

**Existential Quest: Paulo Coelho's, The Alchemist and Herman Hesse's,
Siddhartha**

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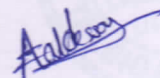
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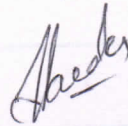
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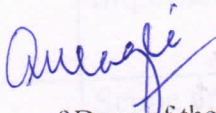
COMPLETION CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation report “ Existential Quest: Paulo Coelho’s The Alchemist and Herman Hesse’s Siddhartha” is a bonafide work carried out by Ms Ashmika Faldessai under my supervision in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of MA English in the Discipline of English at the Sheno Goembab School of Languages and Literature, Goa University.



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Chapters	Particulars	Page Numbers
	Declaration Certificate	II
	Completion Certificate	III
	Acknowledgement	VI
	Abstract	VII
1	Existential Philosophy	1-13
1.1	Introduction	
1.1.1	Overview of Existentialism	
1.1.2	Central Focus on Individual Learning	
1.1.3	Key Themes in Existential Philosophy	
1.2	Importance and Reasons of the Proposed Research	
1.3	Scope and Limitations of the Research	
1.4	Research Questions	
1.5	Necessity and Relevance to the society	
1.6	Objective of the Research Proposed	
1.7	Literature Review	
1.8	Hypothesis	
1.9	Research Methodology	

2	Unveiling Santiago's Quest	14-24
2.1	Reflections on The Alchemist	
2.2	Dream, Desire	
2.3	Maktub: An Arabic Predeterminism	
2.4	Cosmic Soul and its Impact	
2.5	Travelling to the Unknown	
2.6	The Castle, Caravan and The Omens	
2.7	Happiness is within	
3	Unveiling the Quest of Siddhartha	25-33
3.1	Insights into the Book	
3.2	Renunciation of Asceticism	
3.3	Worldly pleasures	
3.4	Father's Attachments	
3.5	Son's Departure	
4	Understanding the Existential Yearnings of Santiago and Siddhartha	34-62
4.1	Siddhartha	
4.2	Individual and Religion	
4.3	Individual and Psychology	
4.5	Existential Individual	
4.6	Cross Cultural Individual	

4.7	The Alchemist	
5	Conclusion	63-67
	References	68

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Abstract

This research paper is an attempt to read Paulo Coelho's novel, *The Alchemist* and the novel, *Siddhartha* by Herman Hesse in the light of Jean Paul Sartre's lecture, "Existentialism is humanism". Existentialism as a philosophical theory emphasizes the existence of the individual person as a free and responsible agent determining his/her own development through acts of the will. As man is focal point of attention for all existentialists thinkers. This is why existentialism is also called Humanism. This current study aims to show how Coelho and Hesse's protagonists explore the existential quest for ultimate meaning and purpose of existence. It will analyze how action, freedom and choice are fundamental directives for determining one's place in the universe. It will also look into Coelho's own philosophy of personal legend through textual references and will figure out the deviations from Sartrean theory. It also attempts to provide a comprehensive analysis of Hermann Hesse's '*Siddhartha*' with the explication of its philosophical themes, spiritual exploration, and enduring relevance within the context of Eastern philosophies and the human quest for perennial wisdom and inner peace.

Key Words: Siddhartha, Existentialism, *The Alchemist*, fate, free will, personal legend.

Chapter 1: Existentialism

“A human being is absolutely free and absolutely responsible. Anguish is the result.” – Jean-Paul Sartre

1.1 Introduction

Existentialism is a 20th century philosophical approach which emphasizes the existence of human beings solely as the outcome of one's choice. The path that the individual, being, a free and responsible agent chooses, determines their future developments. It emphasises the fact that there is no particular reason for such an existence. It even disregards the existence of all pervasive God or transcendental force to guide this existence. Everything that one sees today is the result of the decision taken by the individual, rather the choice made by the individual in the past.

The works of Soren Kierkegaard, Fredric Nietzsche, Karl Jaspers and Edmund Husserl are considered the precursors of existential philosophy though it was not labelled as existentialism at that time. The deep pessimism and void brought down by the World Wars and the Great Depression of 1930 put to question the very essence of human existence. The prevailing social scenario lead Jean Paul Sartre to lay the foundation of his monumental work *Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology* (1943) where he demonstrates his principal – free will exists. His work was partly influenced by the German philosopher Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time* which was again a development of Edmund Husserl's analysis of human consciousness. Sartre's introduction to *Being and Nothingness* has been put together in a book *Existentialism and Humanism* which is regarded as the defining text of Existential movement. The book encapsulates his slogan 'existence precedes essence' meaning that there is no external controlling factor to define the individual goal Or character; that the essence of life is decided solely by the individual. Existence is “self-making-in-a-situation”. Human beings differ from all other entities for our existence is not fixed by the type of entities they are. Neither nature nor culture can constitute one's entity. It is solely the desire to exist which, in the process forms the identity. According to Sartre, “man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges up in the world-and defines himself afterwards”

Existentialists are concerned with ontology, which is the study of being. During WWII, when Europe faced a crisis of death and destruction, existentialism began to take hold as a movement, centered in France. Of course, there are existentialists who wrote long before and after WWII, from every corner of the globe.

The term existentialism is coined by the Danish theologian and philosopher Søren Kierkegaard. According to Søren Kierkegaard, Existentialism “is a rejection of all purely abstract thinking, of a purely logical or scientific philosophy; in short, a rejection of the absoluteness of reason. Existentialism, in fact, begins as A voice raised in protest against the absurdity of Pure Thought, a logic which is not the logic of thinking but the immanent movement of Being. It recalls the spectator of all time and of all existence from the speculations of Pure Thought to the problems and the possibilities of his own conditioned thinking as an existing individual seeking to know how to live and to live the life he Knows.

According to Oaklander, (1992, p. 9), the subject matter of existentialism is human existence, as exemplified by the particular, living, existing individual. Existentialist philosophers are a variety of philosophers that share the common theme of human freedom and the idea that “we are what we choose to be.” Another shared theme of the existentialist is that the universe has no meaning, and that there are no objective values. Existential philosophy is a system of beliefs about the nature of human existence. But it is not sufficient to understand what existential philosophy is about. It is also important to understand the

beliefs of existentialism in relation to our own lives (Oaklander, 1992, p. 9). To better understand existentialist philosophy, an overview of the major contributors of this branch of

philosophy follows. The human science philosophy by Wilhelm Dilthey had permeated the philosophy world. This was the “golden hour” of opportunity for new ideas and reconceptualization of old ideas in philosophy. The time period begins in the early 1800s and extends to the present time. Kierkegaard.

The existentialism philosophy movement or persuasion began with Soren Kierkegaard in the 19th century. Kierkegaard is known as the founder of modern existentialism. Although this distinct philosophic movement is attributed to the 19th and 20th centuries, elements of existentialism may be found in the writings before that period. Existentialist themes involve the essence of human existence, that is, their central topic is the nature of human existence. The existentialist movement has concepts of individualism, individual existence, subjectivity, freedom, self and choices.

1.1.1 Overview of the existential philosophy

The word Existence Is the key concept in Existentialism. It is used in this philosophy in a very special sense. The existentialist uses existence to refer specifically to human existence.

There is a common belief that only a concrete thing can exist. Existentialists also support this view and describe man as a concrete individual capable of being an existent. The Existentialist considers that to be an existent one has to be capable of being conscious that one exists. In this sense man alone can exist. Kierkegaard was the first person who used the word existence in a religious sense. His main interest was the possibility of man’s self realization. According to him, to what extent can Man realize himself by withdrawing from the irresponsibility, superficiality, and forgetfulness of everyday life? So, for Kierkegaard

existence is the attainment of self possession in the spirituality directed and determined life of the individual.

According to a widely accepted definition, 'Existentialism' may be defined as a philosophic stand point which gives priority to existence over essence. From the dictionary meaning, existentialism may be defined as a 'philosophy of existence'. It is "---an irrational trend in bourgeois philosophy which appeared in the 20th century in an attempt to create a new world outlook corresponding to the frame of mind of bourgeois intellectuals".

Existentialism as laid down in the Encyclopedia Britannica emphasizes that

- (i) existence is always particular and individual
- (ii) (ii) existence is primarily the problem of existence; it is therefore, also the investigation of the meaning of Being.
- (iii) (iii) this investigation is continually faced with diverse possibilities from which man must make a selection to which he must then commit himself
- (iv) (iv) existence is always a being-in-the -world, so to say, in a concrete and historically determinate situation that limits or conditions choice.

1.1.2 Central Focus on Individual Learning

Existentialism insists that philosophy should be connected with the individual's own life and experience. It should be a philosophy worth living. All this is blended in the word existence.

The existentialist philosophers concentrate mainly on inner experience of the individual. So for an individual the personal is the real. Philosophy therefore should start from one's inner knowledge, one's own experience, which must be considered as evidence.

Existentialism believes in Individual's personal experience. Thus it is considered as a philosophy of Being, a philosophy of attestation and acceptance, and a refusal of the attempt to rationalize and to think Being. But the question arises that does man's existence have an essence. In this regard existentialism is most commonly acknowledged with the modern French existentialist Jean Paul Sartre's famous dictum "existence comes before essence", which implies that there is no pre-defined essence to humanity except that which it makes for itself. Sartre further adds, "Man first is – only afterwards is he this or that. Man must create for himself his own essence"(Roubiczek, 121). This lends some authority to German existentialist Martin Heidegger's statement of man being thrown into existence, which existentialists consider as prior to any other thoughts or ideas that human's have or definitions of themselves that they create. Again as Sartre puts it, "... man first of all exists, encounters himself and surges up in the world- and defines himself afterwards." So human being has no essence that comes before his existence.

An existentialist believes:

Our life is the sum of the decisions you have made for yourself.

At every moment it is always your own free will choosing how to act.

We are responsible for your actions, which limit future actions.

Thus, we must create a morality in the absence of any known predetermined absolute values.

In short, existentialism: A complex philosophy emphasizing the absurdity of reality and the human responsibility to make choices and accept consequences. Existentialism isn't just about rational decisions; reason alone is an inadequate guide to living, because people are also feeling and willing beings, who must experience

life directly, actively, and passionately. Only this way can one live wholly and authentically.

We first simply exist—find ourselves born into a world not of our own choosing—and it is then up to each of us to define our own identity or essential characteristics in the course of what we do in living out our lives. Thus, our essence (our set of defining traits) is chosen, not given. The highest value in existentialism is personal freedom. The primary virtue is authenticity. The opposite of existentialism, then, is self-deception and conformity.

Freedom has resulted in our alienation from God. Each person's job then is to "heal the chasm" (Kierkegaard). Emphasis on faith and commitment rather than blind acceptance of truths handed down by traditions in religion. One must determine one's own faith and commitment to God, if that is what one chooses. The objective (only one right answer) question of whether God exists is not important. The subjective (many possible right answers) question of truth about God is important. In both atheistic and godly existentialism, we must accept both the freedom to choose and the responsibility of choice.

1.1.3 Key Themes in Existential Philosophy

Authenticity :

Authentic existence involves the idea that one has to "create oneself" and then live in accordance with this self. The authentic act is one that is in accordance with one's freedom. Of course, as a condition of freedom is facticity, this includes one's facticity, but not to the degree that this facticity can in any way determine one's choices (in the sense that one could then blame one's background for making the choice one made). The role of facticity in relation to authenticity involves letting one's actual values come into play when one makes a choice instead of, like

Kierkegaard's Aesthete, "choosing" randomly), so that one also takes responsibility for the act instead of choosing either-or without allowing the options to have different values.

Facticity

Facticity is both a limitation and a condition of freedom. It is a limitation in that a large part of one's facticity consists of things one couldn't have chosen (birthplace, etc.), but a condition in the sense that one's values most likely depend on it. However, even though one's facticity is "set in stone" (as being past, for instance), it cannot determine a person. As an example, consider two men, one of whom has no memory of his past and the other remembers everything. They have both committed many crimes, but the first man, knowing nothing about this, leads a rather normal life while the second man, feeling trapped by his own past, continues a life of crime, blaming his own past for "trapping" him in this life.

Another aspect of existential freedom is that one can change one's values. Thus, one is responsible for one's values, regardless of society's values. The focus on freedom in existentialism is related to the limits of the responsibility one bears as a result of one's freedom: the relationship between freedom and responsibility is one of interdependency.

Authenticity :

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one's actual values come into play when one makes a choice (instead of, like Kierkegaard's Aesthete, "choosing" randomly), so that one also takes responsibility for the act instead of choosing either-or without allowing the options to have different values.

1.2 Importance and Reasons of the Proposed Research

This research paper will delve into philosophical explorations, dealing with existential themes. It will explore the search for meaning, self discovery and the human condition which will contribute to the broader philosophical discourse on existentialism. The proposed research will also showcase the characters in-depth, with all the complexities. Comparing the two works which have varied cultural backdrops will give insights into both the cultures.

1.3 Scope and Limitations of the Research

The proposed research will give a deeper understanding of the theme of existentialism in literature. The comparison of the two texts will give insights into cross cultural literature and the theme of existentialism explored will give insights into the conflicts between the protagonists and the exterior world or society.

