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# THE WAY TO THE SELF: THE NOVEL «STEPPENWOLF» THROUGH THE LENS OF JUNGIAN PROCESS OF INDIVIDUATION

**Purpose.** This paper aims to analyze the life journey of Harry Haller, protagonist of H. Hesse's novel «Steppenwolf», in the context of Jungian process of individuation. **Methodology.** The author has used C.G. Jung's theory of archetypes, along with hermeneutical methodology. Theoretical basis and results. «Steppenwolf» is the story of a man who is dogged by controversy: he feels himself to be a human and a wolf at the same time. Harry Haller learns from the «Treatise on the Steppenwolf» that he has more than two natures. Actually, he consists of hundreds and thousands of them. This idea is based on Jung's concept of the collective unconscious. And the very novel «Steppenwolf» brightly illustrates Jung's individuation process. Harry Haller's mission is to overcome opposition between his social cultural «I» and Shadow (Steppenwolf), to recognize and accept his Anima (Hermine), to understand the mystery of the identity of Pablo, who embodies chthonic depths, and Mozart, who represents sublime spirituality, that is, to comprehend his own Self. Scientific novelty. In the novel, the human nature is depicted as the eternal struggle and eternal unity of two polarities. Individuals have to realize this unity on their way to the Self. Recognizing, confronting and assimilating the Ego, Anima/Animus, Shadow into the larger realm of the Self, one achieves a new level of consciousness. However, this is a never-ending process, unattainable ideal. At the end of the novel, Harry Haller failed to cope with this challenge. It seems that he has remained at the same point, where we had met him. However, nothing was impossible – everything was just beginning. Conclusions. The questions raised by Jungian analysis push us beyond our limits to the great alchemical mystery – the wholeness of our own souls. For the salvation of humankind as a whole and every single human in our world full of conflicts and violence, we all need to experience the feeling of our spiritual unity and our deep connection to the universe. It becomes possible due to return to our spiritual core, to our Self. The process of individuation is, in fact, the way to infinity. Harry Haller has yet to find his way to himself.

Key words: Self, Anima, Animus, Persona, Shadow, individuation.

#### Introduction

Today humanity faces such a chaotic, uncertain world that it is very difficult, if not impossible, to feel a deep connection to all that exists. Modern culture demonstrates the problem of «broken consciousness». Human psyche cannot unite oppositions and feels like being over the abyss. «Existentialism in philosophy - modern art, literature, and science – shows man either in a state of groping in agony for some spiritual center of meaning for his life, or trying to live a horizontal existence, one in which all values are of equal significance... The urgent psychological and philosophical need of Western man today is a return to the vertical, to some central spiritual ideal principle about which he can orient his life and overcome his feelings of alienation and meaninglessness» [8, p.219]. In his seeking for true himself, modern man finds Herman Hesse's writings so appealing because the

characters of his novels urge us to question accepted values, norms, and traditions; to rebel against existing system and institutions; to make a journey to our inner world, even to most dark and secluded corners of our soul.

Works of famous German writer Hermann Hesse usually generate a lot of interpretations. They can be seen as novels-crosswords, wherein a reader has to reveal something special. At the same time, these novels are novels-initiations that can change reader's worldview. The characters of novels are not real people, though we identify ourselves with them. Heroes of H. Hesse appear to be more archetypes than just characters. Probably, this is the background of their tremendous impact on readers. The great writer created characters that are understandable to representatives of any culture. At all times they are perceived as the embodiment of basic functions of human existence [1]. Influenced by C.G. Jung, H. Hesse reproduced the con-

cept of archetypes in his writings.

Archetypes are primordial images that reflect basic repeating patterns or universal themes common to humankind. They are unshakable elements of our unconscious. However, they are in constant change. Identical archetypal images and motives (e.g., myth of the flood) are found in noncontiguous cultural areas that exclude borrowing. Archetypes should be understood not as the images themselves, but as the schemes of images, their psychological preconditions: «these are as many archetypes as these are typical situations in life. Endless repetition has engraved these experiences into our psychic constitution, not in the form of images filled with content, but at first only as forms without content, representing merely the possibility of a certain type of perception and action. When a situation occurs which corresponds to given archetype, that archetype becomes activated... » [12, p. 67]. If individual cooperates with archetype's elaboration, it provides a meaningful guide to life. Jung's theory of archetypes plays a major role in H. Hesse's writings of the middle and late periods.

