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DECONSTRUCTIVE ELEMENTS IN HERMANN HESSE'S *SIDDHARTHA*

P.V.RAJLAKSHMI

Assistant Professor, Department of English.

Kongu Arts And Science College (Autonomous), Nanjanapuram, Erode, Tamil Nadu, India.

E-mail: rajivenkat93@gmail.com



P.V.RAJLAKSHMI

ABSTRACT

Siddhartha was written by German Philosopher, Hermann Hesse. The novel is based on the life sequences of Buddha. Siddhartha is the Protagonist in the novel whose life underwent on deconstructive circumstances. Siddhartha searched for self-realization for attaining salvation in his entire life. He did never get where he searched for, but he had gained it at quiet contradictory event. He did never caught awakening from whom he expects, but from completely converse person.

Key Words: Deconstruction, contradictions, two extremes, Nirvana, Sansara, Sensual pleasures, Experiences

Introduction

Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha* (1922), is published in German language. He is a German poet, essayist, shortstory writers, novelist and painter. His other notable works are *The Glass Bead Game* (1943), *Steppen wolf* (1927), *Narcissus and Goldmund* (1930) and *Demain* (1919). Most of his works are translated into English. Siddhartha is translated into English by Hilda Rosner in 1954.

The word 'Siddhartha' itself possesses the resemblance of deconstruction in its meaning. 'Siddha' means 'achieved' and 'artha' means 'to search for'. The search and reaching of goal stand in the single medium of Siddhartha's life. Siddhartha has searched the path of spiritual wisdom to attain the roots of salvation. He has achieved after a long journey of sansara instead of getting from spirituality.

Siddhartha is Brahmin son. He is mastered over most of the spiritual practices that are following by the Brahmins. Though he has learnt everything from Vedas and Upanishads, his heart has the thirst to find the ways of salvation. So he has started his spiritual journey from this point. He has

learnt many arts from Samanas' way of practices. But he is not satisfied. So he has entered into sansara – worldly pleasures. In certain stage, he has realized that his tenderness and all the spiritual practices and skills have flown from him because of his deviated habitual of sansara. Finally, he finds out the divinity within himself whereas, he has searched for all the external things.

Discussion

The term 'Deconstruction' is coined by French Thinker Jacques Derrida. Deconstruction means that two extremes stand in a single medium, whereas, they meet the critical point can be called as deconstruction. M.H.Abrams mentions it as 'Binary Oppositions'. He further says,

Among deconstructive literary critics, one such demonstration is to take the standard hierarchical opposition of literature /criticism, to invert it so as to make criticism primary and literature secondary, and then to represent, as an undecidable set of oppositions, the assertions that criticism is a species of literature and that literature is a species of criticism (79).

The text can never be predictable under the analization of deconstruction. There might be the occurrence of chaos to justify it. Derrida speaks of not just only the differences but two extremes. His actual embellishment is to go through a text not only in literary aspect and also in critical views of philosophical, traditional and conventions. Derrida composes the philosophy with criticism. Kathleen Wheeler states,

Derrida denied determinacy, immediacy, and fullness to the intention of speech acts through the concept of "iterability". According to "iterability", any speech act is repeatable and meaningful within another context. ... "Repeatability" detaches speech acts from immediate intentions postulated in the present moment. Iterability alters what is said, showing that we mean something other than what we mean, or say something other than what we say. Derrida called this "spacing" or articulation (54).

According to the argument of Kathleen, Derrida denies the definiteness of the text in single perspective. Words might be same but the meaning differs constantly. This is what Derrida mentioned as "iterability". There is no need to be the same thing to be happened what is preplanned. The circumstances might be changed in a specific point that is the mid-point of two extremes.

Siddhartha wants to learn the art of reaching God. So he has moved from his family life and joined with Samanas. There he has learnt all the arts with the equivalence of the his Guru in Samanas. He also raises the question against his Guru why he had not attained salvation even though mastery over all kind of practices. His questioning tendency is good but it leads him towards the deviation of wisdom. Though his questions shows Siddhartha as a wise man, that leads him towards the worldly pleasure. He could never remain within his border. He has no complete belief on anything. He keeps on moving from one to another. After departing from Samanas, he has entered into sansara – sensual life. His actual journey is to find the way for salvation but instead of moving forward

with the spiritual path, he has glided into sensual enjoyments.

The sensual enjoyments are not only happiness, love, comfort, etc., but also sad, fear, hatred, discomfort, etc. There is a traditional saying, that one man could never reach the salvation if he belonged to sansara. But Siddhartha finds the path to attain salvation through comes across the experiences of sansara. Freudian psychoanalytical theory says that the suppressed emotions of the mind may be accelerated to cure the conscious troubles. By applying this, Siddhartha is accelerated his suppressed emotions within himself. So each and every men has common sensual explorations. After such a critical point, it turns into its reversal, whereas, deconstruction occurs. Spirituality insists that to attain the state of emptiness occurs after the experiences of sensual pleasure. So each and every circumstance of the worldly pleasures has to be experienced. Then the life will automatically create its deconstruction after the reach of its critical point.

The combined experiences of, good and bad, bliss and stress, fortune and misfortune, are standing in the medium of Siddhartha's life in various circumstances. After experiencing all these emotions, Siddhartha turns his vision into himself instead of the external experiences. He feels the satisfaction, when he starts to experience his innerself. It is his self-realization. The self-realization leads a human being towards the way for reaching salvation. The awakening happens, when he enchants the "Om" after seeing the images of his life in the river stream. It is an inducing factor of suppressed memories.

Siddhartha emphasized it to Govinda, as in the words of Rosner,

I am telling you what I have discovered. Knowledge can be communicated, but not wisdom. One can find it, be fortified by it, do wonders through it, but one cannot communicate and teach it [...], in every truth the opposite is equally true.[...] When the illustrious Buddha taught about the world, he had to divide it into Sansara and Nirvana, into illusion and truth, into suffering and salvation. One cannot do otherwise, there is no other method for

those who teach. But the world itself, being in and around us, is never one-sided. Never is a man or a deed wholly Sansara or wholly Nirvana; never is a man wholly a saint or a sinner (114).

We come to understand the two extremes of Sansara and Nirvana stand in the single medium of human life. Knowledge is what we are learning from the experiences. Wisdom is internal awakening. The knowledge can be taught. All the spiritual practices are followed for gaining the knowledge, that is, communicated by the various teachers in Siddhartha's life. But wisdom comes only when the mind thinks about the experiences and derives its own definition from them.

Conclusion

Nothing is pure in this world. No men can attain Nirvana only by following spirituality without come across the experiences of Sansara. These binary oppositions stand in the single medium of human life. People should aware of their inner-self. It gives the wisdom. All other practices and rituals are just ensuring the knowledge of spirituality, not the platform to attain Salvation. By gaining the self-realization, people can find their own way to reach God, along with all the sensual experiences.

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