NOTE TO USERS

The Pilgrim without a Map:
The Religious Vision of Hermann Hesse

A Thesis

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ABSTRACT

The Pilgrim without a Map:
The Religious Vision of Hermann Hesse

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Four novels of Hermann Hesse are analyzed in order to formulate the religious vision that characterized Hesse's life and works. Particular attention is placed on locating the biographical, cultural and philosophical influences that shaped Hesse's writings. The four elements that make up Hesse's religious vision are identified as rejection of external authority, the inner journey, the aesthetic realm, and the life of service. These four elements make up the framework of a constructed model that serves to illustrate Hesse's religious vision. The meaning of Hesse's religious vision for a modern definition of religion is examined. The result is a critical dialogue between a mind of the twentieth century and the evolving one(s) of the twenty first century, examining the boundaries and possibilities of a religious vision that fits within a modern context.

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Finally, I want to express my deep gratitude to my best friend and life partner Dr.Matthew Robillard, for his unfailing support and constant interest in my work.

I dedicate this thesis to the memory of my parents; Stephanie Weinsberg and Ignatz Tekel.

Rose M. Tekel

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Now, reader, I have told my dream to thee;
See if thou canst interpret it to me,
Or to thyself, or neighbour; but take heed
Of misinterpreting; for that, instead
Of doing good, will but thyself abuse:
By misinterpreting, evil ensues.

Take heed, also, that thou be not extreme,
In playing with the outside of my dream:
Nor let my figure or similitude
Put thee into laughter or a feud.
Leave this for boys and fools; but as for thee,
Do thou the substance of my matter see.

Put by the curtains, look within my veil,
Turn up my metaphors, and do not fail,
There, if thou seekest them, such things to find,
As will be helpful to an honest mind.

What of my dross thou findest there, be bold
To throw away, but yet preserve the gold;
What if my gold be wrapped up in ore? --
None throws away the apple for the core.
But if thou shalt cast all away as vain,
I know not but 'twill make me dream again.

[End.]

The Pilgrim's Progress, John Bunyan[1]

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1. Hermann Hesse's Quest for a Religious Vision: The Pilgrim without a Map

One of the aspects that made Hesse's work popular throughout the twentieth century was his great interest in the religions of the East, while at the same time he seemed to be presenting an avowal of his own religious tradition; namely Pietist Christianity. Hesse's main audience often has been among the youth, many of whom looked to the religions of the East as a path to "spirituality" devoid of what they viewed as the severity of the Judeo-Christian traditions (Heath-Potter 2004, 255). This conceptualization of Judaism, Christianity, as well as Hesse's views of religion belies the complexity of each of these elements. In this thesis I will examine the significance that religion played in Hermann Hesse's fictional writing, using a model that gives a nuance perspective on Hesse and his understanding of religion both in the life of individuals and of his times. My purpose is to show the complexity of ideas and sources that form the underpinnings of Hesse's discussion of religion. Hesse's views of religion can be analyzed as interconnected and gradually developing themes in his novels that as a whole form - I argue - his quest for a "religious vision".

Although Hesse as a writer may be out of fashion at the moment, his "religious vision" is worthy of study for those who have an interest in religion and culture in the

his ultimate destination. In many ways, Hesse appears as a secular man heir to the smashed God of Nietzsche, the alienated man of the twentieth century.

Yet at the age of twenty three, Hesse declared in a letter to his parents his belief in God not withstanding the great doubts that he held concerning "religion". "I can probably now accept some kind of belief in God - i.e., a belief that there is a positive order in the world - but from then on the form and purpose of religion seems to be either too murky or too ignoble."(Hesse 1941, 45)

Hesse maintained a belief in God throughout his life, while at the same time denying that any particular religion could serve as the embodiment of his "religious vision". Hesse was simultaneously fascinated and repelled by traditional religions in terms of their institutional, doctrinal and ritual practices. This ambivalent attitude toward religion and religions is demonstrated by his use of symbols, figures and myths of various religious traditions in the four novels to be discussed in this thesis.

Hesse's attitudes and beliefs can also be linked to events in his life, as well as to intellectual influences on the development of his thoughts and ideas. Hesse's writings, however, have a dimension that goes beyond the "facts" of his life. As I discuss throughout this thesis, Hesse delves into the religious life and history of various traditions from the standpoint of many critical approaches. He was heir not only to the Pietist tradition of his parents and grandparents, but also to the philosophical traditions of Nietzsche and Feuerbach. The religious context that informed Hesse's writings regarding the order of the world and the place of humans in that world includes the traditions of

India and China, as well as Christianity. To define the nature of this religious context, however, requires locating Hesse's ideas about the nature of the sacred.

It is a commonplace to begin with the statement that Hesse's writings have a profound moral basis, this being particularly true of the novels written in the second part of his life. While there is no common agreement among scholars as to the role that religion(s) played in Hesse's writing,[2] Hesse's insistence throughout his life that he did believe in a God allows us to inquire into the religious dimension of Hesse's writings within the realm of the sacred.

That Hesse's context of the sacred is sometimes hazy, and clearly not centered within a specific religious tradition, need not be a sign of a lack of religious content.[3] Here I am following the discussion by William Closson James concerning the relationship between literature and the location of the sacred in Canadian literature (James 2000, 14-15). James states in his introduction the argument that when considering the relationship between culture and religion our analysis can move beyond the scope of specific religious traditions. One can examine

> "... the religious imagination as manifest in various products of Canadian literary culture and episodes in Canadian life, whether recreational experiences or *an individual's search for meaning or the historical crisis of a particular group.*" (My emphasis) (James 2000, 15)

James goes on to specify that his "interpretive principle" for discussing the relationship between religion and culture is based on the ideas of Paul Tillich. Namely that the sacred – or what Tillich called "ultimate concern" – "provides the believer with a view of culture that embodies it with characteristics that go beyond those we commonly call "secular" (James 2000, 15).

The starting point of the relationship between religion and culture for Tillich is that "religion is the substance of culture, culture is the form of religion" (Tillich 1964, 42). By using this now-famous formulation, Tillich is not suggesting that religion and culture are the same, but rather that while they share the same subject matter such as morality, reason, and aesthetics, the manner and scope of religion goes deeper than that of culture.

> What does the metaphor depth mean? It means that the religious aspect points to that which is ultimate, infinite, and unconditional in man's spiritual life. Religion, in the largest and most basic sense of the word, is ultimate concern. And ultimate concern is manifest in all creative functions of the human spirit. (Tillich 1964, 7-8)

Thus for Tillich, ultimate concern goes beyond the realm of that which is human, as only that which is transcendent - what is commonly called God in Western religions - can be considered ultimate. Human beings can only access this ultimate concern by language and symbols that point toward the transcendent. These are certainty in the realm of culture; what we generally call the arts.

In this thesis, I apply James' interpretive principle grounded in Tillich's view of the relationship between religion and culture to the study of four novels written by Hesse. My point is that because Hesse's view of the world was informed by an "ultimate concern", his search for meaning in life was not secular, but rather held a sacred dimension. This sacred dimension can be identified in the various manifestations of Hesse's "religious imagination" which is evident in his choice of subjects throughout his fictional and non-fictional work (Mileck 1978, 47). Taken as a whole, I argue that Hesse's work can be viewed as a pilgrimage in search of a "religious vision". Hesse, moreover, is a modern pilgrim who embarks on his pilgrimage deliberately disregarding the signposts

of religious traditions. Thus, I argue that Hesse is a pilgrim in search of a religious vision on a journey, who has embarked on his quest without a map.

It is my hope that this critical analysis of Hesse's "religious vision" will provide some material for reflection to those who may want to follow in the footsteps of Hermann Hesse in considering the place of religion(s) in modern society.

2. Hermann Hesse and Religion: A Review of the Literature

The body of work dealing with the literary aspects of Hermann Hesse's works is extensive.[4] Mileck notes in his recent study of Hesse, over 160 books and pamphlets have been published since 1945 dealing with various aspects of his writings.(Mileck 2003, 87)

In terms of this study, the most significant are the books and articles by Theodore Ziolkowski, Mark Boulby, Joseph Mileck, Ralph Freedman, Eugene Stelzig, and Lewis Tuskan. While the work of other scholars is also cited in this study, these authors have made the most significant contributions to developing the focus of this study in terms of the body of scholarship dealing with Hesse.

Theodore Ziolkowski's approach to the novels of Hesse is the most closely related to the present study in both themes and choices of novels.[5] Ziolkowski's major study of the novels of Hesse is divided into part one, dealing with the themes and part two, with the analysis of novels written in the second phase of Hesse's life.