However there are various limitations for the proposed research, focusing on only two texts may limit the breadth of the analysis. The novels might not have more content on cultural differences or similarities.

1.4 Research Questions

How is the existential quest of ‘Santiago’ different from that of ‘Siddhartha’?

1.5 Necessity and Relevance to the Society

Studying the two works, ‘The Alchemist’ by Paulo Coelho and ‘Siddhartha’ by Herman Hesse, which more or less deal with the themes of existential quest will be thought provoking for the contemporary society which is dealing with complex and critical issues of existential crisis and it will also shed light on the psychological development of the protagonists. The importance of finding our purpose and working towards it until we reach our goal. It will also inspire the youth and anybody who’s in need of a spark to ignite their passion and strive for it in spite of the loopholes on the way. Considering the stories from different cultures will give an insight into cross cultural literatures and their impact. The Universal theme of existential quest will bridge the distance across the cultures.

1.6 Objectives of the research proposed

- To Analyze the literary techniques, themes, and symbols used in both novels to understand how they contribute to the overall narrative.
- Exploration the character development of Santiago in “The Alchemist” and Siddhartha in “Siddhartha.” Examine how their journeys and transformations are portrayed.

- Investigate the philosophical and spiritual themes in both novels, such as the pursuit of one's destiny in "The Alchemist" and the journey towards enlightenment in "Siddhartha."
- Consider the cultural and historical context in which each novel is set and how it influences the story.

1.7 Literature Review

AN EXISTENTIAL READING OF PAULO COELHO'S NOVEL, 'THE ALCHEMIST' – JAVEED AHMAD RAINA, (UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR).

In this paper, Mr.Raina makes an attempt to read Paulo Coelho's novel in the light of Jean Paul Sartre's lecture on "Existentialism is humanism". It shows how Coelho's protagonist explores the existential quest for ultimate meaning and purpose of existence. It analyses how action, freedom and choice are fundamental directives for determining one's place in the universe. He also presents Coelho's own philosophy of personal legend through textual references and figures out the deviations from Sartrean theory.

QUEST AND MYSTICISM: A JOURNEY FROM SELF TO SELF IN PAULO COELHO'S ALCHEMIST – S. KARTHIK SARVANAM (PH.D RESEARCH SCHOLAR IN ENGLISH), PERIYAR E.V.R COLLEGE, TIRUCHIRAPALLI.

S. Karthik Sarvanam explores the themes of quest and mysticism of individual self towards supreme self in Coelho's novel, The Alchemist. He tries to portray

the authors intense spiritual conflict with the contemporary society. Sarvanam concludes by stating that it is the radical inner transformation, similar to alchemy which is unstoppable condition to attain the supreme self.

PERILS AND PITFALLS IN THE PROCESS OF TRANSFORMATION- A PSYCHO- SPIRITUAL STUDY OF SIDDHARTHA OF HERMAN HESSE.
(Dr.ANMOL, DEPARTMENT Of HIGHER EDUCATION, HIMACHAL PRADESH)

In this research paper, Dr. Anmol, explores the themes of individuation, self realization of the protagonist, Siddhartha and also gives psycho analytical Interpretation of the novel. He dwells into Jungian and Freudian viewpoint. The process of transformation in the life of Siddhartha and the influence and link of traditional Indian concepts of Nirvana and Hindu ideas of cosmic identity.

QUEST FOR IDENTITY IN HERMAN HESSE'S NOVEL, SIDDHARTHA.
(S.M GAYATHRI, M.PHIL, ENGLISH, AND S.FARHANA ZABEEN, HOD, ENGLISH, BHARTHIYAR ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE, (W) DEVIYAKURICHI).

The research scholars, Zabeen and Gayathri, give an insight into Siddhartha's state of uncertainty, camaraderie between Siddhartha and Vasudeva who worked as an connection link between the worldly life and asceticism and the exploration of Buddhist elements.

PAULO COELHO'S THE ALCHEMIST : THE MNEMONICS OF LIFE
MANAGEMENT SKILLS. (DR. RAJENDRA KUMAR DASH, ASSISTANT
PROFESSOR (ENGLISH), KIIT UNIVERSITY, BHUBANESWAR.

In this research paper, Dr. Kumar, tries to relate the novel to the contemporary times and through the protagonist Santiago, examines how one can overcome the obstacles to success, following personal legend, and the love between Santiago and Fatima which constantly motivates him. Dr Kumare, portrays the novel as a self help book which has transformed many lives.

All of the research papers have dealt with similar themes of existential quest and search for meaning. Paulo Coelho's 'The Alchemist' and 'Siddhartha' by Herman Hesse have more to offer. Along with the existential themes, this research paper will also focus on the relevance of both the works in contemporary times and what the people are gaining from it.

1.8 Hypothesis

'The Alchemist' and 'Siddhartha', although differing in cultural context, portray a similar underlying tone of a personal quest conflicting with the outer world.

1.9 Research Methodology

This research paper will apply qualitative method for conducting the research. Literary analysis will be done using qualitative method and a close reading of both the works will be

conducted. The novels will be analyzed descriptively. Along with this, the philosophy of existentialism will be applied.

Chapter 2 : Unveiling Santiago's Quest

“There's only one way to learn...it's through action.” – ‘The Alchemist’

2.1 Reflection on 'The Alchemist'

Paulo Coelho is one among such writers who is the most widely published Brazilian author of all time. In total he has published 30 books, three of them are autobiographical, while majority of others are fictional. However all these novels are rooted in his life experiences. In total he has sold more than 150 million books in over 150 countries worldwide and his works have been translated in 80 languages. The recipient of numerous prestigious international awards. He is a story teller with a power to inspire nations and to change people lives.

Besides being an internationally acclaimed author, Coelho is an outspoken activist for peace and social justice. He is messenger of peace for the UN, an ambassador to the European Union for International Dialogue, A member of the board for the Shimon Peres Institute for Peace. Coelho was born on August 24, 1947 into a middle class family in Rio de Janeiro. He attended school run by the Jesuits, in accordance with the wishes of his parents, who were devout Catholics. However Coelho was a willful and rebellious child. He aspired to pursue a career as a writer – a career that his father, a pragmatic engineer, found wholly undesirable. In his late teens Coelho was committed to a Psychiatric Institution by his parents, who interpreted his literary ambitions as a sign of instability.

In 1967, Coelho reached an understanding with his parents and in order to fulfill their standards for practical and respectable profession, entered Law School.

Coelho's Alchemist which is considered as a world classic established his worldwide reputation. The Alchemist was noted as one of the 20th. Century most important literary

phenomenon. Since Coelho entered for the second time in the Guinness Book of records in Oct. 2008 with his book 'The Alchemist' as, the most translated book in the world (in 67 languages) . It has been edited in more than 150 countries and so far 35 million copies have been sold. It is a novel that is rich of metamorphic language and it reflects Coelho's personal experiences in learning alchemist for 11 years. The main character, Santiago, who goes to a faraway country just to pursue his dream, actually reflects the author who never gave up and followed in his dream to be writer despite many difficulties that encountered on his road to success.

Paulo believes that God has assigned a particular role to each individual and it is his/her duty to perform that role by following his dreams. Through this novel he tells us how each of us has a specific Personal Legend, though most of us do not realize it. The book is divided in two parts- The first part portrays how the boy comes to know Personal Legend by interpreting the Omens and ends with the boy's determination to follow his dream by overcoming the misfortunes and being the main force in controlling his own destiny. Part two describes his material as well as spiritual journey and describes with how he finally comes to know and his realization where the treasure actually is.

Santiago is a shepherd whose purpose in life is to travel. However his parents want him to become a priest which is matter of pride for them. Ever since his childhood, he wishes to know the world and for him this is much more important than knowing God and knowing man's sins. He is haunted by a recurrent dream in which a child transports him to the Egyptian Pyramids with the words, "If you have come here you find a treasure". (P. 14) The boy is well versed in Latin, Spanish, and theology. He is wise enough to analyze that possible of a dream come true that makes life interesting.(P.11) The dream makes him feel something is missing in his life. His heart craves for the essential spiritual needs that he was to fulfill and thus to achieve pure happiness. He decides to leave his house and family to roam alone.

His father reluctantly permits him by giving him enough money to buy flock. He chooses to be a shepherd, the profession that could allow him to wander from place to place. He meets an old woman who interprets dreams as the language of God. She tells him if he speaks in the language of the soul the person can understand its there meaning. She tells him that he must go to the Pyramids in Egypt and there he will find the treasure. For this interpretation she asks him to give one tenth of treasure in return.

Next, he meets Melchizedec, an old king of Salem and tells Santiago not to let fate govern his life. He asks Santiago his purpose of being Shepherd. Santiago tells that “I like to travel (P. 23) Melchizedelc explains whatever the hurdle may be”, when you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it.(p.23) The boy understands that this is the time he needs to fulfill his dream. Psychologist consider dream as a expression of the secrete, unconscious desires of human psyche. It is the dream that initiates Santiago’s discovery of self . Even though he could not exactly define what is dream really conveys, he realizes the need of undertaking a long journey to reach out his own sublime self. Melchizedek gives two stones called Urim and Thummim. He advises Santiago to read omens but to make his own decisions and trust himself. “If God leads the sheep so well, he will also lead man”. (P.37) with this optimism Santiago begins his journey. He is looted by a young man. He becomes frustrated. However he regains his confidence by his positive thinking.

He meets a crystal merchant who talks about his dream of pilgrimages to Mecca. But does not want to move to fulfill his dream. He is happy with what he has. Commenting on the contrast between Santiago and the crystal merchant, Mriliini Taker observes 1) “In this way, Coelho captures the drama of human beings who sacrifice fulfillment to conformity. Only few people choose to fallow the road that has been made for them and find God while searching for their mission on earth”. Nearly a year after his arrival in Africa, Santiago has earned enough money. One morning he makes up his mind to return to Tarifa and by large

sheep flock. This is a moment of decision making for Santiago. He decides to go back and starts packing his belongings. He finds the pouch given by the old shepherd. It reminds him of the king's statement. Ultimately, he comes to the conclusion. I can always go back to be a shepherd. But maybe I'll never have another chance to get the pyramids in Egypt.(P.61) He feels determined to continue his Personal Legend and moves on his way. He joins a group travelling with a desert caravan. He meets an Englishman who is on his way to meet an alchemist residing in the desert. The Englishman serves both as a friend and contrast to Santiago. While the Englishman is lost in theory, Santiago believes in the practical aspect of life. He represents that class of educated men who rely more on bookish knowledge rather than their instinct. Santiago's meeting the Englishman helps him to understand all the knowledge of the art of alchemy encompasses the Master Work that involves the transformation of lead into gold. Santiago's treasure hunt also becomes his spiritual journey as he decides to learn about the soul of the world. He begins to understand the Language of the world in a better way and pays attention to minute details.

The next phase of his spiritual journey takes him to an oasis as the caravan must stop at the oasis because of the tribal war in the desert. The caravan has no choice but to carry on and hope for the best.

Santiago keeps on learning new experiences. At a neutral place called Al-Fayyum, Santiago meets his soul mate named Fatima. As soon as Santiago approaches her, he notices her beauty and falls instantly in love with her. Here Coelho narrates the power of love and vital role it plays in one's life. Santiago's love for Fatima is another important step in Santiago's quest for his Personal Legend. Fatima too reaffirms Santiago's faith in his Personal Legend.: "I am a part of your dream, a part of your destiny as you call it. That's why I want to continue your goal. (P.102)

Coelho believes that when we love, we always try to improve ourselves and that is when everything is possible and thus true love cannot prevent us from walking our path and following our dream. For him everything in the world starts making sense. Coelho writes

“When you are in love, things make even more sense” (P.95) After meeting Fatima, Santiago again stands at a road with two diversions and he has to choose one.

He seems to be quite reluctant about following his dreams. “I have found my treasures. I have Fatima. She is a treasure greater than anything else. The alchemist makes him realize the essence of true love. “Love never keeps a man from pursuing his destiny; If he abandons that pursuit, it is because it wasn’t true love. (P.115) Fatima becomes treasure for him. But she understands his need to follow his dream and asks him to realize his goal with other hope and courage; he is able to transcend his journey with renewed enthusiasm. Santiago’s spiritual consciousness evolves as he continues his journey, with the alchemist. He faces many difficulties and overcome all. The alchemist’s lesson that action is the only source of knowledge motivates Santiago. Moreover the Alchemist has told him that there is only one thing that makes a dream impossible to achieve, the fear of failure.

According to Jyoti Mishra, As Santiago’s journey integrating his physical self with the spiritual self, he gets liberated from his old, narrow perceptions and moves to a larger awareness of life a grander experience of the self and establishes a greater connectivity with the universe. Santiago is thus undergoing an amazing metamorphosis from an ordinary shepherd self to a nobler self of an alchemist 2 (190-191) (reference – Mishra Jyoti – Coelho’s Fiction – Existential & spiritual Preoccupation: - Select study of Seven Novels. Germany LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing GmbH & co. KG 2012 Print.

