



## RESEARCH PAPER

### The process of Individuation of the Main Character in Hermann Hesse's *Demian*

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## ABSTRACT

This article is an attempt to analyze the process of *individuation* of the main character. The process of *individuation* means to know oneself. The novel is the main source of data collection. Books, research articles are secondary sources. This research is qualitative. Research approach is inductive. Research technique is interpretive content analysis. The current study indicates that psychological strength of all human beings is intertwined with the socially undesirable contents of personality. By embracing these unwelcome parts, the search for the self is nearly completed. The search for self-identity is important and cannot be ignored. A person suffers from mental, physical and social issues due to lack of attention to the self and his lack of ability to recognize and integrate the opposites of good and bad in the form of "*persona*", "*shadow*" and the likes in him. Such a person suffers from psychological disorders. Psychoanalytic theory can be applied to study other characters of the novel.

**KEYWORDS** Persona, Shadow, Individuation, The Self

## Introduction

According to Jung (1965) the *shadow* is a moral problem that challenges the whole ego personality, for no one can become conscious of the *shadow* without considerable moral effort. To become conscious it involves recognizing the dark aspects of the personality as present and real. This act is the essential condition for any kind of self-knowledge. Emil Sinclair is threatened with reporting him to the farmer or police. Kromer demands money and other valuables from Emil Sinclair which leads him to commit actual thefts though small in nature. Emil Sinclair is sure that he belongs to the evil realm of the world.

Furthermore, this study focuses on *anima/animus* and the Self. *Anima* is the unconscious feminine side of a man and *animus* is the unconscious masculine side of a woman. Jung (1959) explains the integration of *anima* with *animus*—the two are likely to fall in love. This is the mixing of two halves. This integration of the two halves leads to *individuation* and wholeness. Self is the centre of the unconscious and guides towards *individuation*. It acts as mediator of light and shadow where the opposites are united. According to Carl Jung (1993) "I call this centre the 'self', which should be understood as the totality of the psyche". The self is not only the centre, but also the whole circumference which embraces both conscious and unconscious, and is the centre of this totality. In the beginning of his acquaintance Sinclair does not understand Demian's ideas. But with the passage of time, Sinclair learns to comprehend Demian's ideas especially when he comes in contact with Frau Eva. She helps him come into consciousness of the self.

## Literature Review

Min(2018) argues that Hermann Hesse's private life (1877-1962) is marked by trauma caused during his youth by his parents' Pietistic discipline (17<sup>th</sup> century religious movement stressing Biblical study and personal religious experiences), and middle-aged depression accompanied by treatment with psychoanalysis. When 15, he was admitted to psychiatric school because of his rebellious behaviour, and his psychosexual development stopped due to this traumatic experience during his teenage. At the age of 39, his father's death caused his depression. Hesse received psychoanalysis treatment from Dr. Lang and Dr. Jung for ten years, but the treatment could not prevent depression from recurring. He was critical of his assessment of psychoanalysis treatment. In the 1950s, he began to create new novels that described the journey to greater harmonious and spiritual unity based on Jungian psychoanalysis.

Alam (2018) points out that the journey to the East is a new term coined by Hermann Hesse. Hermann Hesse is one of the Western minds who approached the Eastern way of looking at things very closely. There is no other person of his calibre who better understands the East. This is his ideology toward the East. The new term is *philosia*: the love of seeing. "Sia" means "to see", "philo" means "love". In the term "philosophy" "sophy" means "thinking". So philosophy means "love of thinking". This "love of seeing" and "love of thinking" are the fundamental principles which are constantly characteristic of both Eastern and Western civilisations consecutively.

Kuswandi(2018) investigates that Emil Sinclair grows throughout the plot all the times. In his childhood, he grows from an innocent, clever, curious, and submissive boy. He grows the most in his teenage; he is guilty, lonely, watchful, ambitious, contemplative, optimistic, insatiable, and maverick. Eventually, he is cynical, defiant, and maverick in his early adulthood. The character creations of Sinclair are influenced by several factors; guidance, and philosophy of Max Demian (Sinclair's mentor), sparrow hawk as a sign of liberty (to leave his parents' house for achieving self-understanding), guidance and teachings of Pistorius (his teachings about Abraxas and different cultures), guidance of lady Eva (Sinclair's *anima* and self), and his own personality traits.

Septyarini (2018) explains that Emil Sinclair feels that he should be changed unlike his parents and sisters who are part of the bright world and happy in that. His mentor also emphasises upon change of his habits so that he may get his love and happy life. Sinclair thinks that he is part of the dark world and is different from his parents. He finds his guide or mentor to instruct and help him solve his problems. His mentor not only helps him solve his problems, but also leads Sinclair to meet his lover, Frau Eva. He is happy and finds his true love.