Ziolkowski realized that in writing about the technical or literary aspects of Hesse's work that several themes emerged that repeated in all of Hesse's novels. The first theme – what he calls "the alienation of man" - was the result of Hesse's "years of crisis". The most apt way of characterizing the result of these crises would be to say that Hesse no longer lived in harmony with the world. Subsequently, Hesse would maintain the view that one must search for answers to life's crisis by learning to stand outside society. In defining this as the first theme for his discussion, Ziolkowski points to Demian as the

product of the "new Hesse". Hesse at this stage concluded " ...in order to become a man, one must break all ties with the past and venture alone into the future."(Ziolkowski 1965, 14)

This emphasis on breaking with the past is the focus of the discussion in this thesis in terms of Hesse's views of authority and its significance in terms of Hesse's development of a religious vision. Similarly, some of the other themes that Ziolkowski identifies in his study are also a significant part of the discussion in this thesis. Ziolkowski characterizes Hesse's search for a means to overcome the polarities of good and evil, nature and spirit, male and female through what he calls "magical thinking". The third theme that Ziolkowski identifies is what he calls the chiliastic vision. In his discussions of this theme, Ziolkowski calls to our attention Hesse's search and longing for redemption that can be best analyzed in the discussions of death at the end of all his novels. Ziolkowski writes:

> "In all of the novels from *Demian* to *The Glass Bead Game* ... death and speculations about death play a central role. The fact to be observed, however, is that the power of death over men - the threat of death - is sublimated to the extent that it becomes unimportant." (Ziolkowski 1965, 49)

In this study, the significance of the death of Joseph Knecht, the hero of *The Glass Bead Game*, is paramount to an appreciation of Hesse's religious vision. Similarly, I shall consider death in relationship to Hesse's view of service to humanity. The remaining themes that Ziolkowski discusses in his study are: the process of humanization which primarily requires individuation, the use of humour to overcome despair, and Hesse's status as a twentieth century writer, all of which become part of the analysis put forward in this thesis (Ziolkowski 1965,16-17)

The differences in Ziolkowski's work and this study are twofold. First, while Ziolkowski discusses some of the same themes and the same novels, his focus is on the literary aspects of the novels, rather than on the religious significance that is the focus of this study. Secondly, and more extensively, while Ziolkowski identifies some of the crucial ideas and symbols found in the novels he does not discuss these in terms of their significance in the development of Hesse's religious vision. Thus while Ziolkowski isolates "individualization" as one of the themes in Hesse's novels; he does not trace its development as part of Hesse's search for a religious vision. Indeed, Ziolkowski does not trace any of these themes in the development of Hesse's work. And although he does note the significance of Jung's influence on Hesse's ideas, he does so only in passing. For example, he translates the Jungian idea of "individuation" into "individualization", and thus does not follow the development of individuation as Hesse uses it in subsequent novels. This work examines this process of development. I shall return to this important point when discussing the work of Joseph Mileck.

Mark Boulby's study of the work of Hesse is one of many that focus on the relationship between Hesse's life and his writings.[6] This approach – of discussing the fictional representations in the novels in light of the events and thoughts of Hesse – is one that has shed a great deal of light on the ideas embedded in the characters of the novels. While the plots of Hesse's novels are relatively unimportant, the characters in the novels often bear a close resemblance to Hesse and many of the significant people in his life. More significantly the thoughts of the characters can often be attributed to those held by Hesse. By referencing his letters and essays written at the same time as the novel was

being developed, it becomes clear that Hesse used his characters as a vehicle for expressing his own thoughts about various aspects of existence.

Boulby in his discussion of Hesse's use of polarities makes a significant contribution to our understanding of Hesse's development of a religious vision.

For example in his discussion of the language that Hesse uses in Siddhartha, he clearly draws to our attention that Hesse's style in itself embodies the polarity of the material and the other-worldly.

> "The language of Siddhartha ... is indeed a curious inter-fusion of the tactile and the intuitive-visionary, a product of the esemplastic imagination." (Boulby 1967, 133)

The discussion of polarities to be found in Hesse's novels is particularly significant among scholars whose approach is psychoanalytic. For example, Oscar Seidlin in an article analyzing the influences on Hesse's use of psychological theory in Demian points out that Hesse constructed polarities which reflect Jungian rather than Freudian psychological approaches. Thus Seidlin speaks of the father and mother polarities in Hesse's work that have often been used in a Freudian framework. Hesse, according to Seidlin, expanded the arena of psychological analysis by using Freudian concepts but placing them within a Jungian psychoanalytical framework. "A Freudian interpretation would achieve here what it always achieves; the reduction of a symbolic image to its purely psychophysical elements and, by the very rationalistic process of this reduction, the destruction of the ontological authenticity of the symbol." (Seidlin 1950, 13)

Hesse's use of polarities in conjunction with religious issues specifically within Jungian psychoanalytic theory is the focus of David G. Richard's two studies; *The Hero's Quest for the Self: An Archetypal Approach to Hesse's Demian and Other Novels* and *Exploring the Divided Self; Hermann Hesse's Steppenwolf and its Critics.*[7] In both of these works, Richards's primary purpose is to demonstrate the significance of Jungian psychoanalytical theory as a source of insight in Hesse's work. While this is certainly an important lens through which to view Hesse's work, the significance of Jung's influence on Hesse's work is highly debatable. The issue of the significance of Jungian psychology, particularly in reference to Demian, is discussed in Chapter 2.

Another method used to elucidate the psychological approach in Hesse's writings is that of Eugene L. Stelzig. In a similar manner to that of Boulby, Stelzig looks for the interconnections between Hesse's life and his writing. The goal of Stelig's approach is to have a better understanding of Hesse, which is certainly the strength of the work. Thus, his concluding thoughts deal with trying to understand the various parts of Hesse's personality as manifest in his major writings.

The significance of the work of Stelzig to this study is his analysis of the "self" and its development in the various stages in Hesse's life and their reflections in Hesse's literary output. For example, in discussing the focus of Steppenwolf, Stelzig states the following:

> Thus rather than ascending to the personal and literary temptation of a belated suicide as the resolution of his problems, Hesse writes his way out of and beyond the Steppenwolf crisis by achieving a more substantive and less-flattering self-knowledge. If this book is surely his most sensational and courageous confession, its most notable formal and autobiographical feature is its deployment of multiple perspectives on and reflections of the self (Stelzig 1988, 207)

While Stelzig's approach and especially his focus on the self overlaps at some points with this study it is also significantly different in its definition of purpose. The purpose of this study is to elucidate and examine Hesse's "religious vision" and as part of achieving this goal, we need to consider aspects of Hesse's biography. In that sense, Stelzig has insights to offer, particularly in the details that he provides about Hesse's life and implications for his writing. Stelzig's study is primarily one that analyzes the personality of Hesse, as it is mirrored in his novels. The focus of this study is to trace the development of Hesse's ideas about religion, and to note the most significant aspects of his life that effected this development.

The relationship between Hesse's life and his writings is the subject of another major work. One of the most prolific Hesse scholars, Ralph Freedman published in 1978 a biography of Hesse, linking Hesse's writing to the major stages of his life. He entitled the biography: *Hermann Hesse: Pilgrim of Crisis*. Freedman identifies as the hallmark of both Hesse's life and writings Hesse's quest for self-understanding.

> Hesse's struggle for a sense of self led him to write relentlessly about even the most mundane experiences of his life, as if each were unformed material waiting to be fashioned, through the power of the written word, into a work of art. (Freedman 1997, 3)

Freedman argues that Hesse's quest moves beyond the realm of his personal life to encompass concerns of his and our society and as such has ongoing social significance. Freedman's major contribution is to make the link between Hesse's autobiographical approaches in his writings, with a purpose beyond self-understanding.

> "If he [Hesse] is not always acknowledged as a literary master, or if questions can be raised about the depth and complexity of his style, he nonetheless remains enormously significant to the social historians of our age. Hermann Hesse continues to be a force of considerable magnitude as he reflects the uncertainties and betrayals of our history from the late nineteenth century to the present. *A pilgrim; a poet of crisis who achieved his identity as a pilgrim into the inner life."* (My emphasis) (Freedman 1997, 13)

Freedman's approach in this biography is to link Hesse's life to significant intellectual and social aspects that can be analyzed in Hesse's writings. The placing of Hesse within the context of cultural history makes this biography a valuable tool for this study. Therefore, Freedman's understanding of the significance of events in Hesse's life, will be closely followed in this study.

The identification of religious themes in Hesse's works is the focus of a recently published work by Tusken. The significance of Tusken's book is that it presents the first, full-length introduction to Hermann Hesse's literary work and its religious implications. In his analysis, Tusken pays particular attention to the influences of Jung as well as Indian and Chinese influences on Hesse's works. Tusken's work is an analysis of themes that he identifies as the progression toward a definite culmination in Hesse's last novel, The Glass Bead Game. I shall refer to Tusken's book throughout this thesis. At this point, I want to introduce Tusken's framing of Hesse's style, as I believe that it further substantiates my thesis in terms of Hesse's approach to religion and literature. Tusken states:

> His [Hesse's] writings are, in a large part, an attempt to give religion back to life. His stories are the stories of that entire journey to the East, for all whose lives must have meaning that may not be found in the familiar religions or isms. Hesse's 'new mythology' reaches out to the common core behind all religions, beyond the unique myths that he felt separates them, leaving them unable to move beyond their unique metaphors. (Tusken 1998, 9-11)

Tusken clearly identifies three themes as part of Hesse's religious vision. The first one has to do with religion as constituting part of the life journey of the self. The second is the need to find one's own authority in terms of a religious path, and the third is the possibility of cultivating some manner in which religion beyond dogma provides the path for self-development. In these three sentences, Tusken identifies the purpose behind much of Hesse's work, namely an attempt to construct a religious vision outside of the historical religions that is based on a way of "knowing the religious" that Tusken believes Hesse proposed all can access. All those who are prepared to go on a life journey that requires a change of focus from that of the outer world to a focus on the journey taken within the self. Tusken concluded that Hesse's approach to looking at religion results in giving "religion back to life". Within this framework, religion for Hesse is a journey of exploration of the self that has as its goal a "pure" religious vision or understanding, a vision that is not "contaminated" by the trappings of traditional religions.

Another scholar who has throughout his lengthy life provided bibliographical and biographical work dealing with Hesse is Joseph Mileck. His most recent work, however, is the most significant to this study, as it deals with the impact that Hesse's views of Pietist Christianity and the Eastern religions have had on Hesse's approach to religion. Mileck does a thorough review of scholarship dealing with both these issues - which is considered in detail in chapters dealing with Siddhartha and Steppenwolf - and concludes that the enduring concept throughout Hesse's life was the one that he had "inherited" from his Pietist tradition, i.e. service.

