

THE BUILDING OF MAIN CHARACTER'S SELF-ACTUALIZATION THROUGH RELIGION IN HERMANN HESSE'S *SIDDHARTHA*

Ellychristina D.Hutubessy 

Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Jl. Rawamangun Muka, Pulo Gadung, East Jakarta, 13220

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to find out the role of religion in Siddhartha's self-actualization process in Hesse's *Siddhartha*. The analysis applies Rogers' humanistic psychology focusing on self-actualization. The method used was qualitative with content analysis. The data were taken from the texts contained in the novel. Data analysis used triangulation techniques. The results showed that Buddhism and Hinduism had taught various things through religious activities conducted by Siddhartha to find out his actualization.

INTRODUCTION

Everyone has the highest need for self-actualization. To achieve self-actualization, every human must go through several phases. However, a different opinion arises from Rogers that self-actualization is not a hierarchy of needs, but a positive process (Beitela, a.l, 2015: 147). For this reason, humans must be able to act without being overshadowed by the past good conditions or the circumstances that will occur in the future. To be able to deal with these things, humans need to behave to accept the truth about the circumstances that have happened to him (Schultz, 1991: 46).

One way that can be used to find self-actualization is through religious teachings. One of the literary works that convey such teachings is Hesse's *Siddhartha*. Through literary works, many life values can be shared, so that by reading and understanding literary works, both students and teachers can add insight into the values of life. *Siddhartha* is one of Hermann Hesse's works. Hesse is a German-born author (1877), who won a Nobel in literature in 1946 (Böttger, 1990: 490). His famous works are *Steppenwolf*, *Siddhartha*, and *The Glass Bead Game* (Tempo). *Siddhartha* has been translated into various languages, including Indonesian. Also, it has been produced as a feature film in India (Conrad Rooks; 1972_film).

Siddhartha describes the life journey of a young man from the Brahmin family who has the same name as Gotama, Siddhartha. In this novel, Siddhartha tries to achieve happiness in life through various realities which he naturally experiences. With his ability, Siddhartha tries to fulfill his desires (Linh 2015: 1).

Siddhartha gives a clear picture of a spiritual search for one's self-awareness. The novel has aroused readers' interest in Eastern religions since it was first published in Europe in 1922. Throughout the 1950s, *Siddhartha* caused euphoria among young people in America, so that those who experienced disappointment in their lives began to form a religious association that was by their personalities.

Based on events in India, during Buddha's life, *Siddhartha* contains quite a lot of similarities with the experience of Buddha, even though it has fictional events. The character Siddhartha is told as the son of a Brahman, or Hindu priest, who refuses to accept the privilege of his family status. To seek knowledge and salvation, Siddhartha leaves all the pleasures of the world. He is very eager to empty himself of his desires, dreams, and pleasures so that he can understand the essence of peace of mind and soul.

Failing to achieve his wishes, he finally went to find Gautama Buddha, a saint who always wandered. After meeting, Siddhartha refused to accept Buddha's doctrine of salvation. He insisted on finding salvation in his own way, but he failed. What he found was just nothing, until finally, he thought of ending his life. In desperation, Siddhartha met a boat puller, who told the wisdom of a river to Siddhartha. Instantly, Siddhartha's pain vanished as he found his place in the universe. As he watched the flow of water, he heard voices in a unified universe. Siddhartha finally found himself in perfection. He has found the concept of self-actualization in religion that teaches various kinds of good values in life.

One of the humanistic psychology figures, Carl Rogers, based his theory on a life force of an organism called an actualizing tendency. Pescitelli (1996: 1) explains the tendency to self-actualize is a motivation that is united in every living creature and aims to develop all the potential as much as possible. The main concept of Rogers' theory of personality is self. Rogers' approach emphasizes that one must rely on his own experience of the world. The concept of self describes the individual's concept of himself, the characteristics that are considered to be a part of himself (McLeod, 2014: 1).

Many studies have shown the importance of self-actualization as a form of kindness. The results of this study are in line with those of other studies. Rani (2017) in her research on self-actualization in Anita Nair's *Mistress* found that the individual wants mental strength to claim personal autonomy within the facts of social pressures and restrictive forces. Her study emphasized on revealing that Anita Nair accepts the validity of the individual wants for rebellion and rejection of stereotyped roles. Her novel has conjointly been explored as a journey to find the authorization of girl's point of view on the conception and position of womanhood within the fashionable context.

Sawwa & Neimneh (2017) wrote an article on exile and self-actualization in Pauline Kaldas' "He Had Dreamed of Returning" and "Airport." The article has utilized the notion of self-actualization that argues for people's want to accomplish everything they're capable of. The article also illustrated that self-actualization keeps the immigrants from experiencing exile and dislocation within the two stories by Kaldas.

