings. While reading literature, whether it is a poem, novel or short story, one can understand the profound influence of psychology. As literature is the manifestation of the emotion, cognition, aspiration and consciousness of the author and these are directly derived from the psyche of the author, it shares a common ground with psychology because psychology always tries to provide justification and clarification to the thought processing even they are vague and obscure.

Introduction of psychological elements in literature is not a novel concept. Literary criticism employed psychology as tool to analyse literary works. It was William James, the American Psychologist, who coined the term *Stream of Consciousness* which is a method of narration that describes incidents in the flow of thoughts in the mind. *Psychoanalytic criticism* is a genre of literary criticism based on the findings of the famous Austrian neurologist, Sigmund Freud.

## HUMAN MIND ACCORDING TO ANALYTICAL PSYCHOLOGY

*Analytical Psychology* is a system of thought developed by Carl Gustav Jung, the Swiss psychiatrist and psychoanalyst. He was born in Kessewill, in the Swiss canton of Thurgau on 26 July 1875. His works were influential in the fields of archeology, anthropology, literature, philosophy, psychiatry and religious studies. It was during his practice as research scientist in Burgholzli hospital he came into contact with Sigmund Freud. Jung was an ardent supporter of Freud but later due to the ideological differences occurred between them, Jung took a differed path. He established *Analytical Psychology* for experimenting and disseminating his ideas. It gives emphasis to the importance of individual mind and the quest of self-actualization.

Jung, like Freud, believed the existence of unconscious mind apart from that of the conscious mind. But the conception of unconscious mind is entirely different from Freud. He conceived a human mind comprises of different layers and each layer functions entirely different from one another. According to Jung the different layers of mind are Conscious Mind, Personal Unconscious and Collective Unconscious.

Conscious Mind is the upper layer of the mind consists of memories, feelings and thoughts that are the part of one's consciousness. It is regarded as the seat of one's ego and conscious behaviour. It is just only a fragment of the mind. The vast unconscious mind lies below it and is divided into two parts- the personal unconsciousness and collective unconscious.

Personal Unconscious lies immediately below the conscious. Its nature is highly individualistic and personal. It consists of all the repressed feelings, ideas, desires, fear, anxieties, dreams and other personal incidents which may occur in the lifetime of an individual

Collective Unconscious lies below the layer of personal unconscious. It is not a personal or private area of mind but universal to all people. According to Jung collective unconscious consists of the modes of thinking, development of the consciousness, culture, feeling and doing as held by one's ancestors. It is being transferred from generation to generation and all are stored in Collective Unconscious. Jung observed Unconscious Mind as:

The individuals who inherit such vast stores of ancestral characteristics or racial memory, then are conditioned to perceive the world in the same way as the previous generations did. One's collective Unconscious thus contains the experiences of the whole race gathered over millions of ancestral years specifically in the form of universal ideas or images called archetypes (71).

Archetypes are the essential features of Collective Unconscious. They represent the immutably inherited ideas and images which are same to every generation since the genesis of mankind. They may either be transmitted from one generation to other in the form of neural pattern in the brain or may be acquired through direct or indirect experiences. Jung enumerates a number of archetypes such as The Mother Archetype, The Father Archetype, The Hero Archetype, Persona, Anima, Animus, The Shadow, The Self etc. Each Archetype conveys the abstract ideas associated with or attributed to that particular concept universally. For example The Mother Archetype stands for the abstract ideas such as pious, warm, protective, loving and nourishing.

## TRACING ANALYTICAL PSYCHOLOGY IN *SIDDHARTHA*

According to *Analytical Psychology* mind operates in different ways and dimensions. Applying *Analytical Psychology* to *Siddhartha* is a key to inspect the idiosyncrasies of the characters in particular and the literary work in general. The protagonist in the novel, Siddhartha, is curious and this curiosity leads him to attain the divine perfection. For that he sacrifices all the material comforts and the bondages and security of the family. His life has many phases and he assumes different perspectives in each. Some are guided by his innate inquisitiveness and others are derived from his immediate environment.

In one sense Siddhartha is guided by his *Personal Unconscious*. He wants to achieve fulfillment but he represses it to this layer of mind. According to Jung *Personal Unconscious* is a personal and individualistic layer of mind to where we repress all our desires and dreams. At first we see Siddhartha as young and handsome boy who is impeccable in his duty and devotion. He observes each and every ritual of

‘brahmanical’ tradition and pay respect to elders. But at times his repressed desire of attaining fulfillment pops up and he pursues it.

This could also be analysed in the other perspective. We can relate man’s longings and aspirations to *Collective Unconscious* which lies beneath the *Personal Unconscious*. A layer that is neither personal nor private, it has a universal aspect. It consists of all the experiences of the whole human race gathered over millions of ancestral years specifically in the form of universal images called *Archetypes*. In this sense it may be implied that the quest motive is innate in our nature. Humankind is evolved as a result of setting out to pursue this inexorable quest and the subsequent discoveries. Siddhartha also sets out to pursue his inner motive that is self-actualisation. It is in his psyche as an archetype and it may be shared by many.

In oriental philosophy, especially the Indian, self-actualisation or ‘Nirvana’ is an exalted and sublime state of being. It is amalgamated in the culture and tradition of the land. The influences of this philosophy, explicitly as well as implicitly, are seen in all areas of life. It is passed from generation to generation since time immemorial. The consciousness of individuals of different ages might have been coloured by this philosophy. Jung calls this archetype as The Self. According to Jung Self is a universal idea that can be found in all primitive philosophies and religion. Hermann Hesse also aware of this concept of religion and made it the crux of his work *Siddhartha*. He describes it in his novel:

Many verses of the holy books, above all the Upanishads of Sama-Veda spoke of this innermost thing. It is written: “Your soul is the whole world.” It says that when a man is asleep, he penetrates his innermost and dwells in Atman. (p 6)

Persona is another archetype as described by Jung. It is considered as the roles that we assume in our life viz the role of father or son, wife or mother etc. Persona transforms the ethereal being into a worldly being. Siddhartha also takes different roles as everyone in life, the role of a son, samana, lover etc.