> Though Hesse took issue with Pietism even as a youngster, left its ranks when he left home, became a freethinker, pantheist, theosophist, and then an enthusiastic student of the religions of India and China, he nevertheless remained a Pietist at heart. He shed Pietism's trappings, but its imprint was indelible. Pietism left Hesse with its aversion to the world and to humans as they are, and with its passion for the millennium and a godly man (sic). Hesse merely secularized his heritage. (my emphasis) (Mileck 2003, 8)

Mileck's conclusion that Hesse, because of his dislike for Pietist Christianity, developed a view of life that was marked by both Pietist underpinnings and a secular outlook serves as a significant point of conversation in this study. The issue that Mileck raises is the following; what does it mean to have a secular view of the purpose and meaning of life that is also highly formed by a Christian outlook? Thus rather than agreeing with Mileck's conclusion that Hesse's view of life was primarily apolitical and secular, I shall explore in what sense it was both sacred and political when his work is viewed in a thematic and developmental manner. In order to clarify this point, we shall now turn to a discussion of some methodological issues that are central to this study.

3. Literature as a key to understanding Religion(s):

A note on methodology

In developing my argument about the relationship between religion and literature, I shall first turn to the American philosopher Martha Nussbaum. In *Love's Knowledge*, Martha Nussbaum characterizes the relationship between philosophy and literature as being analogous to the relationship between form and content. The central

thesis of her book is that in order to understand a text one must appreciate what is being written as well as how it is being written, i.e. content and form. Thus, Nussbaum argues form and content are bound together in two significant ways. The first has to do with the ways in which ideas are framed.

> Conception and form are bound together; finding and shaping the words is a matter of finding the appropriate and, so to speak, the honorable fit between conception and expression. If the writing is well done, a paraphrase in a very different form and style will not, in general, express the same conception. (Nussbaum 1995, 5)

This is a vital point in considering the work of any author, and is crucial when attempting to capture the main ideas of Hesse. I believe that the impact of his ideas on the reader is derived as much from his writing style as from the content of his novels. The telling of the plot of *Demian* does not carry within it the power of the novel. The same may be said of the manner in which he develops the protagonists that populate his novels. Similarly, Demian, the main character in the novel is almost ethereal in Hesse's description of him. One has to appreciate the style of Hesse writing in order to be able to discern the argument that Hesse is making about the development of Demian's sense of self.

The second point that Nussbaum makes about the relationship between style and content builds on the first;

> ... certain truths about human life can only be fittingly and accurately stated in the language and forms characteristic of the narrative artist. With respect to certain elements of human life, the terms of the novelist's art are winged creatures, perceiving where the blunt terms of ordinary speech, or of abstract theoretical discourse, are blind, acute where they are obtuse, winged where they are dull and heavy. (Nussbaum, 5)

Nussbaum in her use of the term style means not only the ability to express ideas in a beautiful written prose, but more significantly in choosing to tell a story the writer brings to our attention and consideration a specific framing of a segment of a life-story. Thus, the process of representation involves the naming of that which is valuable in the eyes of a writer. The value can be found in any aspect of the story, including those parts that may be left out. Furthermore, Nussbaum argues, the style of writing in itself is often considered to be the source of its true value. Her point is that non-narrative writing that is often found in academic disciplines – and Nussbaum is particularly concerned with philosophy – needs to consider the most appropriate style for the formulation of truth statements. The argument that Nussbaum develops in the essays in *Love's Knowledge* is

> ...that with respect to several interrelated issues in the area of human choice, there is a family of positions that is a serious candidate for truth ... whose full, fitting, and (as James would say) 'honorable' embodiment is found in terms characteristic of the novels here investigated." (Nussbaum 1995, 8)

Nussbaum in her studies, uses primarily the novels of James and Proust, and takes as her starting point the question; how should one live? In her discussion she argues, " ... that the answer to this question can be most fully explored when framed in a manner that is rooted in Aristotle, rather than in Kantian or Utilitarian conceptions." (Nussbaum 1995, 24). The purpose of this line of argument is to show that all aspects of our lived experience need to serve as the source for providing the answer posed by the challenges of life. The specific point that Nussbaum stresses is that morality cannot be separated from other parts of our lived experience in any meaningful way.

Nussbaum is explicit in locating herself within the Aristotelian tradition of moral philosophy and practical reasoning. In attempting to answer the question 'how should one live', this tradition insists on the incommensurability of values, the priority of particular

judgments over universal ones, and the central role of the emotions and of the imagination in rational choice. Thus, it is not surprising that Nussbaum turns to literature as a form of discourse particularly suited to the exploration of ethical choices. Literature, as she says '...searches for patterns of possibility – of choices, and circumstances, and the interaction between choice and circumstance that turn up in human lives with such a persistence that they must be regarded as our possibilities. (Nussbaum, 35)

Nussbaum's point is further developed in a series of articles published under the title: *Renegotiating Ethics in Literature, Philosophy, and Theory.*[8]

In this collection, Cora Diamond elaborates on the two main claims Nussbaum makes in Love's Knowledge.

> ...that there are some moral views which can be adequately expressed only through novels, and that therefore the study of such novels belongs within moral philosophy. That claim is the second of the book's main claims. The first is that what view of life, of how to live, as conveyed by a text depends in part on formal features of the text. If we accept that point, if follows that formal features of various different sorts of literary texts may fit them for the expression of various views of life that cannot be expressed in other ways."(Diamond 1998, 179)

Nussbaum makes her argument in terms of the relationship between literature and philosophy. Diamond elaborates on this point in her discussion on the particularity that is found in a novel and the actions of a character as a key to moral philosophy. The significant point that Diamond makes for this study is that the particular language of the author and the particular situation of the story and characters of the novel do provide the moral philosopher with the material for a more complex understanding of the moral choices in life.

Carol A. Newsom in her recently published study of Job situates Nussbaum's approach as a form of "narrative ethics". She explains this approach to the study of narrative texts in the following manner:

> "To inquire into ' the moral imagination of the prose tale' involves reflection on the interrelationship between the aesthetic forms of the text – its narrative structure, its metaphors, its style – and the values it endorses as well as those it embodies. Such an inquiry involves both an examination of the world of the text and the relationship provisionally established between the text and the reader." (Newsom 2003, 34)

Diane Fritz Cates expands on the issues that Nussbaum raises in *Love's Knowledge* in her discussion of how the emotional dimension of moral understanding has implication for religious ethics. In her review of the text, Cates emphasizes the role emotional aspects of morality play in Nussbaum's discussion of the moral realm.

> Nussbaum's conception of moral understanding as including an emotional grasp of the precariousness, the painfulness, yet also the attractiveness and delightfulness of human life reflects her fundamentally Aristotelian conception of ethics and the moral realm. The kind of understanding that she seeks to explicate and evoke through her writing is 'moral', not because it is a grasp of universal principles for human action, but because it is a grasp of human value and the vulnerability of the most valuable things; it is a grasp of how close we are to goodness, how close we are to the achievement of rich and satisfying human lives (Cates 1998, 409)

The link between literature and this very broad conception of morality has already been discussed; the question of the relationship between literature, morality and religion now has to be explored. Although Nussbaum does not deal with religion or religiously based ethics in her work, Coates points out that the manner in which Nussbaum frames the relationship between literature and morality can also be central to the study of religion, and religious ethics.

> "A central question of religious ethics has to do with our deepest human attachments: to what do human beings - what do we - cling for a sense of meaning and value in our lives? To what ought we to cling, and why? This is the classic question of the ordering of human love, which has occupied so many religious thinkers throughout the centuries. (Cates 1998, 409)

The phrase "ordering of human love" comes directly out of the work of Nussbaum. She discusses the development of her ideas about the relationship between emotions and ethics in the introductory chapter of *Love's Knowledge*. According to Nussbaum, different emotions and in particular those related to love, may lead human beings into a form of life that does not usually fit into what is considered to follow sound ethical standards. Nussbaum's argument is that if philosophy is to propose a theory of ethics that pertains to actual lives it must take into account all that makes us human.

According to this conception, love and ethical concern do not exactly have equilibrium, but they support and inform one another; and each one is less good, less complete, without the other.

> Philosophy has often seen itself as a way of transcending the merely human, of giving the human being a new and more godlike set of activities and attachments. The alternative I explore sees it as a way of being human and speaking humanly. That suggestion will appeal only to those who actually want to be human, who see in human life as it is, with its surprises and connections, its pains and sudden joys, a story worth embracing. (Nussbaum, 53)

The issue that Coates does not consider is the relationship between secular morality and that of religious ethics; i.e. how we define someone as a "religious thinker". Many other modern writers do not define themselves as religious thinkers within a specific religious tradition or may even make the claim that they reject religion, as is the case with Hermann Hesse. We can locate Hesse's sense of religion or the sacred and its

presence in the ordering of our loves by combining Nussbaum's insistence on style and not just content as being the guiding principle for our study of Hesse's work.

Hesse framed the question "How shall I live?" in four of his major novels, in ways that involved searching for values which were outside the main stream of given, historical and traditional frameworks. All of Hesse's protagonists start out by rejecting any form of moral philosophy that does not have as its central core emotions and imagination. The moral philosophy and practical reason that Hesse struggled with throughout his life and in his writings framed responses to the question "How shall I live". His musings continually moved beyond the edges of this-worldly concerns to that of a world that finds meaning in myth, symbol and otherworldly concerns. That is not to say that he wrote texts dealing with the definition or elaboration of theological matters. Rather, in his choice of life situations, types of images, references from traditions and texts, as well as style, Hesse was involved in the task of examining various and sometimes competing views of the ordering of human loves. He did so with both his head and his heart, and it formed the central task of his writing; a task that had a moral and religious basis. This is the central argument of this study.