Before leaving, the alchemist prepares gold from lead and divides it into four parts. He gives one part to the monk, one to Santiago and keeps one for himself. He gives fourth part to the

monk to keep for Santiago in case he needs in future. He dissuades Santiago from discovery of the treasure is now complete. The end of the novel is the masterstroke by Coelho. Santiago's return journey is not described but directly we find him in Spain at the same church. His native Andalusian plains and full asleep, contemplating the strange way god has guided him to the treasure. He plans to head to Tarifa. Thus ultimately he learns that his treasure lies not at the pyramids, as his dream foretold, but back at the abandoned church where his journey began. His realization has powerful implications about the importance of looking into the roots and foundation of our lives. Santiago's journey for the treasure makes his inward journey to find his true self possible and both merge in his ultimate realization of the truth of life that is often simple and always within our grasp. All we need is faith in our "Personal Legend". In the Theory of Human Motivation, Maslow describes self-actualization as: What a man can be, he must be. This need we may call self-actualization. It refers to the desire for self-fulfillment namely, to the tendency for him to, become actualized in what he is potentially. This tendency might be phrased as the desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything than one is capable of becoming". (370)

Alchemy, has been associated with two main activities: to attempt to when ingested would result in great vitality and health, and possibly even immortality. Chinese everlasting life. Santiago gives up his wealth for his quest. When he sets out. He does so in hope of finding even more wealth just as a base becomes a more valuable metal through alchemy. As in the process of alchemy where base metals like lead is transformed into gold having byproducts Elixir of life and the Philosopher's Stone, the spiritual transformation in the boy transform him from a shepherd to a wise man with profound knowledge and deeper understanding of the cosmos. The Gold symbolizes the spiritual wealth he finally gains. Regarding this Joyati Mishra points out, "Santiago himself is no less a symbol of alchemy". He is a symbolic blend of the base metal, which is quotation of life of a shepherd and the gold that is spiritual wealth

he finally gains.”. We also see over and over in the book that those willing to pursue their Personal Legends enjoy material success in addition to the spiritual upliftment they achieve.

Santiago’s journey from Spain to the Pyramids and then back to Spain makes him find the treasure of life. In order to arrive at his treasure he transforms himself time to time. He first learns to accept change to consider its simplicity, to trust his experiences of day to day life over bookish knowledge, to understand the significance of suffering to overcome fear to recognize the meaning of love and most important to live in the present moment, read Gold’s will in signs and Omens, listen to his heart, and penetrate the soul of the world.

2.2 Dream, Desire and Travels to the Unknown

It is obvious that Santiago longs to travel to the faraway land to satisfy his desire of fulfilling his heart. Dream, desire and travel are the metaphors of his passionate soul which make him move toward the unknown. He therefore listens to his heart’s voice considering that it is indeed the god’s own voice which reminds him of his very destiny. So he is tuned to his heart irrespective of his mind’s rational disposition. So he always thinks of travelling to Egypt, the unknown land of his dream, so as to find treasure and happiness.

Prakash Thapa (2006) states that travelling to the unknown gives liberation: You know silence speaks more than words, and this is in a sense, a way toward freedom: freedom of an individual passion. When I think of walking amidst the mountains, I find a sense of freedom. The moment is beautiful and I start thinking of life: how can I understand life in its entirety, and yet I find, in the mountain trails, an eternal silence, for silence signifies an eternal bliss. That people in most instances come to enjoy the wilderness of the mountains, and free themselves, bringing liberation into their soul: the liberation of the self (19).

And moreover everything on earth is being continuously transformed, because the earth is alive... and it has a soul. We are part of that soul, so we rarely recognize that it is working for us. But in the crystal shop you probably realized that even the glasses were collaborating in your success (75).

The similar thought structure of the inner search is also predominant in Poems of Kabir. Tagore (2002) states that a man is at his home when he is in tune with his inner self. This highlights the integration of the self with the very thoughts of freedom in essence (35). Likewise, Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche (1994) also states that a man can find eternal peace and the realm of silence when he is “placing the mind” in accordance with his own compassionate thoughts in essence. Rinpoche further calls it a state of relaxation which is how one enters meditation (17). We can also find the sense of freedom of the mind in J. Krishnamurti (2005) as well, for he says that thought creates the thinker who isolates himself to give himself permanency, for thoughts are always impermanent (60).

2.3 Maktub: An Arabic Predeterminism

So far *The Alchemist* tries to state the theory of Arabic concept of pre-determinism, for it advocates that everything in the universe is already determined, so that everybody has to undergo the fate according to his predetermined destiny. So *The Alchemist's* assertion is to some extent pessimistic in its undertone if we compare its advocacy in terms of quantum physics and other sciences. Contrarily, it is quite clear that the world is not only governed by deterministic thinking but it is also largely governed by the laws of science as well.

This theory of determinism is similar to that of the eastern concepts of fate and undying soul, so that man is compelled to believe his destiny rather than the changing theories of science and humanism. So concerning fate, Cram (n.d.) mentions that “some things are destined to be,” a quote from the book *Lover Mine* by J.R. Ward, and this means that sometimes fate

controls our lives and we have no choice in changing our destiny, as some things are made to be, whether we like it or not. In the novel *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho, the protagonist Santiago is pushed by fate out of his comfort zone, to embark on his journey and fulfill his personal legend and experience the marvels of the world (32). His destiny is always controlled by fate, as all his decisions are influenced by fate in one way or another. Fate is the one thing that forces you into uncomfortable situations and brings about the potential within one's self.

Likewise *The Alchemist* clearly states that Santiago is learning the Language of the World, and everything in the world is beginning to make sense to him even the flight of the hawks. Furthermore, it states that things make more sense when one is in love in essence.

2.4 Cosmic Soul and Its Impact

Regarding the subject of cosmic soul and its impact *The Alchemist* straightforwardly puts forward its views of Universal Soul that makes impression on all beings. According to Gradesaver (n.d.), one of the fundamental themes of *The Alchemist* is that our paths are pre-ordained or *maktub*, in the words of the shopkeeper. The goal of life is to live in harmony with what is ordained for one, or one's Personal Legend; happiness depends upon this harmony. Moreover, we all once knew, as children, what our Personal Legends were. The main problem is that as humans and adults, we strive to make things more complex than they really are. In the text of *The Alchemist*, this problem is mirrored by the experience Santiago has with alchemy. Likewise while travelling through the desert with the Englishman, Santiago reads several books about the secrets of alchemy.

The books claim that the original secret of alchemy could be written in a single sentence, but that mankind had made its explanations of that secret so convoluted that they could not be

understood by anyone. Santiago rejects this and contends that he can learn everything he needs to know about alchemy through his day-to-day life. This conviction, that one's fate, or Personal Legend, is apparent in any aspect of one's normal life forms one of the most important themes of *The Alchemist*. When Melchizedek says, "When you want something, all the universe is conspiring to help you achieve it (Coelho 22)," he means that since it is fate that puts a desire in Santiago's heart, fate won't stop him from achieving it. The problem is focusing one's energy on determining what it is that one really wants. Santiago does this during the last leg of his journey with the alchemist, when he learns from the desert to look inside him and silence his petty fears. By silencing these fears, he is able to finally see that he is one with the world around him and that his Personal Legend is a harmonious part of that world. This is evinced in a magical fashion when Santiago is able to communicate with the elements, in the climactic scene in which he turns himself into the wind.

Likewise, Thapa (2006) states that beauty is independent to consciousness, and it gives spaces of freedom. Freedom is the way of living, it is liberating, and it gives emancipation from all worldly clinging (253).

2.5 Travelling to the Unknown

That, Santiago is desiring throughout the time, is his longing for the unknown, to the infinite. It advocates at the same time some sorts of spiritual undertones. The universe with its vast expanse is infinite in nature, it is unknown, and yet it controls all lives in the universe, thus generating some kind of special driving force which Santiago calls as the unknown. For instance, Gradesaver (n.d.) states that the unity of all existence can be traced as a theme through two main aspects of the narrative. First, as Coelho describes it, the Soul of the World unites us all – people, plants, rocks and elements. Second, that there is no significant

difference between the different religions of the world. In the narrative of *The Alchemist*, this unity of humans and the natural world is pointed out several times. One example is The Alchemist's assertion that even material elements have a Personal Legend.

The reason that alchemists can turn any metal into gold is because it is the Personal Legend of that common metal to become gold. The alchemist helps achieve their Personal Legends in much the same way as the alchemist helps Santiago realize his own Legend. This unity with the natural world can also be seen when Santiago converses with the wind, the desert and, finally, the one hand which wrote everything. This, the reader is to understand, is God.

2.6 The Castle, Caravan and The Oasis

Obvious as it is that the castle, caravan and the oasis are the metaphorical representations of dream, desire, travel and hope to certain extent. Since Santiago desires to see new places, cross the deserts, meet new people to bring some change in his life. So the boy is unconventional to the extent that he wants to break the common monotony of life in particular. He has dreams. He seems to be creative in life. He is not static. He is a seer. So he longs to travel to the unknown world, cross the desert, observe the caravansary and oasis which is life-generating drives for Santiago. This concept is further revealed in *Gradersaver* as well. For instance, dreams in the sense of "goals" or "aspirations" also constitute a major theme. Santiago's dream of the treasure provides him with a goal; Santiago resolves to find the treasure, and by his decision to pursue this goal he is able to realize his Personal Legend. Thus, Coelho plays with the dual (and of course linked) meanings of the word "dream", as both visions during slumber and far-reaching objectives. In this sense, the message of *The Alchemist* could be described as follows: everyone needs a dream. The vulnerable periods of Santiago's journey are when he has no clearly defined goal. This is true when he finishes

working at the crystal shop, as well as when he contemplates staying at the oasis with Fatima. Both times he thinks about desisting, but winds up carrying on unswayed.

Likewise Thapa (2006) also states that one feels free when he is liberated from the old dogma and theories. So, one can really begin his journey of freedom, the journey of the inner self to discover the eternal truth and happiness (59).

2.7 Happiness Is Within Us

The main concept of *The Alchemist* is that happiness comes from within. For instance, Santiago leaves his home, the Andalusian region in search of treasure. But, on the contrary, he loses even things he has. He ultimately returned homeland and under the abandoned church he discovered his treasure. So the essence of living in contentment is within us, it is with everyone else. So the boy stood up shakily, and looked once more at the pyramids. They seemed to laugh at him, and he laughed back, his heart bursting with joy because, now he knew where his treasure was (Coelho 158).

The boy becomes a traveller of his own desires and Osho (2012) also states that it is something like that of the fourth dimension: Travelling into the unknown, thus unfolding the multiple paths of inner dimensions, and this is Something very creative dimension of life in particular (254). So the boy travels in freedom, crossing the barriers of mind and thought patterns thus following his own voice, the voice of freedom. This spirit is much parallel in terms of freedom interpreted by Tagore (2002), for he states that the world has not been broken up into fragments of narrow domestic walls and where the mind is led into ever widening thought and action (Tagore, 35). So, Santiago finally feels at his home after his journey of inner self into the realm of the unknown. He feels as if he is enlightened to himself.

Chapter : 3 Unveiling the Quest of ‘Siddhartha’

*“Nothing was, nothing will be, everything has reality and presence.” –
‘Siddhartha’*

3.1 Insights into the Book

Hermann Hesse’s novel ‘Siddhartha’ is acclaimed in academia for its examination of Eastern philosophies and the human condition, coupled with Hesse’s literary finesse. This enduring work emerges as a deep exploration of spiritual enlightenment and the quest for life’s deeper meanings. It engages with perennial philosophical inquiries including selfhood, the thirst for wisdom, and the equilibrium between the spiritual and material realms. ‘Siddhartha’ narrates the spiritual journey of its eponymous character against the backdrop of ancient India. Siddhartha’s quest, characterized by encounters with diverse mentors, includes a crucial meeting with Gautama Buddha. However, the novel primarily revolves around Siddhartha’s individualistic pursuit of enlightenment. His journey involves experiences ranging from materialism and sensuality to parenthood and despair, culminating in spiritual enlightenment. The narrative underscores the interconnectedness of all life forms and the critical role of empathy and compassion. Siddhartha’s spiritual journey represents the enduring quest for understanding and inner tranquility, which renders it pertinent to a broad audience in search of profound wisdom and inner calm.

This research paper attempts to provide a comprehensive analysis of Hermann Hesse’s ‘Siddhartha’ with the explication of its philosophical themes, spiritual exploration, and

enduring relevance within the context of Eastern philosophies and the human quest for perennial wisdom and inner peace.

Hermann Hesse, a renowned German-Swiss novelist and poet of the early 20th century, was remarkably shaped by his personal life experiences, which left an indelible mark on his literary works. Born in 1877 in Germany, Hesse's upbringing was steeped in the traditions of a devout Protestant family. However, as he matured, he embarked on a transformative exploration of Eastern philosophies. This overwhelming encounter with Eastern thought had a great influence not only on 'Siddhartha' but also on his entire literary oeuvre. Central to Hesse's body of work are recurring themes revolving around spirituality, self-realization, and the relentless quest for existential meaning. These themes form the bedrock of his literary career and are woven intricately throughout his writings. The works of Hermann Hesse are subjects of scholarly investigation, primarily owing to their intense exploration of Eastern philosophies, existential questions, and the intricacies of human existence. Hesse's literary craftsmanship and philosophical depth make his works perennially relevant for critical analysis and academic discourse.