Du (2017) wrote about Amir's journey for self-actualization in Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*. The paper attempts to reveal Amir's way to redemption for what he did to Hassan. Through his journey, Amir has obtained the power of love, loyalty, responsibility, dignity and courage. His cowardice and selfishness as well as suffering from conscience and condemnation and torture, transform gradually into strong qualities.

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, there are not any of the previous studies that discuss the role of religion in achieving self-actualization. Therefore, the main problem in this study focuses on the building of the main character's self-actualization through religion in Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha*. It focuses on various religious activities in Hinduism and Buddhism that have been carried out by Siddhartha in showing self-actualization.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Self-Actualization

Self-actualization has a different concept. In research conducted by Rawat (2015) concluded that self-actualization is a part of psychological theory that is more concerned with the growth of the human. Self-actualization emphasizes the process of one's personal growth and development towards the best level possible to realize uniqueness, and potential in him. Rogers also said in Poduska and Turman that humans are basically good or healthy. According to him, every human being has a "self-actualization tendency" that is the desire or motivation to develop all the potential that exists in him. In contrast to Freud's psychoanalytic theory which prioritizes attention to the causes of failure of a person or the obstruction of achieving the realization of self-potential. Self-actualization, according to Rogers prioritizes self-growth "self" to the development and improvement of self-potential continuously (Alwisol 2004).

Maslow (in Schultz 1991) explained that a strong effort for people who are self-actualizing is not still needed in the form of encouragement as the usual term deficiency motivation means, but they are given more encouragement called "meta-motivated" to become fully human in their potential. This encouragement can be displayed through the growth and expression of character, maturation, and development called self-actualization. Self-actualization is not just the fulfillment of ordinary needs because someone who is actualizing requires the fulfillment of extraordinary needs. As an effort to achieve needs in general, one cannot avoid failure, so when reaching this extraordinary need, failure can be experienced by every human being. The actions and attitudes shown when a person experiences failure in achieving meta-chases in psychological terms are called metapatology.

Perls (1969), as the originator of the Gestalt theory, also talked about self-actualization in a person as an innate goal for all humans. A person can actualize himself if he is in a relationship with other people and the world. Perls allows humans to use their potential to act and be responsible for their behavior. Even this is explained again by Erikson and Lambert

(2015) in an article about therapeutic methods according to Rogers' theory. Thus it can be concluded that self-actualization is as a desire or motivation to develop all the potential that exists in him to achieve perfection of life according to the environment around him.

In this study, the character in the novel will not be studied through Freud's psychoanalysis or Maslow's Humanistic psychology but through Rogers' Humanistic psychology to explore the religion value that exists from self-actualization. The characteristics of human beings who actualize themselves according to Rogers' opinion are considered appropriate to be used to trace Siddhartha's life journey through religion in the process of finding himself until he reaches self-actualization.

The Religion Value

A value is defined as a principle that promotes well-being or prevents harm. Another definition is that values are our guidelines for our success and our paradigm about what is acceptable. Naagarazan (2006) sees spirituality as a way of living that emphasizes the constant awareness and recognition of the spiritual dimension (mind and its development) of nature and people, with a dynamic balance between the material development and the spiritual development. Wodak (2011) defines religion as a set of shared beliefs and values which carry specific ideological orientations. These beliefs and values are part of the culture of each individual; hence, Byram (2006) conclude that culture and religion are interrelated and should go hand in hand. religious value, thus, is attitude and behavior in obeying the role of religion. In religious teachings, humans are taught to live helping each other to implement the role of human beings as individuals and social beings.

DISCUSSIONS OF THE MAIN THEME

There are twelve stories in the novel. The first story is about the early life of Siddhartha. He is described as “the handsome son of the Brahmin” with “the sun tanned his light shoulders...” (Hesse, 1951: 1). As a Brahmin child, Siddhartha was taught to know all religious rules and rituals and how to worship. Siddhartha was an intelligent child that he learned everything about religion in a short time. His father and mother were very proud of him. Siddhartha would become his father's successor to become a Brahmin. As a Brahmin child, he had a special role in society. He had to become a leader in the social environment.

However, all the love Siddhartha got from his father, mother, and his friend, Govinda, did not bring any “delight in himself”. Siddhartha still felt “lack all joy in his heart” and “dreams

restless thoughts came in his mind..." (Hesse, 1951: 2). Siddhartha started questioning all the teachings he learnt from his father and other Bahmans.