5. Mapping the Territory:
The Choice of Novels and a Discussion of the Model

The novels chosen for a discussion of Hesse's religious vision were all written in the stage of Hesse's life that was marked by his "inward turn". I discuss the novels in the chronological order in which they were written and published; *Damien, Siddhartha,*

Steppenwolf, and finally *The Glass Bead Game.* I have chosen the novels on the basis of what I argue the significant themes to be analyzed for a comprehensive view of the development of Hesse's "religious vision". As I have noted earlier, my choices are partly based of Theodore Ziolkowski's analysis of themes to be found in these novels. It is also my evaluation that these themes are discussed with more depth in these specific four novels than in some of the others. For example, I think that *The Glass Bead Game* is a much more interesting book - in terms of the layers of influences and ideas - to analyze as a final statement in Hesse's religious vision than *Journey to the East.* Clearly, these choices have a strong subjective element, however, I argue in total provide the significant elements for an analysis of Hesse's views on religion. Here is a brief summary of these elements.

Hesse spent much of the early years of his life fighting against what he saw as the strictures of religion as characterized by his Pietist, missionary grandparents and parents. For Hesse this struggle becomes crystallized, I believe, in terms of authority; the authority of parents, school, state and religion. While in the early stages of his life, Hesse deals with these authorities in terms of his rebellious behaviour, later he explores the various discussions about the nature of authority in the writings of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, as well as others. The nature of religious authority that is outside of the traditional definitions of Western religions becomes a central part of his quest. I would suggest, then, the first aspect of Hesse's religious vision centers on his understanding of authority. His ideas concerning both secular and religious authority have their roots in his background, become part of his art and are explored in many of his novels.

Hesse links his formulations of the nature of religious authority with an emphasis on the individual and particularly his theory of *Eigensinn* (self-will).9 The individual becomes the most important element in Hesse's view of the world. At this stage of his life, Hesse is in constant tension with any form of authority, and so is the protagonist of *Demian*, the first novel I discuss in this thesis. *Demian* was first published in German in 1919. While Hesse, in his writings continually explored the meaning and source of religious authority, I believe that he set the parameters of the exploration of this issue in *Demian*, which I have used to illustrate this topic.

The second novel that I consider is *Siddhartha*, the novel that was most specifically written as result of the influences of the East on Hesse. It was first published in German in 1922. While the role of the East in the construction of Hesse's religious vision is a complex one partly because his sense of the East continues to change throughout his life, in *Siddhartha* Hesse begins to search for the path that can bring one to the understanding of true authority. In other words, he is asking the question: what faculties do we use to achieve knowledge? And the answer that he develops is in the first instance the idea of "a journey". Following Hesse's thoughts, a journey is crucial in searching for a new source of inspiration and understanding of a "religious vision". This quest leads Hesse and the autobiographical personas in his novels on a journey into the inner self. The metaphor of the life journey becomes another element of Hesse's religious vision, and, draws its significance from both Jung's writings and Eastern religions. In Siddhartha this journey involves examination of the various aspects of the self, with the outcome of self-transformation. These points are discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

Thus far, Hesse's formulation of a religious vision is as follows: an individual journey that a person embarks upon with the goal of searching for a truth; the destination being self-transformation. It would appear that Hesse had found a resolution to his struggle between the religion of tradition and the religion of the individual by opting for the latter. Hesse, however, did not stop at this point, as he had not resolved the issue of the relationship between Western and Eastern tradition, consequently his journey of self-transformation seemed to retrace its steps back to the West.

In *Steppenwolf* Hesse explores another aspect of his religious vision: the arena of aesthetics and creativity. Hesse returns to the world of the artist within Western society to consider the possibility of self-transformation. In this novel published in German in 1927, Hesse contrasts what he calls "the magical theatre" and the eternal beauty of the works of Mozart and Goethe with what he sees as the perversity, eroticism and cynicism of modernity. Art can be a source of beauty and truth, but only within a world where these elements are valued. Hence the realm of the aesthetic as another part of Hesse's religious vision is considered within Hesse's understanding of art, religion and culture.

Hesse then wrote the book that was his final novel and a summary "statement" of his religious vision. *The Glass Bead Game* published in 1943 was written during the Nazi era in Germany. Although Hesse was living in Switzerland, he continued to have all his works published in Germany. Undoubtedly, Hesse was very much influenced by the events in his younger years, as well as the ominous clouds of Nazism, when he turned to a consideration of the place of history and social order in the development of spirituality in Western history. During the first world war Hesse had struggled with the meaning of culture and the role of the artist. He revisited these issues in *The Glass Bead Game* within

a different perspective. This new perspective, I believe, had been deeply affected by his journey (in both senses) to the East, as well as his deeper understanding of the relationship between East and West. While the individual remains a primary focus for Hesse, in *The Glass Bead Game* he attempts to incorporate an emphasis on a life of service into his religious vision to create a new synthesis in his religious vision which envelopes both the individual and society, the East and the West.

As I have previously discussed, Hesse's novels were based upon experiences that frequently created crisis in his life. Hesse it would appear had a tendency to think about the ensuing issues in terms of polarities. Hesse seldom chose between these two polarities. Nor did some form of synthesis between the two poles satisfy him. Let me illustrate this point by an example.

One polarity, proposed by Mileck as a framework for appreciating Hesse's struggles of the self, is that between spirit and nature.[10] The polarity between nature and spirit, according to Mileck helps us to understand the inner conflicts that besieged Hesse as he moved along his inward journey. Mileck writes:

> Escape becomes quest. As this quest unfolds, Hesse's inner problems reflect and blend to illustrate the basic malaise humain resulting in the tension between Geist (spirit) and Natur (nature). For years, he was to vacillate between these poles, periodically acclaiming one, then the other, and then giving preference to neither, and all the while never ceasing to envisage a harmonious accord to both, though well aware that such was hardly meant for him. (Mileck 1963, vii)

I believe that Mileck raises a point critical to understanding the model proposed for this study; namely, that for Hesse there was at the same time a hope for a resolution of the tensions resulting from the polarities and recognition this resolution could never be the ultimate one. Characters in Hesse's novels that are like tumblers as they follow their

paths, and have to make decisions as to which polarity will lead them to their destination characterize this view. This is their ordering of loves. However, while they may achieve balance for a moment, they (just like their author Hesse) quickly resume their tumbling path. Once more we see the image of " The Pilgrim without a Map."

Nevertheless, as a result of the struggle along the path to bring about a resolution to the tension between the two polarities, I believe that Hesse created in his writings a critical moment that serves to define the nature of the quest. I call these "the themes" in Hesse's religious vision, rather than his definition of religion, as they also continue to progress and change as they are revisited in subsequent novels. Therefore, while I identify a different polarity and corresponding theme in each of the four novels I discuss in this thesis, actually both the polarities and themes are present in all of the novels. I would suggest, however, that each of the novels contain one theme as its major focus. The table in figure 1 on the following page serves as a summary of the polarities, themes and corresponding novels.

The four themes constitute what I understand to be Hesse's religious vision. Therefore, I speak of "themes" in Hesse's religious vision, as they are not final resolutions or theological statements within Hesse's writings. Rather these themes arise from what Hesse sees as a necessary and unrelenting struggle between two polarities. Each of the themes emanates from a struggle to resolve the issues in the polarities that Hesse and Hesse's protagonists in his novels encounter during their journey of life.

It is within this struggle, with its suffering, doubt, despair and some kind of resolution, which I believe we need to examine in order to have an appreciation of

Hesse's "religious vision". The four elements of the religious vision can be expressed in the following manner:

1. The quest for knowledge that leads to understanding of the Ultimate
2. The development of the Self and the possibility of transformation
3. The struggle between the life of desire and the life of creativity
4. The possibility of a resolution to the journey through the life of service

The identification of these themes allows me to provide a heuristic device for analyzing Hesse's religious vision.

Figure 1.

MODEL OF THE RELIGIOUS VISION OF HERMANN HESSE

Polarity	Theme	Novel
1. Outside authority ↔ Inner Knowledge	Gnosis	*Damien*
2. Reason ↔ Feeling	Self-transformation	*Siddhartha*
3. Sensuality ↔ Asceticism	Aesthetics	*Steppenwolf*
4. Life of Contemplation ↔ Life of Action	Service	*The Glass Bead Game*

CHAPTER TWO: *DEMIAN*

1. The Journey of Emil Sinclair: the Process of Individuation

Demian: The Story of Emil Sinclair's Youth was published in 1919 under the pseudonym of Emil Sinclair. Hesse wrote this novel at a time of great person upheavals. He had been reviled in the German Press because of his pacifist position concerning the First World War.[11] As well, he had suffered personal tragedies: the break-up of his marriage, his wife and son's illness and the death of his father in 1919. Hesse's reaction to these catastrophes in his life and his society involved a re-evaluation of the meaning of life. Hesse himself speaks in this period of his feelings of alienation from social life, as well as his difficulties in writing. In a letter written in 1917 to Austrian writer Felix Braun, Hesse speaks about his manner of coping with his New World. First he describes his new past time - painting - that had become his major sources of artistic expression. Next he speaks of the way in which the war has changed him.

> Although the war has changed the way I - and indeed everybody else - relate to the world, it has not made a political animal of me. Quite the opposite. I see the line dividing the inner and outer worlds even more clearly than usual, and am interested solely in the former. (Hesse 1991, 88-89)

In the same year that Hesse wrote *Demian* and it is indeed to the inner world that the main character - Emil Sinclair - turns his attention in his search for an understanding of the meaning of life.

Demian is the story of a man looking back at what had shaped him, what experiences had provided a background to the development of his life, and mainly the forces that have been significant in his understanding of himself. In other words, it is the story of the formation of Emil's identity; his sense of self.

The prologue provides the philosophical framework for the entire story. It speaks of the fragility of life, the connections to nature, and a path that leads to finding one's "true" inner self. Hesse begins by making it clear that the reader should not expect to find a soothing story in a neatly wrapped package. For just as the inner person is slimy and unclear, the path to self-discovery is also a tortuous one. Hesse introduces the story of Demian in a foreboding manner.