## Material and Methods

The proposed study is qualitative because Jungian Psychoanalytic theory is applied to the text. This study focuses on the process of *individuation* through archetypes of *shadow anima/animus* and the self to analyse the main character in the novel *Demian*. The data collection from primary and secondary sources helps to investigate Emil Sinclair's mental development. Meanings from the life of Emil Sinclair are extracted through application of interpretive techniques to describe, decode and translate his behaviour. Interpretation is based on Jungian Psychology for understanding the personality and individuality process of the protagonist. The process of individuation is investigated with reference to various stages in the life of the protagonist.

## Results and Discussion

Psychological wholeness refers to the equilibrium of our lives in which our physical, spiritual, and mental selves are freely incorporated and equalled, with none overriding the other. Wholeness takes the broken parts of our lives and puts them back together by modifying and evolving in new ways. Emil Sinclair's life was modified and he learned new ways of life.

Psychological wholeness cannot be truly realized. It is a journey. It is a process that lasts for life. It is a state we work on every day through changes in life. Psychological wholeness is not easily attainable, it is a process. Demian told Sinclair that he would not come on horseback if he needed his help. He had to listen to his inner self and he would sense him inside. Demian told Sinclair on another occasion that he would pass on Eva's kiss and he would be happy. It was clear that Emil Sinclair reached psychological wholeness, but the journey towards psychological wholeness was not complete. It moved on and it was the beauty of it.

## Discussion

Edinger (1992) explains that psychological development is a redemptive cycle in all its stages. The goal is to restore the concealed self through conscious awareness, concealed in unconscious association with the ego. Sinclair's development owes much to his association with a female character; namely Frau Eva. He meets her during his visits to the house where Demian had lived years before. There he meets an old woman walking in the garden. She shows Sinclair a photograph of Damian's mother. Sinclair associates it with the photograph of his dreams to which she bears a striking resemblance. She is tall and has masculine figure. She resembles her son. In Jungian language it is called *animus*. *Animus* is masculine traits in a female's personality. She has also maternal traits. Demian exhibits the *anima* of his mother from whom he seems to have inherited it. *Anima* is feminine traits in a male's personality. She possesses both masculinity and femininity that emanates through her words, actions and dealings with the others: an unusual balance of the two archetypes that leaves a very favourable impression on Sinclair who describes her personality "There she was, the tall, almost masculine figure, looking like her son, but with maternal traits, traits of severity and deep passion, beautiful and alluring, beautiful and unapproachable, daimon and mother, fate and lover" (Hesse, 2017, p.106).

Sinclair is intoxicated with a sense of completion, so near and so satisfying. He thinks that he is near his destination. He is about to reach the fulfilment what he searches for and not a fancy-ridden mirage but a solid reality. He felt his search at the edge of wholeness "I felt that my fate was drawing me on. I felt that the moment of fulfilment was approaching" (Hesse, 2017, p.107).

However, Aniela Jaffe argues that it is difficult to attain fulfilment in the desire for *individuation* because the process of *individuation* never ends in actual life; it can't be confined by any means and the awkwardness resulting from it makes it more substantial (380).

For Aniela Jaffe the "prerequisites" for an individuated self, contain, in the first place, one's carnal requirements that are recognized in the life of day to day activities of ordinary living. It initiates a step in the direction of establishing fellow-feelings with the others around and inculcating in oneself the urge of a pursuit for "higher truths" (379). For her the process of *individuation* never comes to an end, rather it continues throughout one's life (380).

According to Shah (2011) "Gaining consciousness of individuality is a process that comes with intense pain and agony. It is a price which, at times, humans pay a little too heavily"(16)

Sinclair meets Demian after they have separated for quite some time. Demian asks Sinclair if he recognises him. This is to initiate the process of recognition that has been interrupted because of their separation. Sinclair replies "*you have changed, naturally. But you still have the mark on you*" (Hesse,2017,p.109). The 'change' refers to the physical development of Damian. Whereas 'mark' seems like hint of acknowledgement, an initiation towards the continuation of the process of self-recognition. 'Mark' being an abstract term here may refer to the recognition of the effect that he has left perpetually on the mind of Sinclair.

Demian's 'mark' resembles Sinclair's 'mark' that creates a sort of a bond between the two. Sinclair points towards that while stating "*Once I painted a picture of you ,Demian, and I was astonished to find that it resembled me. Was that the "mark"?*" (Hesse,2017, p.109).