'Siddhartha,' published in 1922, stands as a hallmark of German literature. Set against the backdrop of ancient India, the novel intricately traces the spiritual odyssey of its eponymous protagonist, Siddhartha, in his relentless pursuit of enlightenment and profound self-realization. It does not purport to offer a biographical or historically accurate portrayal of the life of Siddhartha Gautama, the historical Buddha, notwithstanding the lead character and his son bearing names reminiscent of the historical Buddha and his offspring. Instead, it is a work of literary fiction that employs the character Siddhartha as a narrative device to explore philosophical and spiritual themes. While there exist certain parallels between the fictional Siddhartha's spiritual journey and select aspects of the historical Buddha's life, such as the pursuit of enlightenment, renunciation of material wealth, and encounters with spiritual

mentors, the novel takes substantial artistic liberties in shaping its narrative. Hesse's 'Siddhartha' is chiefly an allegorical and philosophical work, which draws inspiration from diverse Eastern philosophical and religious traditions, including Buddhism and Hinduism, to examine broader concepts of self-discovery, spirituality, and the existential quest for purpose.

Commencing from his early years as the son of a Brahmin, progressing through his phase as an ascetic Samana, followed by a stint as a prosperous merchant, and culminating in his role as a humble ferryman, the narrative meticulously traces Siddhartha's life trajectory. This meandering odyssey unfolds against the backdrop of ancient India. Siddhartha meets a variety of spiritual teachers along the way, including an important encounter with the historical Gautama Buddha. However, the crux of the narrative revolves around Siddhartha's individualistic relentless pursuit of enlightenment. The novel deals with perennial philosophical and existential quandaries. It probes into the very essence of selfhood, the unquenchable thirst for wisdom and knowledge, and the intricate equilibrium between the spiritual and material realms of existence. Furthermore, it accentuates the interconnectedness that binds all living entities and underscores the fundamental role of empathy and compassion in an individual's spiritual expedition.

3.1 Renunciation of Asceticism

Despite his comfortable upbringing and privileged life as a Brahmin boy being raised in a tranquil Indian village by his loving father, Siddhartha is plagued by an inner discontentment and an unrelenting yearning for spiritual fulfilment. Recognizing the limitations of conventional Brahmin teachings, he renounces his comfortable life for relentlessly ascetic life of a Samana. He joins a cohort of ascetics, and commits himself to rigorous self-denial and intense meditation as means to attain wisdom and enlightenment. Along with his companion,

Govinda, Siddhartha subjects himself to extreme austerities, such as prolonged fasting and physical hardships. These practices result in severe physical debilitation, malnourishment, and near-death experiences.

The evident suffering prompts Siddhartha to question the efficacy of such extreme asceticism. A chance encounter with Gautama Buddha also makes him contemplate the alternative paths to enlightenment that do not necessitate extreme asceticism.

3.2 Worldly Pleasures

Siddhartha soon embarks on the second phase of his spiritual journey by relinquishing the asceticism as a way to self-realization. He immerses himself in the pursuit of material wealth and worldly success. He associates himself with Kamaswami, a prosperous merchant, and actively engages in various commercial endeavours. This newly adopted lifestyle facilitates the accumulation of substantial wealth that leads to a life characterized by opulence, comfort, sensual pleasures, and worldly achievements. A critical moment in Siddhartha's worldly journey is his encounter with Kamala, a courtesan with whom he deeply falls in love. This romantic liaison introduces him to the intricacies of love, which also serves to integrate sensuality and basic human instincts into his mission of attaining enlightenment and truth. Save for this incursion into the worldly pleasures, Siddhartha would have remained incomplete in his wisdom as a fully matured human being. In this regard, Divender Mohan aptly observes: "Kamala's union with Siddhartha symbolizes this expressive mutuality, indeed the total expressive energy of the active principle of femaleness that binds them together to the original substance of the controlling principle of the universe, both active and passive" (Mohan 85). He fully indulges in sensual pleasures without any compunction concerning the sensory and hedonistic facets of life. He partakes in physical relationships and

revels in the pleasures of the flesh. These experiences help him to realize the ephemeral but biologically inescapable nature of desire, passion, and attachments.

3.3. Father's Attachments

Notwithstanding his initial prosperity in the material realm, Siddhartha's life takes a bleak and disillusioning turn as he loses all his accumulated wealth. This period of financial ruin plunges him into existential despair and self-reproach. He reaches a point where he contemplates suicide having been driven to the precipice by the futility of worldly pursuits. His journey eventually leads him to the banks of a river, where he encounters Vasudeva, a sagacious and serene ferryman. Under Vasudeva's gentle mentorship, he imbibes invaluable lessons concerning wisdom of listening to the river and being serene and calm. This transitional phase in Siddhartha's life entails a nuanced exploration of worldly and physical aspects of human existence.

From another perspective, this crisis accentuates the tension between attachment and detachment in Siddhartha's life. His newfound role as a father forces him to confront the delicate balance between his past commitment to detachment and the strong attachment that he now feels towards his son. Siddhartha is torn between the desire to love and nurture Rahula and the knowledge, gleaned from his own spiritual journey, that attachment can lead to suffering. Moreover, Siddhartha's acceptance of Rahula into his life confronts him with the complexities of the materialistic world that he had previously renounced. Kamala's death and her bequest of Rahula force Siddhartha to reconsider matters of wealth, inheritance, and societal expectations—elements from which he had consciously distanced himself during his ascetic phase. This collision of two contrasting worlds further exacerbates his inner turmoil.

Siddhartha is seen in dilemma regarding his choices between whether to impose his own spiritual worldview on his son or to allow Rahula the autonomy to make his own choices and carve his unique path.

Rahula turns out to be a rude, disrespectful, and disobedient son who finds himself in difficulties to get adjusted to the simple living of the father. Rahula, now a teenager, is drawn to the material world and the desire for wealth and a more conventional life. He feels estranged from Siddhartha's way of life and is not totally in tune with his father's spiritual path. He goes away from his father one day. The inevitable separation is symbolic of the ultimate inability of parents to shape their progeny's lives in right direction as well as of the fact that the children cannot fully flower in the shadows of their parent's, notwithstanding parental care and good-will.

3.4 Son's Departure

Subsequent to his son's departure, Siddhartha undergoes a substantial transformation in his perception and comprehension of the human condition. Rahula, who had brought both delight and sorrow, initiates a sequence of alterations within Siddhartha's inner world and his interactions with the external environment.

Initially, distancing himself from his life-long passion for wisdom and spiritual enlightenment, he starts thinking and reasoning "childishly and illogically"; whenever he takes travellers with sons and daughters across the river as a ferryman, he cannot but help envying their pleasures of parenthood (Hesse104).

Siddhartha, once detached from the desires and pursuits of common individuals, now perceives these individuals in a different light. This transformation signifies a departure from

his preceding detachment and an escalating appreciation for the multifaceted tapestry of human experiences.

He now regarded people in a different light from previously: not very clever, not very proud and therefore all the more warm, curious and sympathetic. When he now took the usual kind of travellers across, businessmen, soldiers and women, they no longer seemed alien to him as they once did. He did not understand or share their thoughts and views, but he shared with them life's urges and desires. (Hesse 104)

Despite having attained a significant level of self-discipline, Siddhartha begins to perceive the common people as kindred spirits. Their superficialities, cravings, and inconsequential concerns no longer struck him as irrational; instead, he found them comprehensible, endearing, and deserving of esteem. He acknowledges the tremendous strength and vitality in their everyday desires, vanities, and follies, which also involve the irresistible love of parents for their offspring and the passionate aspirations of youth.

There was the blind love of a mother for her child, the blind foolish pride of a fond father for his only son, the blind eager strivings of a young vain woman for ornament and the admiration of men. All these little simple, foolish, but tremendously strong, vital, passionate urges and desires no longer seemed trivial to Siddhartha. For their sake he saw people live and do great things, travel, conduct wars, suffer and endure immensely, and he loved them for it. He saw life, vitality, the indestructible and Brahman in all their desires and needs. These people were worthy of love and admiration in their blind loyalty, in their blind strength and tenacity. (Hesse 104-5)

Gradually, Siddhartha's sense of unity and interconnectedness with humanity deepens. He concedes that, in addition to the consciousness of the unity of all life, these ordinary individuals possess qualities and virtues that he had hitherto disregarded. Their loyalty,

strength, and unwavering determination in the face of life's trials become apparent to him. This realization leads him to question the value of his own knowledge and contemplation, wondering whether it might constitute a form of self-adulation or intellectual conceit. Siddhartha apprehends that these individuals, frequently categorized as ordinary, exhibit qualities that are equal to, and at times superior to, those of thinkers and philosophers. He realizes that wisdom is not the exclusive domain of philosophers and thinkers but also an inherent capacity within every individual. This evolving perspective deconstructs the barriers he had previously erected between himself and the rest of humanity. Wisdom, as he now grasps, entails the art of perceiving unity in every facet of life in the present moment. This understanding matures progressively within him and is mirrored in Vasudeva's serene and childlike countenance. It embodies harmony, knowledge of the eternal perfection of the world, and a deep sense of unity.

Despite these transformative shifts, Siddhartha's affection for Rahula remains undiminished, and the pain continues to gnaw at his heart. He nurtures his tenderness for his son and yearns for Rahula's return. It is a testament to his being a human being like others since the spark of parental love and longing is still burning.

In the final phase of his spiritual odyssey, Siddhartha commits himself to deep contemplation by the river.

Through this awakening, Siddhartha acquires an insight into the interconnectedness of all facets of existence and the inherent unity that pervades the universe. To reach the ultimate truth and self-realization, he went through deep and varied experiences including materialism, sensuality, romantic love, parenthood, despair, and, ultimately, spiritual enlightenment. Each experience contributed significantly to his evolution as he endeavoured to unravel the mysteries of self and human life. In the dialogue between him and his

childhood friend, Govinda, who has become a follower of Gautama Buddha, Siddhartha attests to this:

[E]verything that exists is good-death as well as life, sin as well as holiness, wisdom as well as folly.

Everything is necessary, everything needs only my agreement, my assent, my loving understanding; then all is well with me and nothing can harm me. I learned through my body and soul that it was necessary for me to sin, that I needed lust, that I had to strive for property and experience nausea and the depths of despair in order to learn not to resist them, in order to learn to love the world, and no longer compare it with some kind of desired imaginary world, some imaginary vision of perfection, but to leave it as it is, to love it and be glad to belong to it. These, Govinda, are some of the thoughts that are in my mind.

(Hesse 115) The dialogue between Govinda and Siddhartha encapsulates the novel's central themes and the spiritual evolution of its main character. His friend Govinda still follows the teachings of the Buddha in the form of strict discipline and meditation, while Siddhartha has taken a more experiential and individualistic route.

Thus, Hermann Hesse's 'Siddhartha' serves as a great work of philosophical and spiritual exploration that encapsulates the themes of self-discovery, enlightenment, and the relentless pursuit of life's deeper meanings.

In academia, 'Siddhartha' is often studied for its exploration of Eastern philosophies, its examination of the human condition, and its literary craftsmanship. Scholars and readers alike continue to find inspiration and wisdom in the novel's timeless themes and Hesse's masterful storytelling. The character of Siddhartha embodies the universal quest for meaning and enlightenment that makes the novel relatable to a broad audience. In the words of Kher, "Siddhartha is a journey beyond these and yet into man's own abyss where alone can he

discover his real self, the nucleus of all things” (Kher 18). Siddhartha’s pilgrimage stands as a timeless parable that resonates with those embarked on a quest for penetrating insight and imperturbable inner peace.

Chapter : 4 Understanding the Existential Yearnings of ‘Santiago’ and ‘Siddhartha’

Though Cartesian philosophy of “I think therefore I exist” sums up the philosophical underpinnings of the existentialist thought, Existentialism as a Western thought has its roots in the writings of several 19 and 20 century philosophers like Frederic Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, Soren Kierkegaard. Existentialism deals with the finding meaning in the existence of man; from this perspective, there are no meanings or structures that precede one’s own existence, as one finds in organized religion. Therefore, the individual must find his identity or create meaning for his or her self. It is difficult to find ‘this meaning’ in man’s life and to find the reason of the ‘existence of man’ and hence it might lead to pessimism and nihilism. So the investigation might lead to the meaninglessness in the existence of man and therefore to Absurdity in existence. Hence, popular existentialist trends like boredom, anger, fear, depression and pessimism and suicide or death becomes a common feature of the 20 century literature.

However, nothing in the philosophical trait of existentialism dictates a negative thought or the negative view of humanity or reality. In fact, much of the philosophy revolves around the limitless capacity for ethically and intellectually engaged persons to enact change in the world. Positive change is an imperative for a true existentialist; otherwise existence is a complete void. So, it is not simply enough to “be” but has to be something with a “choice” or “decision”-otherwise life lacks meaning or purpose. From this point of view, existentialism is highly positive means for approaching reality.