> I do not consider myself less ignorant than most people. I have been and still am a seeker, but I have ceased to question stars and books; I have begun to listen to the teachings my blood whispers to me. My story is not a pleasant one; it is neither sweet or harmonious, as invented stories are; it has the taste of nonsense and chaos, of madness and dreams – like the lives of all men who stop deceiving themselves. (Hesse 1965, 4)

Demian can be seen as a novel about the discovery of the self, which is the immense struggle to understand one's destiny and purpose in life. According to Hesse, each individual must make the journey to the inner-self alone. The only guidance, direction and solace we can gather from others is that they may be on their own journey to self-understanding, and thus may be able to empathize with our struggles; therefore, our paths may intertwine as well as intersect at various points with others on their journey. Nevertheless, each of us must make this journey ultimately alone. Hesse speaks about the 'types of humans' we will meet on our journey; some who have little sense of their humanity, and thus have little hope for their self-development. Others who are living in part the life of an animal and in part that of a human, have started their journey.

They may reach the next level of or be permanently caught in the state of half/human half animal. There will be also others who are also trying to reach the higher stages of self-development. Hesse, in the prologue, defines the problem of self and self-understanding in the following way:

> Each man's life represents a road toward himself, an attempt at such a road, the intimation of a path. No man has ever been entirely and completely himself. Yet each one strives to become that – one in an awkward, the other in a more intelligent way, each as best he can. Each man carries the vestiges of his birth – the slime and eggshells of his primeval past – with him to the end of his days. Some never become human, remaining frog, lizard, or ant. Some are human above the waist, fish below. Each represents a gamble on the part of nature in creation of the human. We all share the same origin, our mothers; all of us come in the same door. But each of us - experiments of the depth - strives towards his own destiny. We can understand one another; but each of us is able to interpret himself to himself alone. (Hesse 1965, 5)

While the divisions of humanity made by Hesse in the above quotation need to be considered, at the moment let us explore the significance of this quotation is in terms of the individual who is moving along the path. First, Hesse's insistence on the individual making the journey of self-discovery alone hinges on his belief that we must rely on our own self for the direction of this journey. It would appear from the above quotation that "understanding" for Hesse is a surface process, and subject to misunderstanding. This process does not involve the actual search for self-understanding that according to Hesse may bring us out of the slimy, dark depths of the humanity that we all share. It is the movement into another kind of depth - the inner self - that gives us the possibility of becoming, rather than just being. And this is the process that Hesse sees as requiring the individual to remove the bindings of social life, which serve to prevent this inner-interpretation.

The novel *Demian* was Hesse's first (but certainly not only) lyrical description of the struggle that ensues within the psyche during the process of search for the self. Hesse truly believed that the path for the pilgrim in search of the meaning of life lies in moving from a social definition of the self, to one that is solely formed through self exploration.

In *Demian* the hero Emil takes this journey to his inner-self. As in many of Hesse's books, the plot of *Demian* is difficult to follow, and is episodic rather than clearly developmental. The story starts when the narrator, Emil Sinclair, is ten years old. Emil is a boy from a devout and prosperous family, whose home life he characterizes as "light." He seems to be an obedient and happy child, but also curious about life outside of his own social circles. One day, while playing with a group of lower-class children, probably in order to establish rapport, he boasts that he has stolen some apples. One of the boys, Kramer, threatens home and at school. His world that had been previously characterized by lightness becomes dark and unbearable. He is saved from this dark life by Damien, a new boy in town, who is older and more astute in dealing with a bully like Kromer. Emil states:

> I fled from the valley of sorrow, my horrible bondage to Kromer, with all the strength at the command of my injured soul: back to where I had been happy and content, back to the lost paradise that was opening up again now, back to the light, untroubled world to mother and father, my sisters, the smell of cleanliness, and the piety of Abel. (Hesse 1965, 36-37)

The next time that Demian appears in Sinclair's life is in a communion class, where Damien, through skillful questioning, leads Sinclair to probe deeper into the meaning of several Bible stories, particularly the story of Cain and Abel. We shall return to this episode in a later discussion.

Damien again disappears from Sinclair's life when Emil is sent to boarding school. While at this school, Sinclair falls in with a group of young rebels, who spend most of their time drinking and disrupting school. Sinclair pays no attention to outside authority, either that of his father or of the school administrators. He shows no fear of expulsion; in fact, he seems to welcome that inevitability, as it gives him the opportunity to demonstrate his new-found contempt of authority.

> I did not care what became of me. In my odd and unattractive way, with my pub visits and outspoken attitude I was a t loggerhead with the world at large, and this was the form my protest took. I was ruining myself in the process and sometimes it looked to me as if the world could not find a better use for people like myself. If they could offer no better place, no higher rewards, people like me would come to grief. Well, the loss was the world's. (Hesse 1965, 73)

During this time, Emil also talks about being lonely but at the same time being too shy to go out with the other fellows when they are with girls. However he longs for female company and to be in love.

Then one day Sinclair sees and falls in love with a girl whom he sees in the park. Although he never actually speaks with her, her beauty prompts him to name her Beatrice, and he devotes himself to her as her secret lover. Much of his passion is channeled into creating paintings of her.

> The more I endeavored to capture the features of the girl whom I occasionally encountered on the street, the less successful I was. Finally I gave up the attempt and contented myself with painting a face from imagination and ideas that arose spontaneously as I dipped by brush in thee paint. It was a dream face that emerged and I was not satisfied with it. (Hesse 1965, 77)

To Sinclair's amazement, he realizes that the painted images bear a strong resemblance to Demian. The spell is broken, and Sinclair loses interest in "Beatrice." As

was to be the pattern in many of Hesse's novels, the depictions of women are similar to Beatrice in Demian; more of a sketch than a real person.

Sinclair again begins to think about Damien and recalls his friend's interest in the carved figure of a bird in the keystone above the entrance to the Sinclair home.

The image of the bird becomes the center of his artistic work, and he sends an image of the bird to Demian. Damien writes back, and provides Sinclair with a name for the bird: Abraxas. This marks the turning point in the novel, as it is the beginning of Emil's search for his true self; his guide in this search is his new understanding is Abraxas.

This name, derived from a Gnostic deity, becomes part of the various myths and antiquarian beliefs and practices that Sinclair discovers with the help of Pistorius, an organ-playing theologian. For Sinclair, this "knowledge" is much more significant than simply learning about ancient religious practices, as it becomes part of his psychological life. Most specifically, it becomes part of his dreams, always so important in psychoanalytic theory. And in his dream now becomes a compass to his inner self.

> Only gradually and unconsciously was a link being forged between this wholly inner image and the 'sign' that came to me from outside concerning the god I had to search for. The link then grew closer and more intimate, and I began to feel that in this dream of longing I was invoking Abraxas himself. Ecstasy and horror, a mixture of male and female, an intertwining of the sacred and profane, flashes of profound guilt in the most tender innocence - such was the nature of my love-fantasy, such was Abraxas.(Hesse 1965,90)

At the same time he meets Knauer, a student who has a great interest in the psychoanalytic interpretation of dreams. Sinclair has now been introduced to the sources of knowledge he will need to reach the next phase in his journey.

At this point in the story Sinclair is nineteen and at university, where he is reunited with Demian and meets Demian's mother, Frau Eva, and their circle of friends. Sinclair now transfers all of his ambivalent feelings about women to Frau Eva; she is on the one hand the personification of the ideal figure that he has vainly sought and on the other hand the object of his erotic desires.

> My love for Eva seemed to fill my whole life. But every day she looked different. On many occasions I believed that it was not really just her as a person, whom I yearned for with all my being, but that she existed as an outward symbol of my inner self and her sole purpose was to lead me more deeply into myself. (Hesse 1965, 142)

It is also during this time that Sinclair 'awakens' to the realization that he and his friends in Frau Eva's circle represent those who bear the "sign of the elect." They are the true heirs of Cain, who represent those who have the knowledge and courage to stand outside of the crowd.

> We who bore the 'sign' might rightly be considered odd by the world, even mad and dangerous. We were 'awake' or 'wakening', whereas the striving and quest for happiness of the rest was aimed at identifying their thoughts, ideals, duties, their lives and fortunes more and more closely with that of the herd. That too was striving, that too was power and greatness. But whereas we, in our conception, represented the will of nature to renew itself, to individualize and march forward, the others lived in the desire for perpetuation of things as they are. For them humanity - which they loved as we did - was something complete that must be maintained and protected. For us humanity was a distant goal towards which we were marching, whose image no one yet knew, whose laws were nowhere written down. (Hesse 1965, 137)

Sinclair and Demian are part of the group that is dissatisfied with not only the present, but also the past of all cultures, as they represent ideas and laws imposed on individuals, and thus taking away any hope that they may have of individuation. This was particularly the view that Sinclair expresses concerning all forms of religion.

Every sect, every faith seemed dead already and of no use. The only duty and destiny we acknowledged was that each one of us should become so completely himself, so utterly faithful to the active seed of nature within him and live in accordance with it that the unknown future should find us prepared and ready for whatever it might bring forth (Hesse 1965, 138)

Ecco, the pilgrim without a map!

This episode ends as the war breaks out. Both Demian and Sinclair go to the front as officers in the cavalry. Both are wounded, and are brought to the same hospital and placed in adjoining beds. Demian, just before he dies, gives his friend a final embrace. At the end of the book, we are told that after Demian's death Sinclair has written down his memories of Demian.

The novel is meant to be the reflections of the now adult Emil as he traces his own journey to individuation. For this study, the focus is on the significant source of knowledge that allowed Emil to reach higher stages along the path to self-knowledge.