Demian tells Sinclair that to know who he is, is important. If he does not know "*man is only afraid when he is not attuned to himself*" (Hesse,2017,p.110).

To achieve completeness one has to know the aspects of one's personality so far hidden from an individual due to his lack of desire to know oneself. Most of us live an unconscious life as we take the events and happenings of our lives for granted which hinders us from initiating a process of asking ourselves who we are and what is the purpose of our existence.

All such reflections lead to something beyond the material world; the world of truth behind the physic; the world of spiritual realities behind the ostentatious world of gains and achievements. Beside the world of luxury and extravagance there lies the world of poverty, dearth and suffering. The rich are powerful who are always power hungry no matter what they possess, they want more. The power dynamics of the individuals expand to states and have expanded all over the planet. Scientific Europe has won the globe and lost its way. Europeans are well aware of how to bring destruction to the world but have distanced themselves from the realization of God's existence.

Demian, while discussing the truth behind the obvious and the general discontentment of individuals shares his observation to this regard with Sinclair: "*They know exactly how many grams of explosive are needed to kill a man but they do not know how to pray to God , they do not even know how to remain happy and contented for one single hour*" (Hesse, 2017,p.110).

Sinclair knows that the road to *individuation* is not a direct one. It has sufferings, pains and separation from the family. But these pains, sufferings and separation are part and parcel for achieving *individuation*. Sinclair seems to comprehend this truth when he says :

*I had grown accustomed to my inner life, resigned to the fact that I had lost my feeling for the outside world and that the loss of its bright colours was an inseparable part of the loss of childhood and that one must to some extent pay for the freedom and maturity of the soul with the renunciation of those pure gleams of light* ( Hesse, 2017,p.112).

When Sinclair meets Frau Eva, he realises that her countenance resembles Damian's face. Demian seems to have got his *anima* from his mother "*I was unable to utter a word. From*

*a face that resembled her son's, timeless and ageless and full of inward strength, the beautiful, dignified woman gave me a friendly smile" (Hesse,2017,p.113).*

The smile of Fra Eva is very suggestive and can be interpreted as a signal of recognition besides that of hospitality, a smile that creates bonds and relationships that are timeless. She knows him before he tells her his name and promptly admits it "*You are Sinclair, I recognised you at once. Welcome!" (Hesse,2017,p.113).*

Sinclair's meeting with Frau Eva is the moment that triggers a movement and he feels that he has been in search for her throughout his life. Stevens (1997), points out that *individuation* is the simple or complex process, whereby every living organism becomes what it was supposed to be from the outset. Sinclair believes that he has reached his destination "*I believe I have been on my way here the whole of my life – and now I have reached home at last" (Hesse,2017,p.114).*

Frau Eva tells Sinclair about his mark on his forehead. She knows about his mark that makes him different from others. This mark is a distinction and she knows that "*When you were a small boy, Sinclair, my son came back home from school one day and said, there is a boy there who has the mark on his forehead; I must have him for my friend. It was you" (Hesse,2017,p.114).*

Sinclair asks Frau Eva about the journey to *individuation* and its difficulty. Eva responds that it is difficult for anybody who wants to follow the road to *individuation*. Frau Eva adds that it has its beauty too.

*It is always difficult to be born. You know the bird did not find it easy to struggle out of the egg. Think back and ask yourself, was the way so hard then? Wasn't it beautiful too? Could you have wished a more beautiful or easier path?(Hesse,2017,p.115).*

Frau Eva here it seems, is referring to his past life when he confronted his *shadow* in the form of Kromer and later ... She wants to make him recall the innocent phase of his childhood when he could not recognize the existence of evil. At this stage one lives a blissful life of contentment and satisfaction. It is only when one confronts the evil that one learns about 'fear' and uncertainty. She tells Sinclair that a day will come that he will meet his real fate. His fate loves him. Eva assures Sinclair that he is going to reach his true destiny one day. When someone is cherished by his destiny, he gets to his goal. The target may be his true self "*Sinclair, you are a child! Your "fate" loves you indeed" (Hesse,2017,p.116).*

Frau Eva's promises of '*happiness*' that instill a hope in Sinclair himself who is so much at ease with this family that he does not experience a frightful isolation. In his journey towards wholeness, he is not cut off from the people around him. He is only separated from the people outside the vicinity of the Eva's family "*and yet we lived in no way cut off from the outside world" (Hesse,2017,p.117).*

There is a division between the outside and inside. This division is not on the basis of concrete walls that one deliberately constructs to shun the world and its inhabitants but it is more an abstract form of separation based on spiritual distancing "*we were not divided off from the majority of men by boundaries but by another kind of vision" (Hesse, 2017, p.117)).* This vision needs to be clear in order to see what is going on outside and inside.