Soren Kierkegaard’s concern was how people responded under crisis and the choices one made in shaping one’s life; while Jean-Paul Sartre, the key figure in the philosophy of existentialism and phenomenology, and one of the leading figures in 20th-century French

philosophy and Marxism talks about the principle philosophy of 'Being and Nothingness'. Sartre believes in complete freedom of an individual as an imperative to action; given ultimate freedom, humans also should be ultimately responsible for their own actions to establish their identity.

Identity is the distinguishing character or personality of an individual and individuality is the relation established by psychological identification. Identity also can be understood as the sameness of essential or generic character in different instances; the sameness in all that constitutes the objective reality of a thing: ONENESS. Beyond the basic need for a sense of control, man is deeply driven by the sense of identity, of who a person is from within. "Who am I?" is the central question that every individual faces in some phase of his/her life or the other. As the Cartesian philosophy gives absolute importance to the mind and thinking and hence Francis Bacon says, "It is thinking that maketh a man". Many Western social theories are to do with creating or preserving man's sense of identity in such a physical plan of growth.

The Eastern metaphysical world, especially Indian the way of life, looks at the same question from a different perspective. It believes in the philosophy of "I exist; therefore I think", giving essentialism to existence. The ultimate existence of man enables him/her where s/he may choose to think. It also promotes the understanding of 'oneness of all-living and non-living; plant, animal and human with the five basic elements of life which are- ether, air, fire, water and earth. The entire cosmos is made of these five basic elements in different permutations and combinations, and hence the variety in existence. At the bottom of such multiplicity, one needs to see the oneness and integrity is the true essence of Indian thought of identity.

Psychologist Abraham Maslow in his hierarchy of needs, talks about the lower needs and higher needs of man to understand man from the existential point of view.

Physiological needs (health, food, sleep), Safety needs (shelter and removal from danger), the needs of belonging (love, affection and a sense of being a part of groups) and the needs of esteem (self-esteem and esteem of others) are the basic needs of man. When the physiological and safety needs, which are the lower level needs are satisfied, then begins the higher needs of belonging and esteem which slowly leads to the still higher needs of self-actualization and self-realization of one's own self.

Through self-realization, man moves inside his/her own self to understand the existential and identity problem, understanding which the individual potential in the true sense is achieved. What can be clearly seen is that the upper three levels are about the person and their sense of self. This is in contrast to the bottom two levels, which are about control.

Psychologists like Freud and Lacan talk about the identity formation in terms of mirror image, individual identity, multiple identity, group identity, social identity and identity paradoxes, but Indian School of thought talks about existence and identity in terms of oneness of all and unanimity in cosmos.

Hermann Karl Hesse (1877 –1962) was a German-born poet, novelist, and painter.

His best-known works include *Siddhartha* (1922), which explores an individual's search for authenticity, self-knowledge and spirituality. He was influenced by Schopenhauer and theosophy along with Indian culture and Buddhist philosophy that had already developed earlier in his life. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1946 for his contribution of the eastern thought in the western world.

4.1. 'Siddhartha'

Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha* is one of the most popular Western novels set in India, which deals with the spiritual journey of self-discovery of a man named Siddhartha during the time of the Gautama Buddha. The word Siddhartha is made up of two words in Sanskrit language, *siddha* (achieved) + *artha* (what was searched for), which together means "he who has found meaning (of existence)" or "he who has attained his goals". In fact, the Buddha's own name, before his renunciation, was Siddhartha Gautama, Prince of Kapilavastu. In this book, the Buddha is referred to as "Gotama". The novel is set in the Nepalese district of Kapilavastu. Siddhartha is the protagonist of the novel and Govinda is a friend and follower of Siddhartha. Siddhartha's Father is a traditional Brahmin who was unable to satisfy Siddhartha's quest for enlightenment.

Siddhartha himself was not happy...Siddhartha had begun to feel the seeds of discontent within him...He had begun to suspect that his worthy father and his other teachers, the wise Brahmins, had already passed on to him the bulk and best of their wisdom (05)

Siddhartha was not happy with the books, sacrifices and Brahmin discourses. He feels that one must find the source within one's own self, and everything else is a mere seeking and an error. Siddhartha decides to leave behind his home in the hope of gaining spiritual illumination by becoming an ascetic wandering beggar of the Samanas. Joined by his best friend, Govinda, Siddhartha fasts, becomes homeless, renounces all personal possessions, and intensely meditates, eventually seeking and personally speaking with Gotama, the famous Buddha, or the Enlightened One.

Afterward, both Siddhartha and Govinda acknowledge the elegance of the Buddha's teachings. Although Govinda hastily joins the Buddha's order, Siddhartha does not follow, claiming that the Buddha's philosophy, though supremely wise, does not account for the

necessarily distinct experiences of each person. He argues that the individual seeks an absolutely unique, personal meaning that cannot be presented to him by a teacher. He thus resolves to carry on his quest alone.

Siddhartha crosses a river and the generous ferryman, whom Siddhartha is unable to pay, merrily predicts that Siddhartha will return to the river later to compensate him in some way. Venturing onward toward city life, Siddhartha discovers Kamala, the most beautiful woman he has yet seen. Kamala, a courtesan, notes Siddhartha's handsome appearance and fast wit, telling him that he must become wealthy to win her affections so that she may teach him the art of love. Siddhartha says, "I can think, I can wait, I can fast" (56) for Kamala. He even composes poetry for her. But Kamala asks, "Cannot you do anything else besides think, fast and compose poetry?" (57) Although Siddhartha despised materialistic pursuits as a Samana, he agrees now to Kamala's suggestions. She directs him to the employ of Kamaswami, a local businessman, and insists that he have Kamaswami treat him as an equal rather than an underling. Siddhartha easily succeeds, providing a voice of patience and tranquillity, which Siddhartha learned from his days as an ascetic, against Kamaswami's fits of passion. Thus Siddhartha becomes a rich man and Kamala's lover, though in his middle years he realizes that the luxurious lifestyle he has chosen is merely a game that lacks spiritual fulfilment.

This game was called samsara, a game for children, a game which was perhaps enjoyable played once, twice, ten times-but was it worth playing continually? (84)

Leaving the fast-paced bustle of the city, Siddhartha returns to the river and thinks of a new existence. He lies down under a coconut tree on the river bank and decides to go and lie down in the river current of water. Inside the river water, he heard the sound of OM that reached his consciousness and realized the wretchedness of his crime.

“Om”, he pronounced inwardly, and he was conscious of Brahman, of the indestructibility of life; he remembered all that he had forgotten, all that was divine. (90)

The very next morning, Siddhartha briefly reconnects with Govinda, who is passing through the area as a wandering Buddhist.

The wheel of appearances revolves quickly, Govinda. Where is Siddhartha the Brahman, where is Siddhartha the Samana, where is Siddhartha the rich man?

The transitory soon changes, Govinda. You know that. (94)

Siddhartha now realized that too much knowledge hindered him and so he struggled with this self when he was a Brahmin and an ascetic. Knowledge had brought within him arrogance as he was the best at every walk of life, even as the businessman. Siddhartha understood and realized that the inner voice had always been right, that no teacher could have brought him salvation. The priest and Samana in him died after he became a materialistic business man and lover; the pleasure-monger in him died after the horrible years of madness of worldly life. And now, after leaving the city life, the new Siddhartha is born, and he was very happy.

Siddhartha thus reunites with the ferryman, named Vasudeva, with whom he begins a humbler way of life. Although Vasudeva is a simple man, he understands and relates that the river has many voices and significant messages to divulge to any who might listen. Siddhartha shares every incident in his life with Vasudeva, who listened patiently.

Vasudeva listened with great attention; he heard all about his childhood, about his studies, his seeking, his pleasures and needs...he knew how to listen—he only listened. (104)

Siddhartha also shares his experience in the river and the sound OM that he listened deep inside the river. Vasudeva understands that Siddhartha listened to the river and the river has spoken to Siddhartha; and so asks Siddhartha to stay with him. Hence Siddhartha decides to

live the rest of his life in the presence of the spiritually inspirational river. Siddhartha becomes the ferryman and starts listening to the river as the river knows everything; one can learn everything from it. Vasudeva says, “The rich and distinguished Siddhartha will become a rower; Siddhartha the learned Brahmin will become a ferryman. You have also learned this from this from the river.

You will learn the other thing too.” (105) The other thing is to be found out by each individual by himself/herself by listening to nature; it can’t be expressed in thought or language. Slowly, Siddhartha learnt to listen, to listen with a still heart, with a waiting, open soul, without passion, without desire, without judgments, without opinions and lived happily with Vasudev.

That the river is everywhere at the same time, at the source and at the mouth, at the waterfall, at the ferry, at the current, in the ocean and in the mountains, everywhere, and that the present only exists for it, not the shadow of the past, nor the shadow of the future...(107)

Siddhartha understood that there is nothing like TIME and his life also is like the river. He understood that the various stages of his life were only separated by shadows and not reality. Nothing was and nothing will be, everything has reality and presence-HERE and NOW. This discovery of presence made Siddhartha happy.

Neither he was bothered by the humiliation of the past nor was he worried about the future. Similarly, Siddhartha could listen to many voices in the river, the voice of a king, of a warrior, of a bull, of a night bird, of a pregnant woman and a thousand other voices; after listening to its ten thousand voices, one can hear the river pronouncing OM. The voice of the river to both Siddhartha and Vasudeva became the voice of life, the voice of being, of perpetual becoming.

Some years later, Kamala, now a Buddhist convert, is travelling to see the Buddha at his deathbed, accompanied by her reluctant young son, when she is bitten by a venomous snake near Siddhartha's river. Siddhartha recognizes her and realizes that the boy is his own child. After Kamala's death, Siddhartha attempts to console and raise the furiously resistant boy, until one day the child flees altogether. Although Siddhartha is desperate to find his runaway son, Vasudeva urges him to let the boy find his own path, much like Siddhartha did himself in his youth. Listening to the river with Vasudeva, Siddhartha realizes that time is an illusion and that all of his feelings and experiences, even those of suffering, every relation, everything as part of a great and ultimately jubilant fellowship of all things connected in the cyclical unity of nature.

Siddhartha saw life, vitality, the indestructible Brahman in all their desires and needs...With the exception of one small thing, one tiny little thing, they lacked nothing that the sage and the thinker had, and that was the consciousness of the unity of all life. (130)

Within Siddhartha there slowly grew and ripened the knowledge of what wisdom really was and the goal of his long seeking. It was nothing but a preparation of the soul, a capacity, a secret art of thinking, feeling and breathing thoughts of unity at every moment of life. It led to the understanding of harmony and knowledge of eternal perfection of the world and unity.

The only trouble torturing Siddhartha was his son's disappearance and running away from him. In his anguish, Siddhartha rowed across the river to go to the town and fetch his son. He could feel the river to laugh at him. When carefully seen into the river, Siddhartha saw his face reflected in water, slowly changing into his father, getting changed into many other faces. Siddhartha also left his father when in young age; and now his son has done exactly the same. Siddhartha confesses everything to Vasudeva; disclosing his wound to this listener was the same as bathing it in the river, until it became cool and one with the river.

As he went on talking and confessing Siddhartha felt more and more that this was no longer Vasudeva, no longer a man who was listening to him. He felt that this motionless man was the river itself, that he was GOD himself, that he was eternity itself... that Vasudeva had long ago, almost always been like that, only he did not quite recognize it, indeed he himself was hardly different from him. (133)

Siddhartha could see many pictures in the flowing water; all characters that he had been acquainted on his life, his father, Kamala, Kamaswami, his son, Govinda, each with their own earning, desiring and suffering and accordingly the voice of the river also was sorrowful.

All the waves and water hastened, suffering, towards goals, many goals, to the waterfall, to the sea, to the current, to the ocean and all goals were reached and each one was succeeded by another. The water changed into vapour and rose, became rain and came down again, became spring, brook and river, changed anew and flowed anew. But the yearning voice has altered. It still echoed sorrowfully, searchingly, but other voices accompanied it, voices of pleasure and sorrow, good and evil voices, laughing and lamenting voices, thousands of voices. (135)

Siddhartha listened to all the voices; he could no longer distinguish the different voices- the happy voice, the weeping voice, the childish voice and the manly voice-they all belonged to each other. And all the voices, all the goals, all the yearnings, all the sorrows, all the pleasures, all of them together was the world. The great song of a thousand voices consisted of one word: OM—perfection. There after Siddhartha's pain for his son dispersed and his self has merged into unity. Siddhartha ceased to fight against destiny, surrendering himself to the stream, belonging to the unity of all things. There after Vasudeva leaves Siddhartha and goes to the forest into the unity of all things and Siddhartha becomes the ferryman of all things.

Toward the end of his life, Govinda hears about an enlightened ferryman and travels to Siddhartha, not initially recognizing him as his old childhood friend. Govinda asks the now-elderly Siddhartha to relate his wisdom and Siddhartha replies that for every true statement there is an opposite one that is also true; that language and the confines of time lead people to adhere to one fixed belief that does not account for the fullness of the truth. Because nature works in a self-sustaining cycle, every entity carries in it the potential for its opposite and so the world must always be considered complete. Siddhartha simply urges people to identify and love the world in its completeness.