It is the role of Demian to constantly 'remind' Emil that he needs to continue his struggles, if he is to be his own person. Demian in some sense embodies the authority that is needed in order to continue the journey to individuation. The complexity of Hesse's views of authority needs to be examined, in order to understand the basis for the presentation and representation of authority in the novel *Demian.*

2. Background to the Novel:

The Significance of Authority for Hesse

Hesse's early childhood and youth may be characterized as a period of rebellious and relentless energy. Consequently, his relationship with his parents was often difficult. Hermann frequently found himself in trouble: a broken window, a falsehood, a dramatic temper tantrum, for which he would be disciplined by his father and from which he would seek forgiveness from his mother. As Freedman describes it, "At an early age he constantly had the sense of sinning, and even his carefully selected memories, which appear in his autobiographical books, mention all kinds of transgressions." (Freedman 1997, 29)

Hesse's rebellious behaviour toward his father and the Pietist ideals that he embodied, and his idolization of his mother and the world of imagination and creativity that she represented for him, began during his preschool days and continued into his late adolescence. In fact, Hesse's behaviour through the early part of his childhood was so difficult in both parents' view that they wondered at times whether they could manage to keep Hermann at home. Their concern became a reality when Hesse, a first grader at the missionary school (1883), began to experience mood swings between the need for acceptance from his parents and their Pietist principles and the desperate push for independence reflected in dramatic bouts of withdrawal and aggression. In January 21 of 1884 Herman, age six and a half years, was sent to live at the Boys' House of the Mission School in an attempt to curb his dramatic mood swings. From January 1884, to June 1884, Hesse lived at the Boys' House from Monday to Saturday and then spent Sunday at

home. His behaviour improved and consequently he was brought home in June 5, 1884. Soon, however the old problems of tears, temper and taciturn withdrawals returned and the family continued to struggle with how best to deal with this unusual, gifted child.

To compound the problem of dealing with Hermann's dysfunctional behaviour the parents had to deal with the issue of nationality. In 1883 Johannes Hesse obtained Swiss nationality for his family. Prior to this, the family had claimed Russian nationality. Furthermore, the Mission committee decided in 1886 that Johannes Hesse should return to Calw to begin the process of taking over from his father-in-law, who was now seventy-two, the position of Director of the Mission publishing house. The move back to Calw seemed to highlight the divided world in which Hermann Hesse lived. Calw and Basel, Swabian and Swiss, Pietism and the Orient, the need for acceptance and support, the need for self-identity, all were part of the adolescent Hermann's life and all influenced his ongoing contrasting mood changes and erratic behaviours.

A further complication was Hesse's decision to become a poet, which brought great consternation to the Hesse household. Hesse's loved poetry and literature; indeed he had started to write poems when he was five. (Freedman 1997, 41) His father wanted Hermann to follow the family tradition of theological training and missionary work. Hermann was under the authority of the father and in February, 1890, as he approached the age of thirteen, Hesse was send to Rector Otto Bauer's Latin school in Goppingen in order to prepare for the competitive Wurttemberg State examinations. The successful completion of this examination was a requirement to become eligible for the free education the State of Wurttemberg provided to those students whose ambition it was to become a theologian or academic. In July of 1891, Hermann spent two days writing the

examination for the seminary. He was successful and accepted into the school. As a state scholar, Hesse had to forgo his Swiss civil rights; as a consequence his father acquired a Wurttemberg citizenship for him in November 1890. Hermann was the only member of the Hesse family who was forced to give up his Swiss citizenship. The change in citizenship was to cause Hermann great difficulty during and after World War 1. However, it also created the possibility for Hesse to live in Switzerland, which was to become his home for most of his adult life. (Freedman 1997, 14)

In September 1891, Hesse became a seminarist at the Protestant Theological Seminary in Maulbronn where he was to begin his career as a theologian and missionary. Within a short period of time Hesse became decidedly uncomfortable with the regimentation of the rigidly ordered school system both in terms of the curricula as well as a formal set of expected behaviours. After seven months of study his experiences with the school's formal education structure further reinforced his decision to become a poet and not a pastor. Unable to find any other way out, he ran away from the school. This was a bold move on his part but it was his way of reacting to what he felt was the cold, formal educational system that, in his view, was bent on crushing his spirit.

In Freedman's view: "It was not only the school but a whole way of life he did not want, a whole future that threatened him." (Freedman 1997, 44)

Hesse was found the next day and while he was allowed to continue his classes and write his final examinations, the administrators of the school dictated that he leave at the end of the school year. In May 1892, Hermann suffering from headaches and insomnia was placed by his parents in a spa located in Bad Boll under the treatment of a Protestant Clergyman, the Reverend Christopher Bumhardt. Rev. Bumhardt had gained a

local reputation for treating mental disorders by exorcising the Devil, and clearly Hermann's father believed that this was the necessary cure for his rebellious son. The "cure" resulted in Hermann becoming suicidal. Since his methods did not bring about the desired results, Rev. Bumhardt advised the family to have Hesse placed in an insane asylum. While the family did not agree with this suggestion, they did place him in an institution for retarded and epileptic children. For the next two years, Hesse was moved from one institution to another. Temper outbursts and conflicts marked the short times he was at home primarily with his father. (Freedman 1997, 46-49)

The next chapter in Hesse's relationship with the educational system served for him as a clear view of the relationship between the authority of the father, the school system and the state. Because Hesse's father had changed Hesse's citizenship from Swiss to German, Hesse was entitled to free education at Maulbronn. However as a German citizen Hesse was now required to perform three years of military service. In order to be eligible for exemption, Hesse would be required to continue for one more year of formal education. Consequently in November 1893, he attended the Grammar school (Gymnasium) at Cannstatt.

Hesse's parents hoped that he would return to school in the autumn and spend the next three years obtaining the necessary academic credits that would qualify him for university. Indeed, Hesse returned to school in autumn and for a short period he seemed to be adjusting to the demands of a formal educational system. Within months, however, he reverted to his pattern of rebellious behaviour, railing against the demands of a formal educational structure. From Hesse's perspective, his authoritarian father and his mother - very much under the authority of her husband - had rejected him and his aspirations. The

result for Hesse was the return of constant headaches, inability to sleep, and a total disregard of his studies. Once again he took up pub life, socializing with persons whom his parents viewed as bad influences. One of the consequences of this behaviour was the accumulation of a significant financial debt.

In October 1893, Hesse proclaiming his need to become a writer, and with an increasing financial debt facing his parents convinced them to take him out of school and that he be allowed to return home. At age sixteen Hermann ended his formal education and dashed his parents' hope that he would follow the family tradition of a career in theology or missionary work. (Freedman 1997, 53)

Hesse's childhood had taught him to doubt the authority of all institutions, and particularly the older men who controlled the centers of social life. His father, his father's religion, his teachers and even the apparatus of the state had failed to meet his individual needs. Hesse began his adult life with a clear distinction between the individual and society. He recognized in the individual the potential for expansive life of the imagination, in society he saw only repression that led to the withering of the imagination and soul of the individual.

In an early short story "In Pressel's Garden House: A Tale from Old Tubingen", this polarity is identified as the sensual life of the poet, versus the narrow, cerebral life of the pastor.[12] In *Demian* the polarity is expressed in terms of the oppressive aspects of formal educational system, and the self-actualizing ones of the inner-self. The inner self becomes for Hesse in the second stage of his life, the form of authority that has the possibility of leading the individual to an authentic and non-restrictive sense of self.

Hesse had constructed the story of Demian as a vehicle for illustrating his theory of the development of the autonomous self. This theme is present in all of Hesse's works, yet it is in *Demian* that Hesse is most concerned with the process of moving from outside authority to some form of inner authority.

Freedman, in his discussion of *Demian*, points out the four distinct elements of the novel. The first and most significant one was Hesse's inward turn, which allowed him to deal with the psyche in a different way than his earlier representations. Freedman attributes this new understanding in Hesse to his turn to the East, which he already recognizes in Demian. The significance of this inward turn was the liberation from socially dictated morality and its clear definitions of right and wrong (all of which had their basis according to Hesse in repression of the self), to one where the autonomous self could develop new insights. This was Hesse's solution, according to Freedman to what Hesse identified as a dichotomy, which negated the possibility of the development of humanity. Freedman writes:

> First, it was the turn toward the East as a way of ironically representing an interior world that changed the outward realism into an apparently more obscure but compellingly accurate way of representing the psyche. The awareness of its hero, Emil Sinclair, for example, that Cain rather than Abel was the Elect, the man who can transcend the simple dichotomy of good and evil, or the Gnostic Abraxas myth in which good and evil are combined, propel the reader into an internal landscape in which conflicts can be apparently resolved. (Freedman 1997, 190)

Freedman attributes to Hesse's trip to the East, as well as his subsequent mental collapse resulting from the combined events of World War One and personal tragedies,

led him to rethink sources of authority. (Freedman 1997, 190) We shall consider the role of Hesse's trip to the East in his approach to religion in the next chapter. In Demian it is Hesse's use of the Cain and Abel story as well as the Abraxas myth, that are central to understanding why the inner self becomes the authentic source of authority for Hesse. Let us, therefore, now turn to a detailed examination of those two elements in Damien.

The story of Cain and Abel as interpreted by Hesse is used to identify Sinclair as the one who is marked and marked for greatness rather than death. As Ziolkowski also points out, Hesse used the technique of prefiguration in a manner different from medieval authors, who had first developed it.