The shadow is an archetype that resembles the concept of Id propounded by Sigmund Freud. It represents human’s darkest desires, rejected qualities and untapped resources. According to Jung, “it personifies everything that the subject refuses to acknowledge about himself”. Hermann Hesse was meticulous to incorporate the capricious nature of mind in *Siddhartha*. Though Siddhartha practices asceticism and its rigorous lifestyle, at one point of time he yields to his passion. He indulges in lustful conversation with a young woman whom he sees on the riverside. Hence The Shadow of Siddhartha divulges.

Hesse gives a clear picture of Buddha and how he is being treated by others. Buddha, exalted one, is the embodiment of wisdom and compassion. People worship him and accredit divinity to him. His words are being taken as the elixir. Buddha really evokes respect and veneration from the people. We can identify Buddha as the Hero Archetype as conceived by Jung. Hero Archetype is the concept of a person who is ideal, unselfish and a respectful figure. In *Siddhartha*, the portrayal of Buddha is in close conformity with the definition of the Hero Archetype by Jung. Hesse delineates it through his description of Buddha:

Someone had appeared, called Gotama, the Illustrious, the Buddha. He had conquered in himself the sorrows of the world and had brought to a standstill the cycle of rebirth. He wandered through the country preaching, surrounded by disciples, having no possessions, homeless, without a wife, wearing the yellow cloak<sup>46</sup> of an ascetic, but with lofty brow, a holy man, and Brahmins and princes bowed before him and became his pupils. (p 16-17)

Like Freud, Jung also gave importance to dreams in his study and found that they originate from the unconscious mind but he didn’t agree with the notion that they are the mere representation repressed desires. According to Jung, dreams are not past-oriented but are more present-oriented and forward looking. They are concerned with what is being done by us at present in our waking life and have two-dimensional foundations- the compensatory as well as the prospective. The compensatory function provides solution to the uncompleted task but the solution does not come up during our waking state. It has been offered by the unconscious through our dreams. As far as the prospective function is concerned, it predicts the future through the dream with the help of the unconscious. Hesse also introduces a sequence of dream in *Siddhartha* and it has developed from the conscience stricken state of the protagonist. Siddhartha sacrifices everything that he has attained through a rigorous lifestyle just for the worldly pleasure. His intimacy with

Kamala and his materialistic way of life filled with lust and passion dampened the spiritual awakening within him. Soon he finds his life is just a mess and disgusted with every aspect of it. He plunges into deep misery due to his wayward behaviour and he flounders by this dilemma. At this juncture he sees a dream about Kamala's song bird in the golden cage.

The bird, which usually sang in the morning, became mute, and as this surprised him, he went up to the cage and looked inside. The little bird was dead and lay stiff on the floor. He took it out, held it a moment in his hand and then threw it away on the road, and at that same moment was horrified and his heart ached as if he had thrown away with this bird all that was good and value in himself. (p 64)

This is exactly is the reflection of the present state of Siddhartha which has been divulged to him through the dream. He is seemed very much depressed and disgusted by his worldly life. The dream reveals him that he has thrown away all the values and goodness within him like the throwing out of the dead bird. This may be regarded as the compensatory function of the dream. The protagonist has been supplied with the solution through dream by the help of his own unconscious. Jung posits that our dreams are not merely for imaginary wish fulfillment. They work as true guides to our conscious mind in the time of difficulty and they are also helpful to predict future by anticipating wisely and planning the activities.

As the dream suggested he has lost all the virtues by immersing in the worldly affairs. Subsequently he begins to develop boredom towards all and this turn into an utter disgust and disillusionment. He leaves behind everything he has and at this point he shows the slight signs of mild neurotic behaviour. This could also be analyzed by Analytical Psychology as Jung possessed a distinctive view about the reasons of neurotic behaviour and its effects. As far as Jung is considered, neurosis is a regression or going back as result of a critical impediment in the flow of libido or due to the imbalances in the mind through disharmony between the conscious and the unconscious. And the cause of this imbalance doesn't lie in the past experiences but in the present. Siddhartha also becomes disillusioned just because he cannot cope with his present situation and he also experiences a serious conflict between his conscious and unconscious mind. But Jung didn't consider neurosis as the negative side of one's personality. He perceived it as the attempt on the part of any particular person to lift himself or herself. In neurosis one has the chance to communicate with one's inner self and thereby one gets a better opportunity to understand very well and subsequently achieve the higher level of self-actualization. Siddhartha also communicates with his inner self and it leads him through the right path and he travels through the different planes of experiences and finally he achieves fulfillment.

## CONCLUSION

Analytical Psychology is a vast concept in Psychology. It comprises philosophical, religious, educational aspects other than psychology. Human mind is influenced by various factors and it is coloured by the environment as well as heredity. Through Analytical Psychology Jung tried to understand human psyche and identified that it is a microcosm of the experiences of the whole human race since its dawn. By applying Jung's system of psychology to Siddhartha, one of the most prominent works of Hesse, is crucial because the novel could be read in different planes. It has philosophical and religious foundations moreover the protagonists' journey of life could be analysed in two levels: spiritual and material. Hence it is essential to apply Analytical Psychology to identify its themes, motifs and symbols.



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