Samsara and Nirvana are only words, Govinda. Nirvana is not a thing; there is only the word Nirvana...(146) He adds,

It is important to love the world. It may be important to great thinkers to examine the world to explain and despise it. But I think it is only important to love the world, not to despise, not for us to hate each other, but to be able to regard the world and ourselves and all beings with love, admiration and respect. (147)

Siddhartha then requests Govinda to kiss his forehead and, when he does, Govinda experiences the visions of timelessness that Siddhartha himself saw with Vasudeva by the river. Govinda bows to his wise friend and Siddhartha smiles radiantly, having found enlightenment.

In Hesse's novel, experience, the totality of conscious events of a human life, is shown as the best way to approach understanding of reality and attain enlightenment—Hesse's crafting of Siddhartha's journey shows that understanding is attained not through intellectual methods, nor through immersing oneself in the carnal pleasures of the world and the accompanying pain of samsara. It is the completeness of these experiences that allows Siddhartha to attain understanding. Thus, the individual events are meaningless when considered by

themselves—Siddhartha's stay with the Samanas and his immersion in the worlds of love and business do not lead to nirvana, yet they cannot be considered distractions, for every action and event gives Siddhartha an experience, which leads to understanding. A major preoccupation of Hesse in writing *Siddhartha* was to cure his "sickness with life" and understand existential notion of life by immersing himself in Indian philosophy such as that expounded in the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita.

The second half of the book took very long to write and the reason was that Hesse "had not experienced that transcendental state of unity to which Siddhartha aspires. In an attempt to do so, Hesse lived as a virtual semi-recluse and became totally immersed in the sacred teachings of both Hindu and Buddhist scriptures. His intention was to attain to that 'completeness' which, in the novel, is the Buddha's badge of distinction."

Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha* deals with the spiritual journey of self-discovery of Siddhartha. Hesse dedicated the first part of it to Romain Rolland, a French dramatist, novelist, essayist, art historian and mystic who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1915 "as a tribute to the lofty idealism of his literary production and to the sympathy and love of truth with which he has described different types of human beings" and the second part to Wilhelm Gundert, his cousin. The simple story of Siddhartha's journey unfolds the spiritual path of individual identity and oneness with the cosmic union of man which alone is the true meaning of existence. Herman Hesse is well acclaimed for this East-West union of thought and experience; being and becoming; individual identity and cosmic unanimity.

4.2 Individual And Religion

All religions preach for the individual's personal endeavor to free his self from life's miseries, and still every religion binds the individual in its faith. All religions have their respective

gods judging every human activity, and every person will either deserve the heaven or the hell depending upon their conduct in relation to the religion of their faith. The fatal consequences religious and ethnic conflicts in the increasingly multi-cultural world have encouraged people to search for an individual spirituality free from religious fanaticism. It has been felt necessary to differentiate between the organized religions and spirituality. Spirituality is increasingly being seen as compassion, tolerance and understanding and contrasted with religious collectivism.

Hesse himself was born and brought up as a Pietistic Protestant. However, he does not associate the term Protestant to any particular variety of Christian faith, but as an individual's resistance against institutionalized religious dogmas. In an autobiography written in 1925, Hesse recalls how the religions were used to perpetuate the war, "even so-called spiritual people could find nothing better to do than preach hatred, spread lies, and praise the great misfortune" (Michels 13). The hazards of religions' control over the individual are also being felt in the 21st century world affairs in the form of religious extremism. Eric Hill justifies the reason behind adapting the dramatic version of Hesse's *Siddhartha* at the Berkshire Theater Festival in 2004 as to protect the humankind from those who cling to, "gods and guns as a way of protecting religion from threats real and perceived". Thus, the hazards of extremism in the name of religions have made the thinkers to refute that spirituality is necessarily a religious domain. Even Hesse's contemporary and Austrian born philosopher cum scientist Rudolf Steiner founded a spiritual movement he named "anthroposophy" which was a philosophic and spiritual doctrine centered not on the gods but on the human beings.

However, as early as in the 6th century BC, Buddha had refuted the prevailing religious view that belief in some form of superior deity or the god was necessary for one's enlightenment. He also rendered unnecessary all the rituals promoted by the then prevailing religion, Hinduism. Buddha rejected all prevailing doctrines and claimed that depending upon God's

mercy puts hindrance to an individual's efforts on earning his own salvation. He also prohibited all philosophical discussions regarding the existence of god, afterlife, or Atman and insisted that the individual should discipline his mind through right conduct, right speech and right effort. Replying to a query by his disciple, Buddha once put forward his logic, "I haven't taught the world is eternal or not, that it is finite or not, that the breath and the body are identical or not nor that a person after death will pass to future existence, or not, or both, or neither. . . Simply because these issues are pointless, unprofitable and a waste of time" (Kanekar 280).

Thus, Buddhism is also sometimes described not as a religion but as a spiritual method focusing on the individual's quest for personal self. Hesse appreciates Buddha's way in his lecture on Siddhartha, "Buddha's way to salvation has often been criticized and doubted, because it is thought to be wholly grounded in cognition. True, but it's not just intellectual cognition, not just learning and knowing, but spiritual experience that can be earned only through strict discipline in a selfless life" (qtd. In Freedman 233).

However, the irony with Buddhism is that Buddha himself is worshipped as a God by most of his followers with no less ritualistic and no less dogmatic than what Buddha had accused of Hinduism. Hindus, too, worship the Buddha as one of their eight avatars. Such tendency of deification of the individual achievement and humanization of the supernatural God exists even during the post-modern era when religions have been on their defensive side. The God theory has not lost its charm even while humanizing the God as, "His qualities are human virtues, raised to the nth degree. His interest in man remains even when, as in modern Barthian theology, he is described as the 'wholly other'" (Niebuhr 34).

After the European Enlightenment period, perhaps Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860) was the first philosopher who contemplated upon discovering one's true self without necessarily

believing in any religious system or the Gods. Schopenhauer thought life for the individual as an unavoidable suffering. For Schopenhauer, all the experienced activity of the self is will and the ultimate reality is one universal will. In his discussion of the nature and scope of subjective element of aesthetic pleasure, Schopenhauer hopes for, “the deliverance of knowledge from the service of the will, the forgetting of self as an individual, and the raising of the consciousness to the pure will-less, timeless, subject of knowledge, independent of all relations” (498). Thus, Schopenhauer advocates for the anguished individual to seek for deliverance from life’s sufferings through artistic, moral and ascetic forms of awareness. Schopenhauer’s idea that the world is not factual but mere projections of our mind not only echo with Hindu and Buddhist vision of life, but as Baumann claims even his salvation philosophy “ . . . corresponds to the traditional ‘Tat tvam asi’ of the Upanishads and the Buddhist idea of salvation by overcoming ‘Thirst’ and egocentricity”.

Schopenhauer influenced many literary and philosophical figures including Nietzsche and Hesse. Hesse even sets the story of Siddhartha in Buddha’s time and makes Siddhartha the Brahmin boy hold a discussion with the Buddha. Hence, Siddhartha has also been considered as a mythical narrative based on Buddha’s early life.

However, contrary to popular misconception, Siddhartha is not Buddha’s biographical story. Hesse’s Siddhartha who is awed by Buddha’s persona and yet denies taking refuge in Buddha’s Dhamma has a correlation with Hesse’s own initial admiration of the Buddha and later disenchantment with Buddhism’s too rationalistic generalization. While writing Siddhartha, Hesse seems to be influenced not only by Hindu and Buddhist views on life, but also by the religious philosophies of ancient China, such as Taoism. Hesse’s biographer Mark Boulby claims that Siddhartha is an amalgam of Vedanta and Tao philosophies with, the Indian-Hindu “letting oneself fall into life (tyaga)” and the Chinese-Taoistic “enlightened passiveness (wuwei)” (143).

In his autobiography for the Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech, Hesse discloses the reason why he could not accept the religion of Christian Pietism he was born into was because of its aim of, “subduing and breaking the individual personality” (Gale 349).

And yet, his opposition to the institutionalized religions’ suppression of the individual self seems to contradict with his observation in a 1930 essay, “I myself consider the religious impulse as the decisive characteristic of my life and my work” (qtd. In Ziolkowski 106). The contradiction can be understood if one appreciates that Hesse’s “religious impulse” suggests an approach of consciously choosing one’s own way of life.

If any religion that Hesse believed in it was humanism, as Zipes writes in his evaluation of the influence of fairy tales in Hesse’s works, “If there ever was a creed that he [Hesse] devoutly followed, it was the German romantic Novalis’s notion that ‘Mensch werden ist eine Kunst’ - to become a human being is art” (241).

Thus, Hesse attempts to establish the significance of the individual’s personal quest for self through the interaction with diverse religions. Hesse proposes his own version of spirituality that dissolves the dichotomy of opposite pairs both within the individual and outside in the world, “For me, although brought up a Protestant Christian but then later educated in India and China, there do not exist all these twofold divisions of world and men into opposite pairs. For me, the first dogma is the unity behind and above the opposites” (qtd. In Herzog). Hesse’s interest in finding unity behind opposites can also be seen in *Siddhartha*, in which the protagonist appreciates religion as a method for self-realization and yet refuses to accept any religious doctrine insisting upon finding the unity behind all opposites through his own search for self.

4.3 Individual and Psychology

The fictional character's search for self often provides genuine psychological insights into the workings of an individual's mind. Freud often acknowledged his gratitude for the development of psychoanalysis to Dostoevsky's insights into his character's psyche. Hesse was also receiving psychotherapy sessions from Jung's assistant JB Lang while he was working on *Siddhartha*. The writer's contact with the psychotherapist led him to permanent association with Jungian psychology and Jung himself. As Spielvogel observes, Hesse's novels, "reflected the influence of both Carl Jung's psychological theories and Eastern religions and focused among other things on the spiritual loneliness of modern human beings in a mechanized urban society" (835).

Hesse deals with the psychological concept of Unconscious in his own way. Like the psychologists, Hesse too felt it necessary to look at human behavior in a completely different light than from the conventional Western concept of good and evil, for merely cursing the destructive forces that have their base in the primal instincts would only encourage digression from the real concerns of life. Hesse acknowledges the need for accepting the irrationality of human mind before devising ways for controlling human behavior, for even the "Chaos has to be recognized and lived through before it can be reintegrated into a new order" (qtd. in Harguindey 149).

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) gained popularity among the novelists for his psychoanalytic methods in analyzing the individual character's mind and motive. Freud divides the mind into three parts, viz. Id, Ego, and Superego and attempted to explain how the individual's motives oscillate between the two primal instincts, the pleasure seeking Eros and the death seeking Thanatos. Freud even claims that there is, "similarity between the process of civilization and libidinal development of the individual" (51).

Moreover, Freud also insists that, “the two urges the one toward personal happiness and the other towards union with other human beings must struggle with each other in every individual” (106). Hence, for those interested in the workings of human mind, it was necessary first of all to accept all the forces of nature without any value judgment.

Especially Freud’s insistence on sex and the libido guiding all human behavior including the dreams and neuroses encouraged the novelists of the post-Victorian era to venture on hitherto a taboo aspect of human self. How the unnatural moral codes imposed on individuals result in the aberration of their behavior became popular themes for the novelists of post-Freudian era. That Hesse’s *Siddhartha* moves from one extreme of repression to another extreme of indulgence may also be explained through Freudian principles. However, Freud has also been sharply criticized for his obsession of describing every human behavior and motive as the manifestation of repressed sexual desires. The renowned psychologist Andrew Salter comes heavily upon Freud’s portrayal of perverse and incestuous cravings as the only motive behind every individual’s behavior, and even claims that, “Freud was less a scientist than a *littérateur*” (19).

Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961) and Alfred Adler (1870-1937), were the famous critics of Freud’s excessive indulgence on libidinal theories while defining individual behavior. Jung who worked under Freud in his early years expanded the area of Freudian “unconscious” from merely a dark storehouse of unfulfilled desires into the vast realm of mythologies, spirituality and other symbolic systems. However, while Jung frees the individual from Freud’s sexual determinism, he also leads one toward mysticism. Jung tried to discover the connection of an individual with the fellow humans and with nature in general through the “collective unconscious”. Jung is better known for his personality theories of individual types like extrovert and introvert, and for his theories of archetypes and synchronicity. Jung was also heavily influenced by tribal and mythological traditions from Africa, America and India,

including Hinduism and Buddhism. Like Hesse, Jung had profound interests in the Eastern mysticism and attempted to integrate Eastern philosophical principles into the mainstream of Western thought. Jung maintained that medical psychology can not ignore the ancient religions that have expressed the most basic and universal expressions of human thought. He saw men as the construct of rituals and taboos that were devised to protect them from the unruly and overwhelming drives of the unconscious. At the same time, Jung brought the mysticism of religions into the arena of psychology – the approach being scientific, empirical and phenomenological rather than philosophical or metaphysical. For all those who were interested in the psychological basis of such mental phenomena as spirituality, supernatural, psychic and the universal found an authentic source in Jung for hitherto unexplained realms of the mind.