### Literature review

H. Hesse's writings attract particular attention among researchers in various scientific disciplines. Different interpretations of his works are largely due to the extraordinary richness and deep contradictions of his artistic image. Famous scholars E. Maier, T. Jackson, I. Cornils, M. Swales, F. Lubich, J. Vahlbusch, O. Durrani, A. Hsia, A. Solbach, R. Freedman, G. Baumann, D. Richards, A. Mathäs, Eu. Stelzig, J. Zilcosky, R. Karalashvili and many others contributed to a new level of understanding of H. Hesse's works [6; 11; 15; 16; 17]. However, H. Hesse's insights are hidden «behind the veil» and capture new and new scientists. Still now H. Hesse's works need to be studied within philosophical anthropology.

## Purpose

This paper aims to analyze the life journey of Harry Haller, protagonist of H. Hesse's novel «Steppenwolf», in the context of Jungian process of individuation.

### Methodology

The author has used C.G. Jung's theory of archetypes, along with hermeneutical methodology.

### Theoretical basis and results

Having undergone psychoanalysis, H. Hesse particularly interested in individuation process, revelation of hidden wholeness, and renewal of inward man. He considered the model of the human psyche/soul developed in the analytical psychology (with its central archetype – the Self – that represents the striving for unity, wholeness, and integration) to be particularly fruitful theoretical basis in his quest for the best ways to return to true ourselves. Comprehending the process of individuation, H. Hesse emphasizes inner crisis, turning point and further gradual progress toward wholeness, toward integration of the conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche [2]. The true Self is realized as the result of archetypes' elaboration and gaining experience in conscious relations with images that they animate.

For C. Jung, the Self was the central archetype - archetype of wholeness. The Self is a psychological concept that expresses our indistinguishable, incomprehensible essence. C. Jung called it «God in us» [5, p.237]. The Self is the central point between consciousness and unconsciousness, associated with them, but not identical to them. The Self is a source of energy that «encourages humans» to «be themselves»/to «return to themselves» [7]. According to C. Jung, if the purpose of psychic development is the Self, then the linear evolution does not exist (except the first period of life). There is only circling around the Self [14]. C. Jung studied the processes taking place in the psyche of an individual and their impact on his/her activity. There are integration and disintegration that generate internal contradictions of the psyche and determine the interaction of the conscious and unconscious mind. Integration is the consistency of all components of the personality that unites them into a single coherent system. Disintegration acts as an opposite mechanism that disables the interconnection of all elements of the system and leads to deep-seated contradictions. Thus, the human psyche is polar: one part of it adapts to the rules and regulations of the external world (Persona); the other, which consists of personal and collective unconscious attitudes, is not accepted by individuals due to incompatibility with conscious percep-

tions of themselves (Shadow). When one of them «wins», the process of disintegration begins. Individual feels that there is no consistency between his/her conscious and unconscious «persons». This leads to internal contradictions. Individual strives to get rid of them, however, two different poles knock him/her out of the way. It results in neurosis, disorders that, in turn, could trigger a reintegration of personality – returning to true Self.

By C. Jung, the process of individuation itself is a stepwise approach to the content and functions of the psychic integrity, as well as the recognition of the impact of its conscious and unconscious contents on conscious «I». Individuation begins with dissociation from Persona and continues with deepening into the unconscious sphere that should be raised into consciousness. Archetypes of the collective unconscious, which C. Jung viewed as the characters of inner drama, represent impersonal abyss that for a successful course of individuation should be realized. Shadow, Anima, Animus, the Self act as independent personalities. These images of our unconscious in Hesse's novels are represented by certain people (while remaining symbols). They embody different aspects of the author's soul.

The entire life journey of Harry Haller – the protagonist of «Steppenwolf» – is a story of a man who breaks through his outer shell. It is about the emancipation of personality from the shackles of the Ego and striving for the ideal of Immortals (Goethe and Mozart for Haller). This striving for the «inward man» can be understood as the rejection of the «outward man», his death that the Eastern sages called the death of Ego. Harry is dogged by controversy: he feels himself to be a human and a wolf at the same time. «There was once a man, Harry, called the Steppenwolf. He went on two legs, wore clothes and was a human being, but nevertheless he was in reality a wolf of the Steppes... at the bottom of his heart he knew all the time (or thought he knew) that he was in reality not a man, but a wolf of the Steppes...