Thus, this was the start of Siddhartha's search of self-actualization. He learned a lot about religious teachings to find his actualized self. The following are the religious teachings that shape Siddhartha's self-actualization:

Hindu

Almost all of the stories in *Siddhartha* set in Indian country place religion as a background story. Hinduism is described as very prominent through influential aspects of the kinship system in India, namely caste. In the life of Indian society there are Brahmin caste, knighthood, *Vaishya*, *Sudra* and the fifth is not grouped in the caste-class, namely *pariah*. Brahmin caste is a caste whose members are clergy. The knight's caste consists all nobles from the region. The third caste is *Vaishya* that is the class of traders. While the fourth is *sudra*, which is the ordinary community. The last is the *Pariah* caste which is classified as a beggar and homeless society. In this novel, the most important religion is Hinduism which is reflected through the life forms of two classes of society, namely *Brahmana* and *Samana*. The *Samana* group is included in the *Pariah* caste. The story that depicts religious life is the story of *Brahmin* and *Samana* children (Hesse 2004).

As a Brahmin child, the role of Siddhartha as a potential leader requires in-depth knowledge of life. In this story, it is found that Siddhartha meditated, washed and made sacrificial offerings. All these rituals were studied by Siddhartha diligently from intelligent people around his house.

Siddhartha joined the Samana group, which is a group that practiced spiritual religion by breaking away from the body and manifesting into various forms. Siddhartha carried out various activities that were in accordance with the culture in this caste, namely fasting, self-denying and self-emptying as a form of physical training, and also practicing meditation as a mental exercise. The activity was followed by Siddhartha fervently until he reached the highest ability to be able to call the word "Om" from the bottom of the heart.

Lange schonnahm Siddhartha am Gespräch der Weisenteil, übt esichmit Govindaim Redekampf ,übt esichmit Govinda in der Kunst der Betrachtung, im Dienst der Versenkung. Schon verstanderlautlos das Om zusprechen, ... (Siddhartha, 11).

(For a long time, Siddhartha participated in the lesson about wise people, practicing arguments with Govinda, practicing the art of contemplation, and practicing doing meditation with great devotion. He was able to say the word Om without sound ...).

The quote shows that Siddhartha had many ways of actualizing himself through religious activities. Siddhartha strives to show his perspective on various events by practicing the

ability to argue. He also learns about the values of trust and self-patience.

Besides, Siddhartha also carried out various other Hinduism activities on such as fasting. In Hinduism, fasting is done to experience the emptiness of self from all physical desires to reach ultimate happiness. Therefore, Siddhartha did it to experience peace of mind. However, Siddhartha never felt the peacefulness.

Buddhist

The second religion that also contributed to Siddhartha's search for self-actualization is Buddha. Buddhism has the core teachings of 4 noble truths and the eightfold path. The noble truths teach that there is suffering in the world. This suffering comes from worldly desires, which constantly exist in a human's life. To get rid of that, one needs an elemental path of the eightfold. Siddhartha exercises mastery of the mind through *samadhi*, which aims to free the one from suffering and attain the highest wisdom of life. As a Buddhist follower, Siddhartha's activities were focused on spiritual practices such as the simple life of a monk who received alms and listened to Gotama Buddhist teachings.

Spiritual activities such as a monk who lives simply and receives alms and always listens to all the teachings of Buddha Gotama have been carried out by Siddhartha which aims to obtain meaning in life. Thus, Siddhartha can explore various insights from within himself. The results of this self-excavation lead to spiritual excavation, that life in the world is a suffering that must be defeated by an attitude of death or self-emptying.

Thus, Buddhism has given Siddhartha the understanding or meaning of truth in life. Buddhist characters have inspired Siddhartha to comprehend the truth. Siddhartha understood that he was born like an ordinary human, but in his body, it seemed that his true personality was hidden. Siddhartha understands the physical body is visible, while the other bodies are hidden so that ordinary people are less able to understand it except by those who believe in God. This energetic body is seen as a body of 18 feet tall, golden in color. There is a soft, cotton-like circle, called *urna*, between its forehead, then on top of its head was a kind of turban. Finally, around the head, there is a circle of light, which marks the sanctity and divine nature.

The image of the body is the body of the creator who gives the truth. Siddhartha's understanding of physical humanity provides very important teachings in the course of his actualization. Siddhartha's comprehension of human personality, which is often, considered hidden, influences the behavior and life that each person lives. Saroglou (2015) explains that traditionally, religion has been thought to shape individual personalities (traits, but also social values and attitudes). Religion shapes, to some extent personality but, conversely, genetic and

environmental influences also affect personality-religiosity relationships. Personality interacts with environmental factors to predict religiosity and with religion to predict relevant psychological outcomes.