4.4 Existential Individual

Although it's difficult to give a precise definition, existentialism can be seen as the analysis of human situation with the individual at the center of all phenomena. Thus, existentialism may be called the philosophy of the individual. Existential analyses of human individual are found in the works of early literary writers and philosophers as well. Thomas Flynn claims that even Socrates (469–399 BC) can be called an existential philosopher for the latter's practice of philosophy as ““care of the self” (epimeleia heautou)” (1). Buddha has also been considered to be one of the early existential philosophers since he refused to discuss God and held the individual himself responsible for all the consequences. Søren Kierkegaard (1813-55) found fault with his times for ignoring the individual self with, “Each age has its characteristic depravity. Ours is perhaps not pleasure or indulgence or sensuality, but rather a dissolute pantheistic contempt for individual man” (qtd. in Stokes 145). The Russian writer and thinker Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821-81) whose works dramatize religious, moral, political and psychological issues is considered as an early existential novelist who portrayed his

characters as anguished individuals struggling for their distinctive space in a harsh and hostile society. Hesse (1877-1962), too, who grew up during the last decades of the 19th century, is supposed to have been immensely influenced by his predecessors like Dostoevsky, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche who were later identified as the forerunners of the existential movement.

Dostoevsky's characters are involved in endless dilemma between right and wrong, good and evil and desperately struggle to free themselves from all societal bondage in quest of their own self. Coupled with his fine psychological insights into the anxieties and moral problems of the characters, Dostoevsky makes the existential point that human individuals can get salvation only by braving the intense suffering that life offers. Hesse seems to be very much influenced by Dostoevsky's idea of salvation through suffering as Hesse himself makes all his characters including Siddhartha to go through intensely painful self-searching. Both Dostoevsky and Hesse were anxious at Europe's political, social and moral disintegration during their times. In his analysis of Dostoevsky's novel *The Brothers Karamazov*, Hesse reveals his admiration for the Russian novelist with, "It seems to me that European and especially German youth are destined to find their greatest writer in Dostoevsky—not in Goethe, not even in Nietzsche" (qtd. In Weber 248). Both writers believed that only a completely different kind of spiritual awareness was able to unite Europe emotionally once again. Two years before *Siddhartha*'s publication, Hesse wrote a review on Dostoevsky's another novel *The Idiot* prophesizing, "The future is uncertain, but the road which he [Dostoevsky] shows can have but one meaning. It means a new spiritual dispensation" (qtd. in Girardot 303). While salvation was still a Christian idea for Dostoevsky, for Hesse, as *Siddhartha* shows, the new spiritual awakening was to come from Asia.

Another existentialist thinker, Nietzsche, who was to influence not only Hesse but generations of his posteriors called for a new species of human beings who could survive the God-less world. According to Stokes, Nietzsche wanted the individual to acquire, “what the existentialists would later give him, the power to be master of his own destiny” (147). In his allegorical work, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Nietzsche makes his Zarathustra to proclaim that “Dead are all the gods: now do we desire the Superman to live” (51).

Nietzsche was indicating that the traditional theological systems and their morality concepts which centered on the idea of all-powerful God would no longer hold validity in the new world. Nietzsche’s Superman survives life’s miseries and profound unhappiness through his will to power and affirms life joyously by going beyond the traditional boundaries of good and evil.

Hesse himself was influenced by Nietzsche’s idea of equipping the individual with a magnificent “will to power” so that the individual could transcend his self and create the personal archetype of *Übermensch* – the Superman. However, Hesse was concerned over the way Nietzsche was being interpreted by the Nazi regime to brainwash German youths into racial war. Hesse published *Zarathustra’s Return* in 1919, just three years before *Siddhartha*. *Zarathustra’s Return* was Hesse’s own interpretation of Nietzsche’s philosophy. *Zarathustra’s Return* was written in the Nietzschean idiom to appeal to the youths who were influenced by Nietzsche’s *Thus Spake Zarathustra* and were manipulated by the German State. Hesse made his Zarathustra to “reject German false gods, Kaiser, and the drill sergeant” (Galbreath 68) to awaken the hidden God residing within each individual. Hesse makes the protagonist of his Bildungsroman *Siddhartha* achieve the Nietzschean Superman

status by rebelling against all Gods, prophets, and doctrines and asserting his individuality by following his own self.

4.5 Cross Cultural Individual

Hesse's time was also the time of cultural cross-fertilization. The industrial revolution also promoted visits to far off places for colonial, commercial, and even just for curiosity. Development of steam and the fossil fuel engines in the early twentieth century fueled the growth in the number of people travelling and settling to foreign lands.

The interaction of different people also gave rise to interaction of different cultures.

Hesse was aware that both the Eastern and Western cultures are going to misunderstand each other ultimately, since in their enthusiasm for finding the other exotic, in what Hesse saw as the West's too ready embrace of the East, and vice versa, he "plainly detected too much unavailing flight into the exotic half-known" (Mileck 165). Hesse seems to challenge both the Easterns and the Westerns to revalue their understanding of each other by overcoming all apparent contradiction and dichotomies through the realization of inner self. Hesse was aware

of both the positivity and limitations of both the Western and Eastern ways, since he believed that “. . . basic truths about man and life were to be found behind the religious and philosophical trappings of the Orient and the Occident. . .

(Mileck 165). All Hesse works seek to establish the individual's multi-dimensional identity during the times of great personal and cultural crises.

Although *Siddhartha* is subtitled as an Indian Tale, Mileck calls Hesse's protagonist Siddhartha not another Buddha from the East, but a Western Buddha or a “Western Possibility” (164). Hesse also seems to be making a criticism of Indian way of life as mired in too much pedantry and self-denial. The conflict of culture is latent in *Siddhartha*, since “Despite the Orient's strong attraction, Hesse remained a Westerner” (Mileck 165). However, Hesse wants his *Siddhartha* to transcend the binaries of East and West as well. The setting looks eastern only because Hesse says so, but his depiction of the landscapes could be anywhere. The characters sound eastern only in their names, otherwise as Mileck observes, the figures do not evoke any physical or psychological dimensions. In the words of Mileck, in *Siddhartha*, “. . . timeless substance (the human condition) found a consonant expression in

timeless setting, characters, lives, and language. . .” (172). Thus, Siddhartha represents more of archetype than the actual people. Siddhartha’s opposition to all prevailing traditional paths seems Hesse’s call for rising above the trapping of all cultures regardless of whether one belongs to the Eastern or Western culture.

4.6 ‘The Alchemist’

Existentialism and the Novels of Paulo Coelho:

With the advancement of technology and the increasing fret and fever of life existential themes have invariably penetrated deeper into the society constantly trying to prove what it is to be human. An idea expressed by Paulo Coelho about existentialism is that, “The world needs what existential psychotherapy has to offer, the culture is crying for vivification, for enlightenment and to awaken and to transform. In order to meet that need, we as Modern Existentialists must learn to speak the language of the people and introduce them to the works of existentialism on their terms” This exactly what he has done through his novels.

Coelho has repeatedly used existential themes in his novels especially in THE ALCHEMIST and VERINIKA DECIDES TO DIE as has been found from the results of an online survey conducted in the summer of 2014 to categorise the key existential films, novels and books. Of the 288 nominations for the existential novels Paulo Coelho’s The Alchemist and Veronica Decides To Die, have been classified as existential novels.

In The Alchemist, novel’s protagonist Santiago’s life unveils the philosophy of Existentialism that the human existence is an investigation of the meaning of being.

Santiago's life extends to him a variety of possibilities from which he has to choose. He has to select from the alternatives like priesthood or shepherding, going back to Andalusia or crossing the desert to reach Egypt, and finally, living in the Al-Fayoum oasis with Fatima or going to Egypt in search of his treasure. From all these alternatives he makes the wisest choices of shepherding, crossing the desert, and going to Egypt in search of his treasure. He is truly committed and responsible to his selections. It is obvious that Santiago is assertive of his basic interests and is also capable of dismissing the Sartrean existential angst of 'being for others'. Existentialism also preaches that human nature and human identity vary depending upon the values and beliefs one holds.

Santiago believes in Melchizedek's words that, "When you want something, the entire universe conspires in helping you to achieve it" (Coelho, 21). The discussion between Santiago and Melchizedek reveals certain existential tenants that foster Santiago's self belief, that thinking begins with the human subject and man is endowed with a free choice to determine the meaning of the universe. When Santiago seeks answer from the old man (Melchizedek) about the world's greatest lie? The wise old man replies: "It's this: that at a certain point in our lives, we lose control of what's happening to us, and our lives become controlled by fate.

That's the world's greatest lie." (Coelho, 17) Sartre's existentialism also posits that existence precedes essence. He regards "grand passion as a destructive torrent upon which a man is swept into certain actions as by fate, it is actually the excuse to escape from responsibilities." (Satre, 6) Santiago is guided by his conscious will rather than the fate. He has willingly taken the road to discover his self by going through a long voyage into the distant deserts. His adventure is full of vicissitudes, but without any sign of "deterministic excuses."

So the first striking parallel we get is that Melchizedek's words echoes Sartrean philosophy that 'man is nothing else but that which he makes himself (Satre, 3) .

At times Paulo Coelho is advocating his own philosophy through the voice of an old man (Melchizedek). He believes that everyone know their destiny and firmly believe that everything is possible in this world, but as the time passes, a mysterious force begins to convince them that it will be impossible for them to realize their destiny. He says that:

"The mysterious force appears to be negative, but actually shows you how to realize your destiny. It prepares your spirit and will because that desire originated in the soul of the universe. It's your mission on earth...the soul of the world is nourished by people's happiness. And also by unhappiness, envy, and jealousy. To realize one's destiny is a person's only real obligation. All things are one." (Coelho, 21)

This passage shows that Coelho's protagonist is more than a mere existentialist, a persona whose doctrine is multi-disciplinary and whose quest is not just to find the treasure but to fulfill a greater obligation. He has been nourished by the "soul of the universe" and his soul in vice-versa nourishes it. His journey is to find his origins and observe the oneness of all things. Santiago's mystic/pantheistic belief here differs from Sartre's argument that existence proceeds essence if God does not exist there is at least one being whose existence comes before its essence, a being which exists before it can be defined by any conception of it. That being is man or, as Heidegger has it, the human reality. (Satre, 3). Santiago believes that "life stories and the history of the world were written by the same hand."(Coelho, 73). He is optimistic that in order to be one with the "soul of the universe," he has to follow his

free will and listen to his heart. He also realizes that his dreams or personal legend are not just his but part of the “soul of the universe”. Although Santiago shares different set of beliefs yet his basic search is Sartrean in nature-to find out the meaning of the universe by vehemently working on his personal legend. Again, When Santiago is robbed of the only money he has. It is at this point that he contemplates going back home and surrendering his personal legend. He finds himself adrift and desperate. The boy (Santiago) is finally hired by a crystal merchant, a middle aged resident of Tangier. This Crystal Merchant is Santiago’s foil. He had a personal legend to make a haj pilgrimage to Mecca, but his personal legend is not backed by what Sartre calls man will only attain existence when he is what he wills to be. (Sartre, 3). He simply wishes to travel Mecca without transforming his wish into a more powerful will, a manifestation of a prior and more spontaneous decision. The Crystal Merchant’s in-action is contrasted with the Santiago’s firm belief in goal oriented action. In the following passage, Crystal Merchant says to Santiago:

“You dream about your sheep and the Pyramids, but you’re different from me, because you want to realize your dreams. I just want to dream about Mecca. I’ve already imagined a thousand times crossing the desert, arriving at the Plaza of the Sacred Stone, the seven times I walk around it before allowing myself to touch it. I’ve already imagined the people who would be at my side and those in front of me, and the conversations and prayers we would share. But I’m afraid that it would all be a disappointment, so I prefer just to dream about it.”(Coelho, 52, 53).

Coelho, through this contrast wants to convey that as long as we dwell between Maktub (it is written) and free choice we won’t be able to explore limitless secrets of

the life. Santiago on the other hand shows extraordinary will power to defeat inner demons of fate and voices of despair. He does not rely upon pre-destination doctrine instead believes Descartes dictum, "Conquer yourself rather than the world," (Sartre, 8). He is not just an idealist and a dreamer, but an interpreter of dreams that tell about far off lands man can conquer. He has acquired mastery over his self not by just wishing but through his actions coupled by a strong, prior and spontaneous will.

Another major revealing instance of Sartre's existential thought is provided by camel driver who entirely lives in the moment. He does not fear death or the possibility of dying, even though his caravan travels through the tribal wars in the desert. Santiago learns patience from the camel driver, and how to do each thing on its own time. The camel driver is of the belief:

"Because I don't live in either my past or my future, I'm interested only in the present. If you can concentrate always on the present, you'll be a happy man. You'll see that there is life in the desert, that there are stars in the heavens, and that tribesmen fight because they are part of the human race. Life will be a party for you, a grand festival; because life is the moment we're living right now."(Coelho, 81)

Similarly, Sartre while echoing Descartes dictum that I think, therefore I am, believes in the present moment that there is such a truth which is simple, easily attained and within the reach of everybody; it consists in one's immediate sense of one's self.(Sartre, 10). The existentialist thinkers do not believe that man's future is already written. They vehemently challenge this notion and stress that we have neither behind us, nor before us any means of justification or excuse. We are left alone, without excuse. (Sartre, 6).