And so the Steppenwolf had two natures, a human and a wolfish one. This was his fate, and it may well be that it was not a very exceptional one. There must have been many men who have had a good deal of the dog or the fox, of the fish or the serpent in them without experiencing any extraordinary difficulties on that account. In such cases, the man and the fish lived on together and neither

did the other any harm. The one even helped the other. Many a man indeed has carried this condition to such enviable lengths that he has owed his happiness more to the fox or the ape in him than to the man. So much for common knowledge. In the case of Harry, however, it was just the opposite. In him the man and the wolf did not go the same way together, but were in continual and deadly enmity. One existed simply and solely to harm the other, and when there are two in one blood and in one soul who are at deadly enmity, then life fares ill» [10, p.23]. Two worlds, which coexist in Haller's soul, constitute two basic motives of «Steppenwolf» being manifested in Harry and in the Steppen wolf. These two worlds are similar to Chinese Yin and Yang, which together constitute Tai Chi Monad, – a symbol used by C. Jung to illustrate the interaction between the conscious and unconscious principles in the human. In the novel, the human nature is depicted as the eternal struggle and eternal unity of two polarities. Individuals have to realize this unity on their way to the Self. The image of Steppenwolf, which is associated with Harry Haller, is an archetype of Shadow that expresses the personal unconscious of the protagonist. Persona is represented in the image of sophisticated, intelligent, unique German man named Harry Haller. Mortal combat between Persona and Shadow (Harry-human and Harry-wolf) ends up in disintegration of the personality and loss of meaning of life: «In this way he was always recognizing and affirming with one half of himself, in thought and act, what with the other half he fought against and denied» [10, p.27]. «Steppenwolf» begins with despair that brings to the end the initiation into the outer world. Despair indicates the insolvency of Persona and its moral worldview and, therefore, is directed against this artificial construct of personality. Despair and conflict with Persona can cause death of the protagonist. But in the case of successful overcoming, they open the chaos of unconscious that should be raised into consciousness enabling the personality to find his/her true nature. Haller's main challenge is to abandon his «I» to get closer to his ideal, which is represented in the novel by Immortals. In the «Treatise on the Steppenwolf», which a lone man in the street gave to Harry, was stated that «the desperate clinging to the self and the desperate clinging to life are the surest way to eternal death, while the power to die, to strip one's self naked, and the eternal surrender

of the self bring immortality with them» [10, p.32]. Harry Haller, this German intellectual, who became aware of his duality, his splitting apart, gained access to Magic Theatre - theatre, where price of admission was his mind, his ability to say «Goodbye» to his «I», to Persona. Harry described the feeling prior to this important event of his inner life as follows: «I had escaped time altogether, and went my way, with death at my elbow and death as my resolve» [10, p.75]. Haller finally broke up with his mask – «Persona» – during the Masked Ball. Ambivalence and bipolarity of the carnival, where the death of the old is linked with the birth of the new, particularly emphasize this beautiful and tragic moment of the death of the «outward» man and the rebirth of the «inward» man.

While Persona reflects external patterns of psyche, Anima/Animus are images that give birth to internal patterns. Persona takes on the role of mediator between Ego and the outer world. Anima/Animus serves as mediator between the Ego and the unconscious. Anima and Animus are terms introduced into psychology by C. Jung. There are archetypal images, which are related, respectively, to males and females. Anima is the personification of all feminine psychological patterns within a man. It is unconscious female component of the male psyche. Animus is the personification of all masculine psychological patterns within a woman. It is unconscious male component of the female psyche. In the novel «Steppenwolf», a young woman, Hermine, who passionately loves life and all its pleasures, acts as Harry's twin character. The very name Hermine (the feminine form of Hesse's name – Hermann) indicates the classic function of Anima: she returns intelligent, sophisticated, and incapable of life candidate for suicide Harry Haller to a normal life and gives him love. She is Steppenwolf in female form. Hermine embodies Harry's unconscious, which he must face. Conversations between Harry and Hermine show that the author of the novel managed to hear and understand feminine voice in his unconscious. Wedding dance in the Globe rooms points out a successful development of unconscious mental content. Hermine acts as a means of Harry's self-development revealing his other selves.

The very process of individuation is the tapping into our true Self through recognition of our unconscious. Its ultimate goal is merging of opposite spheres of psyche – conscious and unconscious.