Those who have a "sign" of something deep and spiritual are considered mad and dangerous by the world because the world fails to recognize the truth behind the appearance as most of its inhabitants live an unconscious life. They cannot see the inside world which interestingly Eva and her son manage to see and connect with Sinclair. They

are considered odd. The world considers those who have signs to be different and hence associates them with negative undertones. It is because they do not know this sign. The sign appears strange to them *"We who bore the „sign“ might rightly be considered odd by the world, even mad and dangerous"* (Hesse,2017,p.117).

Jung (2002) admits that only when a person is willing to meet the demands of difficult self-evaluation and self-knowledge, then there is a meaningful answer to this question of self- knowledge. In doing so, he not only discovers a certain number of important truths about himself, he also gains a psychological advantage. To be called a human, a man must travel a long way to achieve wholeness. A man has to travel a long way in order to be considered an individual with a distinct personality. There is no short cut to humanity. This humanity has no written laws and lies far off *"For us humanity was a distant goal towards which we were marching, whose image no one yet knows, whose laws were nowhere written down"* (Hesse,2017,p.117). The ideals of humanity come from conscious soul. With this realization Sinclair learns to identify the problems of the world. He comes to understand the world outside and the cause of its degeneration. This leads him to state that though European nations have *"conquered the whole world only to lose its own soul in the process"* ( Hesse,2017,p.118).

The process of *individuation* is not necessary for all people but a necessity for some people who are interested in achieving self-understanding. For achieving this target of self-realization, they have to face hardships. It is a painful process, but it is also beautiful. Its beauty dawns on those who strive to achieve it. It requires total submission and acceptance.

*We shall be the handful of people who are there ready to move forward. That is why we are branded- as Cain was - to rouse fear and hatred and drive men out of their unimaginative idyll into more dangerous ways. All men who have striven for the progress of humanity, all of them without exception, were capable and effective only because they were ready to accept their fate* (Hesse,2017,p.119).

A man has to leave the old position to undergo a change. Change does not come to those who are living in status quo. For a change man has to accept what is necessary for it. The change can come by accepting the opposites that one does not expect. Change does not come by adhering to routine life and being not ready to accept what hurts him. This process of self- actualization and becoming more complete also reveals one's particular, individual structure. It shows how human characteristics and possibilities are combined in each individual in a manner that is different from any other (Johnson,1989). We have to accept the consequences that the change brings in order to avoid our destruction. Demian explains this in these words :

*When the upheavals of the earth's surface cast the creatures of the sea on the land and land creatures into the sea, the pre-destined specimens of the various orders were there ready to follow their destiny and accomplished the new and fantastic, and by making new biological adjustments were able to save their species from destruction* (Hesse, 2017,p.119).

Demian tells Sinclair that what he desires is important. This desire must be justified. If not, the desire should be renounced. It is important that the fulfilment should exist within him. Demian tells Sinclair that it is important what he wants . There must be a valid point for the desire, otherwise the desire has to be abandoned. It is important that the fulfilment occurs within himself. Then the fulfilment will come *"You should however either be capable of renouncing those desires or feel wholly justified in having them"* (Hesse, 2017,p.120).

The desire to attain a goal and the actual attainment depends on the intensity of the desire. According to Shah (2011)

*Man may desire to act independently but he is time and space bound and this is the reason why he is circumscribed by forces other than his own. Consequently, for the sake of survival, he surrenders to facts that are in drastic conflict with his inner realities (75).*

Frau Eva understands her strength of charm that draws Sinclair towards her but here she needs to educate him to distinguish between love and fascination. In order to make him understand she explains to Sinclair the concept of true love that cannot be demanded or requested. Love must find its own way. Then it stops to be attracted and begins to attract. It ceases being drawn and starts to draw. She tells Sinclair that his love is attracted by her. When it begins to attract her, she will come to him in the form of a revelation "*Your love, Sinclair, is attracted by me. When it begins to attract me, I will come*" (Hesse,2017,p.121).

This meeting not only educates Sinclair but also the reader is acquainted to the bigger realities of life and living in very simple terms. He realizes the worth of his meeting with Fra Eva and considers it *purposeful*. The purpose of this meeting is to lead him to the process of self-understanding. Every sound that she makes seems to be coming from the realms of his unconscious "*Her sole purpose was to lead me more deeply into myself*" (Hesse,2017,p.122).