Religion, in individual life, functions as a value system that contains certain norms. This value system is something that is considered meaningful to human beings who in reality can influence in regulating behavior patterns, thinking patterns and behavior patterns. The process of self-actualization of the *Samana* group according to Siddhartha is a contradictory activity, because self-actualization should be a process of knowing oneself, not self-rejection by eliminating or leaving the body. Likewise, the fasting activities performed by the *Samana* in this novel aim to break away from the body, so that the *atman* as the greatest core of self will come out of the body. Meanwhile, fasting is known in several major religions as an attempt to realize the presence of the Divine in man.

In Buddhism, it is emphasized that this world is suffering which is a unified whole, meaning that all events in this world are related to one another and life, in essence, contains suffering. Buddhist teachings offer a way to avoid negative lifelike as *karna* in the relationship of the chain by regulating the moral behavior of human life, then subsequently doing *samadhi* to control the mind as the basis of human behavior.

The activity of the two religions learned by Siddhartha is essentially a form of Siddhartha's dialogue with himself. It is through this experience from the two environments of religious life that Siddhartha undergoes changes in the course of his life, from adolescence to adulthood and even to the elderly. In this novel, meditation that is done is a manifestation of human communication with himself. So the direction goes inside yourself. Meditation has the purpose of achieving enlightenment of the soul who knows nothing of the principle of divine power that works in humans. Thus, the core of wisdom which is the goal of meditation is in human beings. In this novel, the form of meditation that Siddhartha does is by repeating a mantra to foster self-awareness about a particular object. In this unique meditation process, thinking is interpreted as an activity that is achieved by not making a sound, not having a dialogue or discussion as in Western thinking.

All forms of symbols, miracles, magic, and religious rituals like those of Siddhartha play an important role in the process of forming a system of values in individuals. Once formed, individuals can use the value system to evaluate and understand the situation and experience experienced. That's when individuals have norms about how to behave themselves. This norm will make an individual or a human being able to conclude that "I am a sinner, I am a good person" etc.

Siddhartha Gotama is an important figure in Buddhism who has achieved his perfection through *samadhi*. The process of self-maturing through Buddhist education is called ascetic. Buddhists act as objects that accept teachings and do not experience the enlightenment that Buddha possesses. Siddhartha perceived this teaching as something far beyond his reach, even though the teachings, according to him, were perfect. But Siddhartha would not follow him because he did not want to accept that truth from the Buddha, but wanted to be like the Buddha who got enlightenment himself.

The message of Siddhartha's religious journey is that we should not withdraw from having holy feelings, but instead throw ourselves into various things. Siddhartha's story gives the comprehension that life is hard without the manifestation of sensuality and matter or that life is often filled with thought and knowledge. However, it does not provide spiritual development as we hope. Siddhartha discovered the actualization of himself as a human when he stopped searching for nirvana.

Thus it can be concluded that Siddhartha, as the main character in the novel, gained an understanding of religious teachings in the course of his life both from learning Buddhism and Hinduism through self-actualization. He does not make himself like anyone else. This can be seen from the facts of his life, namely: 1) Siddhartha was the son of a tribal chief who had lived a luxurious life then chose to leave the government to be able to know how to end suffering, and 2) Siddhartha did not worship anyone. The role of religious teachings that can be used or applied in everyday life as living things is the value of goodness. Some of the virtues of the teachings of the Buddha that Siddhartha shows are: 1) avoiding actions caused by the body (murder, theft, and adultery); 2) speeches (deception, slander talk, abusive speech, useless conversations), and 3) thoughts (attachment, intentions, and false beliefs).

Spirituality is as a factor of importance within the context of basic religious needs. Spirituality has both added value for leading the good life and influences the impact of these needs. The results show that spirituality positively contributes to the qualification of a good life, in terms of desirability and moral goodness. Besides, the crucial role of relatedness was confirmed by van Dierendonck (2012). From the analysis, it is known that religion can be used as social control. From Siddhartha's teaching, religious values serve to show the correct behaviors and social control system, thus leading to the self-actualization. Hoffmann (2015) shows that the role of religion refers to morality and social control.

CONCLUSION

The results of the analysis conclude that humans, as living beings, have a unique way to realize their identity to achieve self-actualization. The process of self-actualization can arise through various factors that influence the development of each person's life, such as religious teachings that provide confidence. Through the figure of Siddhartha, it is explained how the process of achieving self-actualization through the teachings of Hinduism and Buddhism. Various religious activities build Siddhartha's self-image into people who have satisfaction in finding needs. Siddhartha, through the religious teachings obtained, became an extraordinary person because he had become a complete human being.

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