The challenge Haller faces is the development of his Anima embodied within Hermine character. It should be stressed that the theory of Animus is also represented in the novel: for Hermine, Harry Haller embodies her own unfulfilled yearning for spiritual life

Harry Haller learns from the «Treatise on the Steppenwolf» that he has more than two natures. Actually, he consists of hundreds and thousands of them. This idea is based on Jung's concept of the collective unconscious. And the very novel «Steppenwolf» brightly illustrates Jung's individuation process. Harry Haller's mission is to overcome opposition between his social cultural «I» and Shadow (Steppenwolf), to recognize and accept his Anima (Hermine), to understand the mystery of the identity of Pablo, who embodies chthonic depths, and Mozart, who represents sublime spirituality, that is, to comprehend his own Self. This should happen in Magic Theatre at the end of the novel, when Harry Haller meets face to face with all his natures, desires, and instincts of the collective unconscious [1].

C. Jung considered reintegration of personality to be the necessary condition for solving the different conflicts facing human race. Social health depends upon the health of every individual. According to C. Jung, many people, entering the second half of their lives, try to reintegrate themselves with wider spiritual reality to gain new meanings and values. That is, integration is the basis for wholeness [4]. Analytical psychology is focused on achieving the Self in the process of individuation. The individual has to realize his/her own Shadow: «It is in recognizing this aspect of the unconscious in oneself, Jung finds, that one loses egoistic self-righteousness. This causes the individual to feel a broad sympathy with the vices of others even though he cannot sanction them. Jung makes clear that the individuation process is basically a transformation process... The transformation process in its climactic experience has flooded the psyche with the light of the numinous spiritual pole (the archetypal idea of «central» or complete unity) so that it now sees itself in true perspective in relation to its phenomenal ego (its ego of the biosphere, the «libido») and to its transcendent spiritual ground, the ultimate meaning which integrates all phenomenal egos and the entire cosmos. When all this is realized and understood, Jung thinks, integration has been achieved» [8, p. 225].

### Scientific novelty

Recognizing, confronting and assimilating the Ego, Anima/Animus, Shadow into the larger realm of the Self, one achieves a new level of consciousness. However, this is a never-ending process, unattainable ideal. At the end of the novel, Harry Haller failed to cope with this challenge. However, both Pablo introducing Harry to his Magic Theatre and the anonymous author of the «Treatise on the Steppenwolf» did not pose such a complicated problem. Actually, Harry was invited to learn the art of laughter - this air bridge between opposite poles. For those, who despise the bourgeoisie, and vet belong to it, who can never break through the starry space, but cannot survive in cozy bourgeois atmosphere, there is an escape into humor: «To live in the world as though it were not the world, to respect the law and yet to stand above it, to have possessions as though «one possessed nothing», to renounce as though it were no renunciation, all these favorite and often formulated propositions of an exalted worldly wisdom, it is in the power of humor alone to make efficacious» [10, p.29]. Then the man-wolf would have been saved - human and wolf would come to terms in the dawning light of humor. However, Haller failed to handle it too: seeing Hermine and Pablo sleeping together, he appeared unable to get rid of his «I». Violating the laws of Magic Theatre, he was condemned to eternal life and had a penalty of being laughed [10, p.100]. At the end of the novel, it seems that Harry Haller has remained at the same point, where we

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had met him. Nothing was impossible – everything was just beginning.

#### **Conclusions**

C. Jung believed that the achievement of the Self is a natural process, the meaning and the purpose of which were originally incorporated in personality. The questions raised by Jungian analysis push us beyond our limits to the great alchemical mystery – the wholeness of our own souls. For the salvation of humankind as a whole and every single human in our world full of conflicts and violence, we all need to experience the feeling of our spiritual unity and our deep connection to the universe [9]. It becomes possible due to return to our spiritual core, to our Self. The process of individuation is, in fact, the way to infinity. Harry Haller has yet to find his way to himself: « I understood it all. I understood Pablo. I understood Mozart, and somewhere behind me I heard his ghastly laughter. I knew that all the hundred thousand pieces of life's game were in my pocket. A glimpse of its meaning had stirred my reason and I was determined to begin the game afresh. I would sample its tortures once more and shudder again at its senselessness. I would traverse not once more, but often, the hell of my inner being. One day I would be a better hand at the game. One day I would learn how to laugh. Pablo was waiting for me, and Mozart too» [10, p.101]. A journey of a thousand li begins with a single step.