Sinclair considers Frau Eva a part of himself. She is not separated from him. They both think alike. They are chips of the same block, to put it in a proverbial way of saying. She is not cut from him rather she is a part of him. They both feel the same and soon he is able to realize that "*She could be transformed into each one of my thoughts and each of my thoughts could be transformed into her*" (Hesse,2017,p.122).

Sinclair uses metaphorical language to explain his journey towards Frau Eva "*She was a star and I was a star on my way to her, and we met and were mutually attracted*" (Hesse,2017,p.123).

Sinclair needs to understand that he can achieve *individuation* when he tries to let go his earlier life and its memories. Demian points out that for birth, death is inevitable. Destruction of the old is necessary for the creation of the new. The demolition of the outdated is needed to build the new. It is important to leave the old to accept new ones as "*Nothing new arises without death*" (Hesse,2017,p.126).

Sinclair is happy after achieving wholeness and lives in Eva's house. This house gives him pleasure and comfort. Before coming here or before achieving wholeness, he was accustomed to loneliness or the life of denial and rejection. Sinclair himself describes his comfortable life "*these months in H- seemed like an island of dreams on which I was being allowed to lead a comfortable and enchanted life*" (Hesse,2017,p.128).

Sinclair attaches all the pleasure to Frau Eva. He achieves wholeness when he meets her. Eva is his fate. He had a feeling of destiny from the start, as if his life had to be fulfilled by fate. His fate provided him with an internal protection, and although he could not explain it to himself, it proved to him. Sinclair does not want to separate from her "*From now on I stayed close to Frau Eva with feelings of redoubled affection, glad that my "fate" still bore those calm, handsome features*" (Hesse,2017,p.128).

These are the days of Sinclair's life when he forgets all the worries and is happy living with her. He does not care about anything. He spends the happiest days of his life.

He has no concerns and experiences the pleasures of contentment. There is nothing to startle him *"But clung to the happy days like a butterfly to the honey – flower"* (Hesse,2017,p.128).

The feeling of safety and protection is soon disrupted by the drums of war as they started beating. Demian tells Sinclair that a new world is beginning. This new world will create troubles for those who do not want to adopt the new social order and want to live in the old status quo. He warns Sinclair to be prepared for more tragedies and disappointments that wait for him and others *"The new world is beginning and the new world will be terrible for those who cling to the old"* (Hesse,2017,p.130).

Both Sinclair and Demian are sent to fight and get injured. But they do not split even in war. They cannot be separated. They are one. When they are injured, they lie close to each other *"There was another mattress close to mine occupied by someone who now bent forward to look at me. He had the „sign „ on his forehead. it was Demian"* (Hesse,2017,p.134).

Demian tells Sinclair that if he needs his help against anyone, he will not come on horseback or by rail anymore. He has to listen to his inner self and he will hear him within him. He further advises him to listen to his inner voice when he needs his support. Damian believes that the company of his mother, her guidance and the education Sinclair has received at his house have strengthened his support system. Hence if he wants his support against anybody he has got to listen to his inner self and he will get a sound counsel *"If you send a message I shan't come riding crudely on horseback or by railway train next time. You'll have to listen to your inner voice and then you will hear me speak within you"* (Hesse,2017,p.135).

This shows the connection of Sinclair's self with that of Damian. It is at this phase of life that Sinclair learns more about the bond that has been created and ties him to this family. He comes to realize that a man does not have *'a self only'* but sometimes more selves. Sinclair has two *'selves'*. One is Demian and the other is Frau Eva. Demian tells Sinclair that Frau Eva told him that *"if things ever went badly with you, I was to pass on a kiss from her which she gave me"* (Hesse,2017 ,p.135).

Sinclair sleeps in the mattress close to Damian's mattress. When he wakes up there is no Demian. There is a stranger lying on his bed. It seems that Demian has been internalized and has become a part of his existence. He has become his inner self and merged into him *"A stranger lay on it whom I had never seen before"* (Hesse,2017,p.135).

When Sinclair sees his face in the mirror, it resembles Damian's. Demian has become his inner self *"I only need to bend my head over the black mirror to see my own image which now wholly resembles him , my friend and leader"* (Hesse,2017,p.135).

## Conclusion

It was discussed that the process of *individuation* took place in three phases- the unification of the *shadow*, the incorporation of the *anima/ animus*, and eventually the achievement of the self. In the process of *individuation* we cannot ignore the *persona*. At the beginning of the story, Emil Sinclair wore his family *persona*. Then he encountered the *shadow* ( Franz Kromer), and finally reached the self with the help of Frau Eva. The process of *individuation* was difficult because the imagined figures of light did not enlighten but made darkness more strikingly apparent.



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