They even go to the extent of saying that if the future is laid up in Heaven, that God knows what it is, it would be false, for then it would no longer even be a future. (Sartre, 6)

Again, Santiago's musings on human heart and its connections with God which echoes Coelho's own firm belief in Christianity lays stress on eternal existence of God. In the following lines we would be better able to understand the point of difference between Santiago's belief in God and Sartre's departure. Santiago says:

"Every second of the search is an encounter with God," the boy told his heart. "When I have been truly searching for my treasure, every day has been luminous, because I've known that every hour was a part of the dream that I would find it. When I have been truly searching for my treasure, I've discovered things along the way that I never would have seen had I not had the courage to try things that seemed impossible for a shepherd to achieve." (Coelho, 125).

Sartre advocates Existentialistic Humanism as a replacement for God. He considers humankind as self-surpassing and self-creating creatures. He believes that man is all the time outside himself, pursuing transcendent aims beyond himself. His argument that man is the future of man acts as a substitute for God. He writes that:

"there is no legislator but man himself; that he himself, thus abandoned, must decide for himself; also because we show that it is not by turning back upon himself, but always by seeking, beyond himself, an aim which is one of liberation or of some particular realisation, that man can realize himself as truly human." (Sartre, 15)

Paulo Coelho's protagonist deals with the subject of love same way as Sartre believes. Santiago engages with two different women that exemplify the disparity

between love and true love. His first encounter with love proves to be just a spiritual attraction with the Merchant's daughter. He realized that this kind of love kept him from pursuing his personal legend. He meets his true love when he arrives at the Oasis and converses with Fatima. She is willing to wait forever for Santiago to accomplish his personal legend. You must understand that love never keeps a man from pursuing his destiny (Coelho, 115). Fatima is not least worried of his separation instead helps him to strengthen his courage. Santiago's meaning of love is:

"Because it's not love to be static like the desert, nor is it love to roam the world like the wind. And it's not love to see everything from a distance...Love is the force that transforms and improves the soul of the world". (Coelho, 143) Sartre also regards love as a force that persuades a man to express the manifestation of perfection in the object.

To assert the necessity of an action oriented modal of consciousness and human existence, he expresses his belief that: "But in reality and for the existentialist, there is no love apart from the deeds of love; no potentiality of love other than that which is manifested in loving; there is no genius other than that which is expressed in works of art."(Sartre, 9) Paulo Coelho through the character of the Alchemist conveys the central design of action oriented pursuit alluding Plato's theory of forms. He is of the opinion that a simple grain of sand reveals the marvels of creation. He while echoing Plato explains the genesis of the world and concludes what he means by action: *"The wise men understood that this natural world is only an image and a copy of paradise. The existence of this world is simply a guarantee that there exists a world that is perfect. God created the world so that, through its visible objects, men could understand his spiritual teachings and the marvels of his wisdom. That's what I mean*

by action." (Coelho, 121) Here, Coelho upholds the Platonic concept of the universe while as Sartre's concept of universe is complete subversion of Plato's theory. However, we find that Santiago's observation of the objective world through an un-failing self belief and the power of wisdom is a testimony of existentialism.

When Santiago recognized his "self" through the encounters with the objective world, he was able to converse with the supernatural powers. In one of his conversation with the wind, he confesses that: *"That's not true," the boy said. "I learned the alchemist's secrets in my travels. I have inside me the winds, the deserts, the oceans, the stars, and everything created in the universe. We were all made by the same hand, and we have the same soul. I want to be like you, able to reach every corner of the world, cross the seas, blow away the sands that cover my treasure, and carry the voice of the woman I love."*(Coelho, 140) Finally Santiago reaches to the culmination of his self discovery, he was able to blow wind and communicate with the sun. The boy reached through to the Soul of the World, and saw that it was a part of the Soul of God. And he saw that the Soul of God was his own soul. And that he, a boy, could perform miracles. (Coelho, 145)

This Passage Reminds us of Sartre's Famous Argument That "The man who discovers himself directly in the cogito also discovers all the others, and discovers them as the condition of his own existence...Thus, at once, we find ourselves in a world which is, let us say, that of "inter-subjectivity". It is in this world that man has to decide what he is and what others are." (Sartre, 11)

Chapter: 5 Conclusion

Harmonious Self for a Harmonious World

Every individual's life is a journey. There are different stages in life that one goes through and by experiencing these different stages of life one becomes wiser. In the novel, *Siddhartha* and *The Alchemist* the protagonist Siddhartha and Santiago both go through different stages in life which made them grow, learn and transform into wiser people. Both protagonists go on a journey which is eventually the same but the purpose of journey is different. Similarly, both protagonist struggles through their journey to become wiser people. However, the end result for both protagonists was the same which is discovering themselves. In their early teenage lives, both Hermann Hesse and Paulo Coelho struggled to cope with their parent's conflicting outlook on their lives and ultimately, their purpose. For separate reasons, Hesse and Coelho spent time in institutions designed to "reinvent" the individual.

The authors endured many months in this compulsory prison yet after release, proved their individuality and perseverance was more than a product of teen angst– they pursued their aspirations. Moreover, Hesse and Coelho's persistence through a childhood polluted by parental control yet followed by complete success, demonstrates not only the genuine existence of destiny, but also the continuous opportunity to achieve happiness and greatness. Exemplified by the stories of their lives, Hesse and Coelho channel this idea in their works

Siddhartha and *The Alchemist*. Using the wisdom the protagonists obtained from personal journeys, both Hesse and Coelho convey the importance of sacrificing love and common human pleasures to become entirely fulfilled. However, only Coelho advocates an ultimate return to such pleasures suggesting that love and possessions are essential in a truly authentic life. Siddhartha's insistence on quest for self defying all doctrines and teachings does not mean that Hesse wished to propound any sort of anarchism against the society. In fact, Hesse believed that only through some sort of individualism each individual can be made responsible for his actions. Hesse may sound just another romantic preacher; however, in a world mired by deadly ideologies seeking justifications from Jesus to Nietzsche, and to Marx, Hesse's concerns would hardly need any justification.

Siddhartha was born in the aftermath of the World War I and another great World War loomed large. Hesse through his allegorical message in *Siddhartha* makes an anxious call to the youths for defiance against growing material and military pursuits. Similarly, Hesse was also concerned over the individual's predicament in the capitalism driven modernity. The collapse of the whole European civilization seemed imminent due to rising political, cultural, and ideological conflicts. At the time of chaos in the Western Civilization's history, Hesse turns to the East in search of fresh ideas and values. However, an individual can only be persuaded to turn inward when he realizes the futility of worldly pursuits of having power over others. The need to control and manipulate the outer world only evaporates when one recognizes that his existence as a being is relatively negligible in comparison to the vastness of the spatial and temporal dimensions of the universe. Therefore, through the excessive individualism of his protagonists like Siddhartha, Hesse as an eye-witness of the greatest human conflicts such as the World War I and World War II seems to be searching for an alternative society among the people divided into various ideological, religious and communal identities. Hesse saw that despite humankind's tremendous accumulation of

knowledge and prosperity the sheer disregard for diversity was leading the world toward perpetual conflicts.

The duality of existence as in the mind and the real world and their address in various spiritual disciplines, the visits to psychoanalysis lessons, and subsequent profound interest in Freudian and especially in Jungian psychology were to influence him the most to arrive at his premises. Hesse seems to realize that extreme nationalism and the desire to have power over others result in millions of innocent death and innumerable sufferings. In *Siddhartha*, Hesse creates a utopian world where power and wealth are ephemeral pursuits and chasing after them being an act of utter foolishness. Thus *Siddhartha* can be seen as Hesse's antithesis to collectivist tendencies in the form of nationalist, racial, cultural, and ideological doctrines, and an effort to establish the individual's inward quest for self as beneficial to both the individual and the society. However, Hesse knew how calls for peace would only be taken as quixotic idealism. He also knew that he would not be able to stop the next war that was sure to happen.

Hesse seems to profess his belief that a true hero is not someone who dies in war or kills a fellow being, but one who synchronizes the conflicting tendencies present within himself. *Siddhartha* proves that the secret of life can not be taught by any teacher, nor by following any dogma, but can only be known through the individual's own inward journey into the self. *Siddhartha* also shows that initial disobedience that a self-willed person shows against authorial power is far more responsible than the sheepish conformity with respect to the universal law of humanity.

Hesse's ideal back to nature world of *Siddhartha* may also be seen as another flawed utopia. However, the creation of utopia, no matter how flawed it may, was nevertheless a deliberate attempt. For Hesse, it was necessary to create such a utopic world as the

devastations of the World War I were not over yet, and the possibility of even a greater war seemed imminent. To persuade his countrymen and the whole humanity against committing yet another civilizational blunder, Hesse wished to develop a new social movement himself. To dissuade the youths from the Nazi, Fascist and war calls other political clouts, it was necessary to detach their attention from politics of ideologies, militarism and nationalism.

Hesse believed that the individual will should not identify itself with the collective will of the society or the nation. Thus, it was necessary to turn the youths' attention toward a very different culture than their own. Resorting to different Eastern concepts in *Siddhartha* seems to be just an excuse for Hesse to adapt Nietzschean *amor fati* or "will to power" into his own form of *Eugensinn* or self-will, so that individuals could be persuaded to take inward journey to self. However, Hesse wanted to emphasize that the Nietzschean concept of "will to power" referred to the will of an individual to have power over his own destiny, but not to have power over others. It was important for Hesse to elaborate Nietzsche's ideas, as the Anti-Semites, the Nazis, and other authoritarians were distorting Nietzsche's philosophy for their bigotry. *Siddhartha* may be seen as a truly Nietzschean model of *Urbarmensch* or Superman who does not follow any doctrine blindly, but dares for an inward search to find the true nature of his self. The concept of Superman was Nietzsche's call for the individuals to achieve their ultimate potential, but not for groups, parties, nations and epochs. Hence, through *Siddhartha's* personal journey of seeking his self and realizing his potential, Hesse points out that perfection in world comes only when each individual establishes harmony with his own self.

Hesse's persistent concern is to find an escape for the individual from not only the societal bondage but also from one's own dual and conflicting tendencies. Hesse believed that outer conflict was only the manifestation of the conflicting instinctual drives within every individual. Hence, Hesse found it necessary to convince each individual to understand their

own nature through intense self-examination and synchronize the polar opposites within themselves into a harmonious unity. Once an individual is persuaded to delve into the study of his own self, the desire to gain control over others would soon evaporate. Experimenting with one's own body and mind has been a favorite intellectual and spiritual activity of the ancient Orientals. In *Siddhartha*, Hesse makes his affluent and yet discontented Western readers travel through time and space to learn how the people from a distant past and distant culture with so little material possession had invented for every individual a way of happy and peaceful existence.

Thus, *Siddhartha*'s extreme individuality can be seen as Hesse's method as well as belief in human capacity for self-cure without any external interference – and for Hesse self-cure was the only cure for treating the whole humanity's suffering. The rising confrontations between various forms of ideologies persuaded Hesse to profess his own version individualism with the belief that individuals who join the masses lose their rational faculties. It should be noted that Hesse is not making any authoritative elaboration or comparison of diverse concepts he borrows from both the Eastern and Western traditions in *Siddhartha*. From Atman to Brahman, from Buddha to Nietzsche, from psychology to mysticism, and from search for self to enlightenment, Hesse uses all these concepts as devices to demonstrate how the individual's self-will can be used to create a more harmonious society by reconciling the conflicting tendencies within every individual. *Siddhartha* shows that the world outside is not a hindrance but a succor in one's efforts for self-actualization. In the initial days, when *Siddhartha* seeks for the mystery of his self as separated and different from others, he realizes that he is in fact fleeing from what he seeks – self-knowledge. The more *Siddhartha* grows toward enlightenment, more he identifies with other fellow beings thus expanding his empathy for others.

Thus, even through intense self-will and individualism, Siddhartha ultimately learns to appreciate unity in the plurality of existence. It should be noted that by his denial of following Buddha, Siddhartha is not undermining Buddha's achievement. Siddhartha, by looking beyond Buddha's reputation, simply conveys Hesse's message that wisdom is not communicable through words and doctrines. The only doctrine of love than Siddhartha professes after his enlightenment was Hesse's call for humanity to appreciate their fellow beings instead of making war citing ideological, racial, and cultural differences. Through Siddhartha's denial of all doctrines, Hesse persuades each individual to be independent thinkers and arrive at a conclusion based on their own individual experience. Siddhartha's ultimate enlightenment transcending all sufferings and with perpetual bliss certainly seem like a utopist's dream. Despite its utopic vision, Siddhartha offers hope for humanity, a hope between the two greatest World Wars that threatened the very survival of the human existence. Through the protagonist's extreme individualism in quest for self and enlightenment, Hesse creates a utopic worldview in Siddhartha to prove his proposition that an individual's inward quest for self is the only antidote to humanity's collective madness for power.

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