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# ШЛЯХ ДО CAMOCTI: POMAH «СТЕПОВИЙ ВОВК» В КОНТЕКСТІ ЮНГІАНСЬКОГО ПРОЦЕСУ ІНДИВІДУАЦІЇ

Мета. У даній статті зроблено спробу проаналізувати життєвий шлях Гаррі Галлера – героя роману Г. Гессе «Степовий вовк» – в контексті юнгіанського процесу індивідуації. **Методологія.** Автор використовував теорію архетипів К.Г. Юнга, а також методологію філософської герменевтики. Основна частина. «Степовий вовк» – це історія людини, яку роздирають протиріччя: вона відчуває себе і людиною, і вовком в один той самий час. З «Трактату про Степового вовка» Гаррі Галлер дізнається, що у нього насправді не дві натури, а сотні й тисячі. Ця ідея базується на концепції колективного несвідомого, розробленій К.Г. Юнгом. Сам роман «Степовий вовк» блискуче ілюструє юнгіанський процес індивідуації. Головному героєві необхідно подолати подвійність свого культурного «Я» і Тіні (Степовий Вовк), пізнати і прийняти свою Аніму (Герміна), усвідомити таємницю тотожності Пабло (хтонічні сили) і Моцарта (духовність), тобто осягнути свою власну Самість. Новизна. У романі «Степовий вовк» людська природа представлена як вічна боротьба і вічна єдність двох протилежностей. Люди повинні усвідомити цю єдність на шляху до Самості. Набуття Самості, цілісності особистості – це нескінченний процес, недосяжний ідеал. Наприкінці роману Гаррі Галлер так і не впорався з завданням, що постало перед ним. Здається, що головний герой залишився в тій самій точці, де ми вперше зустрілися з ним, і все ще тільки починається. Висновки. Питання, поставлені юнгіанською психологією, підштовхують нас до пошуку самих себе, до великого алхімічного таїнства – цілісності власної душі. Порятунок сучасної людини в світі, сповненому конфліктів, полягає у відчутті духовної єдності людства як цілого, що є найвищим проявом духовної єдності Всесвіту. Це стає можливим завдяки поверненню до нашого центру, до власної Самості. Процес індивідуації – це, по суті, шлях у нескінченність. Гаррі Галлеру ще належить пройти цей шлях.

Ключові слова: Самість, Аніма, Анімус, Персона, Тінь, індивідуація.

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# ПУТЬ К САМОСТИ: РОМАН «СТЕПНОЙ ВОЛК» В КОНТЕКСТЕ ЮНГИАНСКОГО ПРОЦЕССА ИНДИВИДУАЦИИ

Цель. В данной статье предпринята попытка проанализировать жизненный путь Гарри Галлера – героя романа Г. Гессе «Степной волк» – в контексте юнгианского процесса индивидуации. **Методология.** Автор использовал теорию архетипов К.Г. Юнга, а также методологию философской герменевтики. Основная часть. «Степной волк» - это история человека, раздираемого противоречиями: он ощущает себя и человеком, и волком одновременно. Из «Трактата о Степном волке» Гарри Галлер узнает, что у него на самом деле не две натуры, а сотни и тысячи. Эта идея базируется на концепции коллективного бессознательного, разработанной К.Г. Юнгом. Сам роман «Степной волк» блестяще иллюстрирует юнгианский процесс индивидуации. Главному герою необходимо преодолеть двойственность своего культурного «Я» и Тени (Степной Волк), познать и принять свою Аниму (Гермина), уяснить тайну тождества Пабло (хтонические силы) и Моцарта (духовность), т.е. постичь свою собственную Самость. Новизна. В романе «Степной волк» человеческая природа представлена как вечная борьба и вечное единство двух противоположностей. Люди должны осознать это единство на пути к Самости. Обретение Самости, цельности личности – это бесконечный процесс, недостижимый идеал. В конце романа Гарри Галлер так и не справился со стоящей перед ним задачей. Кажется, что главный герой остался в той же самой точке, где произошла наша первая встреча с ним, и все еще только начинается. Выводы. Вопросы, поставленные юнгианским анализом, подталкивают нас к поиску самих себя, к великому алхимическому таинству – цельности собственной души. Спасение современного человека в мире, полном конфликтов, состоит в ощущении духовного единства человечества как целого, что является высшим проявлением духовного единства Вселенной. Это становится возможным благодаря возвращению к нашему центру, к собственной Самости. Процесс индивидуации – это, по сути, путь в бесконечность. Гарри Галлеру еще предстоит пройти этот путь.

Ключевые слова: Самость, Анима, Анимус, Персона, Тень, индивидуация.

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