> This technique differs from allegory and symbol because both elements of the equation are real. It differs from the archetypal patterns because the relationship is always a specific one. And it differs from traditional myth because it involves not one representative figure, but a medley of associations from the past brought to focus on a single figure in the present. (Ziolkowski 1965, 119)

Hesse used the old figures – in this case Cain – and gave the figure a new meaning. This is a significant point because it exemplifies Hesse's purpose in writing the novel; namely the reordering of the meaning of authority. Hesse introduces the reinterpretation of the meaning of Cain is in the first conversation that Damien has with Sinclair:

> You can also interpret this story of Cain differently. Most of the things that they teach us are certainly quite true and right, but you can also look at all of them in a different way than the teachers do, and generally they then make much better sense.(Hesse 1965, 134)

In the tradition of the Bildungsroman, Hesse is clearly suggesting that while teachers may have something to teach that is of value, the search for answers that come from the individual is going to make "better sense" as the come from the inner self rather than external authority. Not all individuals, however, according to Hesse can understand

the true meaning found in the story of Abel and Cain. As Frickert points out, Demian is laying the foundation for Sinclair to appreciate that he has the ability to "understand" the true meaning of the story of Cain and Abel:

> For those who are intellectually perceptive, Cain represents someone set apart from the masses . . . He is not branded as a murderer, but as one of the elect. Both Damien and Sinclair are likewise visibly different from their bourgeois counterparts; *they have the sign of election in their appearance.* (My emphasis) (Fricker 1978, 63)

Fricker characterizes this ability to truly understand as one based on "intellectual perception" which can identify those who are "elect". However, the nature of this ability to recognize the extra ordinary aspect of those who stand outside the stultifying rules of society, is for Hesse also based on specific ways of knowing, which go beyond being "intellectually perceptive". In order to better understand Hesse's basis for recognizing "the elect" we shall consider Hesse's view of the inner self as rooted in his Jungian mediated re-interpretation of the Bible and Christianity.

3. The Inner Self as a Source of Religious Authority in *Demian*

Thus Hesse had defined his role as a "missionary poet," imbuing his writings with the sense of hope that every religious vision must contain. His pastoral message is that it is possible for an individual to develop to a higher stage of the self – as long as the person is prepared to follow his or her own path inward, without the guidance of an outer authority. The focus for Hesse is on the individual, especially since Hesse negates the authority of social institutions such as family, church and state. Hesse believes that his ideas of individuation relate to a primarily spiritual quest but its implications are also

political in nature. While Hesse does not deal with these dilemmas in Demian they do re-appear in his later fictional work.[13] Furthermore, without any guidance or source of authority, how can any human being complete this journey?

This, indeed, was the struggle that Hesse set up in his novel *Demian.* Hesse systematically removes all sources of authority from the path of Emil Sinclair, the hero of the novel, at the beginning of his quest for self-development. As he moves through the stages of his development, Emil must leave behind family, the Church, his peers, and his teachers. These sources of authority represent for Hesse the human beings who are in various stages of the movement beyond " . . . the slime and eggshells of his primal past". (Hesse 1970, 5) Although some of them could be also be in the higher stages of self-development, Hesse did not consider this issue in Demian, possibly because of the particular style of this novel.

As Ziolkowski points out in his analysis of Demian, this is a novel in a specific genre called *Bildungsroman,* which was particularly popular during German Romanticism.

> One of the main features of the *Bildungsroman* was its emphasis on the inner development of a young person, while encouraging the awareness of the stultifying influences of the contemporary culture of that period. The second feature was the presence of a spiritual mentor who introduces the youth to a secret society. This secret society was supposed to be considered by the hero and the mentor to embody ideals considerably higher than those of the masses. (Ziolkowski 1965, 90)

We see these elements at play in *Demian.* The inner journey to truth and the quest for a religious vision could be undertaken only by elite; in this case Emil. Demian is the spiritual mentor who could introduces Emil to a secret society. Thus, Hesse seems to

suggest that the individual who does go on a spiritual quest is akin to the "ubermensch" of Nietzsche[14]

Hesse's "style" of writing goes beyond both the questions of the *Bildungsroman* and the answers of Nietzsche while at the same time using their "content" (following the definition of the two by Nussbaum). That is to say, Hesse's view at this stage of his thinking takes the following argument: mass society - represented in the institutions of that society - attempts to arrest the development of the inner self in anyone who questions the ideals of mass society. Thus for Hesse the "fact" that so few are able to resist this pressure and seek inner truth, is not because the masses are undeserving of further stages of self-development. Rather the power of those in authority is such that it prevents most people from embarking on the journey to the inner self. Hesse, however, goes beyond Nietzsche in affirming the possibility of salvation for all those who dare to break with the established authority and search for truth that can only be found through an inner journey. The question for Hesse in this novel is not who is worthy of being on this journey, but rather can we find authentic guidance on this journey?

According to Ziolkowski, Hesse also went beyond the genre by expanding *Demian* from being a novel of modern youth to one of great religious significance and broader meaning.

> Religion not only determines the diction of the language to a great extent; it also constitutes the substance of the book. That is not to say that the novel is extensively informative with regard to these diverse matters [of various religious traditions]. But religion definitely establishes the tone and atmosphere, emphasizing the fact that Sinclair' search is basically a religious one. (Ziolkowski 1965, 108)

I would agree with Ziolkowski that Hesse has written a novel that has as its central point the struggle between the traditional ideals of the society and those of the individual who has embarked on a quest that requires a descent into the chaos of a new vision. Those individuals who are able to sustain the struggle and loneliness of the inner journey are rare, according to Hesse. It is much easier to follow the established paths and follow the established authority.

Hesse never fully solved the tension in his polarity between outer and inner authority and would return to the same issues in his subsequent novels. He 'solved' the question of religious authority in *Demian* by reformulating the myths and symbols of Christianity to conform to his ideas regarding inner authority[15]

The inner-self becomes the start of Hesse's construction of his religious vision. In order to be able to grasp the knowledge that is possible for those who are "elect", it is necessary to rid the self of the false ideas that come from the established authorities. In this case clearly, the church and the school are the culprits. How, then according to Hesse, was one to go about replacing the false knowledge with the true?

We must start by considering the kind and source of knowledge that is of higher value. The knowledge of paramount interest to Hesse is one that is concerned with questions that can be framed in the following manner: Who am I? What is the purpose of my life? What is the meaning of death? In *Demian*, Hesse is primarily concerned with the development of autonomous identity, a theme that he continues to explore in both *Siddhartha* and *Steppenwolf.*

It is in *Demian*, with its myths and symbols drawn from the Christian Pietist background that was so familiar and significant for Hesse, that we see the exploration of

the meaning of the autonomous self in relation to Christian authority. As Ziolkowski points out, *Damien* is a novel that has as its central theme religious questions, so Hesse looks to the Bible as the source for possible answers. (Ziolkowski 1965, 121)

Thus, the major significance of the story of Cain and Abel for Hesse is in the process of reinterpretation, particularly a reinterpretation that questions the accepted moral dimension of the story. Young Sinclair having moved beyond the "light" of his family life, he no longer accepts the meaning of the story within the standard interpretation. In order to develop his true sense of inner self, he must re-examine the meaning of good and evil in the story of Cain and Abel. As several authors have suggested, the story of Cain and Abel can be read in a number of ways. The standard and perhaps the most literal interpretation, is the view that this is the story of both the first murder and the first fratricide. When evil is clearly identified, we can then see the consequences of it in terms of further evil in the forms of violence and broken laws – all of which lead to the destruction of society. In this interpretation, the Cain and Abel story is less a myth and more a morality tale. Most significantly, the author of the tale is the authority figure of God.

Hesse is not, however, prepared to accept the authority figure of God as expressed in the clear confrontation of good and evil in this interpretation of the Cain and Abel story. For Hesse, as the heir to Nietzschean relativism, it requires that the autonomous person provide his or her own interpretation, especially of Biblical material.

> The myths of the Bible, like all myths of mankind, are worthless for us as long as we do not dare to interpret them personally, for ourselves and our times. But then they can became very important to us. (Hesse 1965, 148)

4. The Influence of Jungian Psychology on Hesse's Views of Religious Authority

Hesse, speaking through Demian, questions the possibility of clearly identifying good and evil within one religious or philosophical framework. Tusken suggests that Hesse's solution was to lift what he calls the "symbolic" elements out of various traditions, ignoring the ethical frameworks and explicit theological concerns:

> Far from being a flight into fantasy, *Demian* depicts Hesse's journey along the spiritual path that he created out of the chaos both of his life and of war. Dr. Lang, [a Jungian psychoanalyst,] had opened a door that had enabled Hesse to understand the nature and complexities of the human being and of human society, which had left him a lonely outsider. A large part of his personal dilemma, as we can determine from the strong religious theme in Demian, was the childhood bonding with the Pietism of his family. He now feels free to let Christianity speak in symbols, just as he had learned to let other religions, as well as philosophy and literature, speak in their symbols. (Tusken 1998, 142)

Tusken continues in his discussion of other influences that are sprinkled throughout *Demian*; influences that had been noted by other scholars, including Stelzig.

> . . . there are even more features to the eclectic maze through which Damien has taken the reader, the confluences of the conceptual world of the German romantics and of the traditional dialectic thinking culminating in Hegel; of Nietzschen ideas of Christianity as well as Gnostic motifs and of assorted other strands from Socrates to Dostoevsky, Bachofen and Freud." (Tusken 1998, 142)

Hesse has harvested what interested him from these many sources, as will remain his practice, and has ignored what does not fit his ideas about religion. In *Demian*, he struggles to rewrite Christianity in such a manner that it can fit with his concerns about authority. Here we can particularly note the influence of the work of Jung, particularly the Jungian idea of archetypes, which combine or transcend polar opposites. Hesse's use

of the myth of Abraxas is a significant illustration, I think, of the Jungian ideas of Gnosticism and their influence on Hesse's work.

> The figure of Abraxas may have its roots in ancient traditions, and as Ziolkowski points out, there was reference to it in the works of various German authors – including Goethe – long before Hesse. (Ziolkowski 1965, 110-111)

Hesse uses the symbol of Abraxas at two different points in the novel. In the first one, Abraxas represents the being that is able to overcome the realms of light and darkness, and as such overcome the polarities of good and evil, which is so central to Hesse's possibility of individuation.[16] Thus, the god Abraxas serves as a symbol for the movement beyond the identification of morality with the unquestioning acceptance of authority represented in the institutions of society.

It is in the second use of the symbol of Abraxas that I believe we have a better indication of the Jungian-mediated meaning of Gnosticism for Hesse. As Ziolkowski clearly argues, the pairing of the god Abraxas with the image of the bird breaking out of the egg presents us with the idea of the self's gaining liberation and self-awakening only by breaking through the crusty layer of the old. This was the message that Damien sends to Emil upon receiving the picture of the bird.

> The association of Abraxas with the myth of the bird and egg is actually Hesse's own free syncretic blending . . . and Hesse undoubtedly has his information from J. J. Bachofen either directly from Bachofen's writings or indirectly through the psychology of Carl Gustav Jung. (Ziolkowski 1965, 111)

Furthermore, throughout the novel the nature of this break from the traditional view of life moves from a personal level – concerning primarily the development of Emil – to a universal level. Thus, at the end of the novel the war is portrayed not in terms of a

Soul is for Hesse, at this stage of his life and work, the crucial aspect of meaning in one's life, as well as the ultimate goal to be realized. And by housing his concept of soul in a feminine form in Demian – Frau Eva – Hesse has added a feminine content to the masculine Christianity that he had inherited from his familial roots. The significance of this, I believe, is not so much in Hesse in any way identifying with feminine aspects of the Self, as much as the way in which he was influenced by Jungian framing of archetypes in his search for redefining religious ideas. Just as Damien is an ethereal figure, so is Frau Eva. Neither she nor Beatrice – the other female figure in Damien – is a fully developed, multifaceted woman. Rather, as Ziolkowski points out:

> Frau Eva represents a significant development in Hesse's religious iconography: it is perfectly obvious that Frau Eva does not fit patly into any simple figura ... she is a mixture of the Daughter of Zion, Magna Mater, and the Jungian anima. . . . The sense of mystery that she arouses is actually the result of the planned haziness surrounding her figure. (Ziolkowski 1965, 137-138)

Hesse's hazy portrayal of Frau Eva may be in part due to the manner in which he dealt with the female figure in all of his novels. In all of his novels, the central figure is a male, and the male usually represents Hesse's real life struggles and actual life stage. Hesse's approach to Jungian theory was as selective as his approach to religious traditions. The women characters in his novels, therefore, represent one aspect of the male character, as it relates to the anima. This Jungian manner of representation of the female and male parts of a character did not preclude the possibility for Hesse to have drawn a female character and the animus part of her character. Yet Hesse, I would suggest, was not able to move outside the framework of the highly authoritarian

traditions. The women characters in his novels, therefore, represent one aspect of the male character, as it relates to the anima. This Jungian manner of representation of the female and male parts of a character did not preclude the possibility for Hesse to have drawn a female character and the animus part of her character. Yet Hesse, I would suggest, was not able to move outside the framework of the highly authoritarian household that had marked his early life. Boulby suggests that Hesse continued to see the world through that perspective, albeit now with the feminine aspect, as defined by Jung.

> Indeed, it was through his reading of Jung, that Hesse was able to reformulate his ideas of religious authority. God as archetype, with its basis in the collective unconscious and structures that include both the feminine and the masculine, and Gnosticism as a philosophical framework, paved the way for Hesse's "new" understanding of God and religious authority. (Boulby 1967, 112-113)

The essence of the Gnostic view of the world that Hesse adopted from the ideas of Jung lies in the dichotomy between the image of a true, unchanging Being in contrast to a constantly changing Becoming.[18] The realm of truth lies in the true and unchanging being for the Gnostics, and so the problem then becomes one of how do we gain knowledge of this unchanging truth. This problem is further complicated by our ongoing life that of necessity must take place within the material world. The material world, however, according to Jungian-Gnosticism, is the constantly changing realm of Becoming, and therefore a seemingly unbridgeable gap exists between the flux and flow of existence in the world, and the source of true knowledge or Wisdom. In order to be able to bridge this gap, the Gnostics created a mytho-poetic conduit which provided the possibility for direct knowledge achieved in experience and yet beyond it. This source of knowledge was considered direct by the Gnostics because it was based on reflection of the phenomenon, and thus in the realm of experience. The experience itself, however, is not what provides

had as its basis the divine ordering principle of Logos. The nature of this Logos, however, was significantly different from what became the Christian conception of the Divine. [19]

Now, while human beings may have the grace to receive insight or gnosis, nevertheless, we tend to live in time and space that is objectively constructed, bound to cycles of birth and death. This creates a dilemma regarding the question of who we are; what is the meaning of our existence.

This question can best be framed in the ancient Greek concept of *psyche,* denoting both soul and mind. The mind is capable of orienting itself to objective consciousness, and as such constructing a psychology of the self that is based exclusively in the material aspects of the world. In turn, the soul is unable to find any meaningful connections or patterns of human existence, which in turn leads to anxiety, hopelessness and despair. This is the construct of the self in a temporal time frame. For the Gnostics, this is not considered the True Self, as the True Self exists and persists beyond time and space. This idea is central to the work of Jung, who called this True Self, pure consciousness or Self, in contradistinction to the "ego consciousness." (Jung 1939, 263).

This distinction between the worldly self and the True Self has been a hallmark of Gnostic historical development in that the cosmos, in which we play out our lives, is inhospitable to the insight or Gnosis of the True Self. In order for the human mind to develop insight – which will provide the grace to achieve the True Self – it is necessary to break the bonds that tie us down to a cosmos, which is aloof and often hostile to our True Self. These bonds are particularly characterized by rigid law and order maintained by various institutional authority structures.

develop insight – which will provide the grace to achieve the True Self – it is necessary to break the bonds that tie us down to a cosmos, which is aloof and often hostile to our True Self. These bonds are particularly characterized by rigid law and order maintained by various institutional authority structures.

Jung's presentation of these general characteristics of Gnostic ideas underpins Hesse's struggle with the notion of authority and the True Self. He has discovered a God other than the authoritative figure at the heart of his parents' Pietism. If his Gnostic model, the god Abraxas, is unacceptable to traditional Christianity one, nevertheless it is an idea of God that has had significant influence. Perhaps the most controversial statement concerning Christianity that Hesse makes in *Demian* is his alteration of the Christ into a Christ. The mystery of being could be meaningful to Hesse, so it appears, only if there is a Christ in everyone (recall that Sinclair is reborn on a bed of straw in a stable), as Hesse notes in several passages:

> The spirit has manifested itself in everyone, the creature suffers in everyone, a savior is crucified in everyone. . . . He who desires nothing but his fate . . . stands completely alone and has the cold cosmos around him – that is Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. . . . That which nature wants of man is written in the individual, in you, in me. It was written in Jesus, it was written in Nietzsche. (Hesse 1965, 102, 222, 229)

Demian, accordingly, can be seen as a discerning and serious challenge not only to Christianity, but also to any religious confession that considers its prescriptive doctrines to be the only approach to God. Hesse can only conceive of God as an amorphous concept, stripped of any particular historical definition within a religious tradition.

Hesse sees the very act of labeling faiths as establishing barriers between one religion and every other. Few adherents, he maintains, will recognize their religious

tradition as a pathway among many possible pathways. Hesse makes this argument in terms of what he considers "institutionalized religions." He will make the same criticism within a Buddhism/Hinduism framework in his novel *Siddhartha*, when he notes that:

> ...a true seeker could accept no teaching . . . who has found the inner self, however, could approve of every teaching, every path, every god, nothing more separated him from the thousands of others who lived in the eternal, who breathed the divine. (Hesse 1956, 127)

In both *Demian* and *Siddhartha*, God is to be sought only within the self. The symbolic representations of this inner god manifest themselves in many guises. In *Damien* those include the Gnostic god Abraxas, as well as the Old Testament figures of Cain and Abel. And, according to Hesse, "[T]his inner voice of the individual speaks in the universal tongue of all creeds, however deeply it may lie hidden beneath their individual doctrines." (Hesse 1970, 379) This universal aspect of all religions becomes a significant aspect of his thinking about religion until the end of his life.

In , written much later, Hesse again returns to the theme of the inner journey that can only be embarked upon by those who are prepared to search for truth through development of the inner self:

> Our goal was not only the East, or, rather, our East was not only land and something geographical, but the home of youth and the soul; it was everywhere and nowhere, it was the union of all time. (Hesse 1956, 24)

According to Hesse, if we want to arrive at an understanding of life, we must travel on the journey through the soul. The only rule to this journey is that we must be prepared to step outside of the defined boundaries of society. As Tusken points out, such was the nature of the characters that populated Hesse's books:

> Needless to say, the journeyers are Hesse's kindred souls: the artists, thinkers, musicians, poets, and his own created personae – the Cains, the immortals, all those who obey or obeyed their inner voices to participate in humankind's spiritual quest. (Tusken 1998, 145)

understand what life really means will reach a stage of "pure observation." According to Tusken this stage

> . . permits them to love the world and everyone in it, good as well as evil, God and the devil, heaven and hell, without desiring anything in it for reasons of greed. This would shortly become the message of the god Abraxas in Demian. (Tusken 1998, 76)

5. The Unresolved Issues: The Inner Self as a Religious Compass

Hesse, I would suggest, does not reach a resolution to the issue of religious authority in *Damien*. Mainly he is dissatisfied with theism and he is convinced that the God of his Pietist background hinders rather than supports the process of individuation.

At this point Hesse is a true heir of Nietzsche, and sees Christianity as primarily diluting the potential of the individual to develop a soul that can move beyond the entrenched beliefs of the masses. The influence of Jung and his ideas of archetypal god, as well as Gnostic ideas as mediated through the understanding of Jung, have allowed Hesse to continue to speak of God, but in a form different from the god of any institutional religion. He also believes that the East will be hospitable to his "religion," as he understands the religions of India (in particular) to be a search for understanding through the exploration of the inner self. Hesse, while avowing to remove himself from the arena of political life, nevertheless continues to struggle with the role of the artist in society. This struggle is one that continues throughout the rest of his life, and he returns to it in his later novels, as well as his correspondences in the later stages of his life.

In *Demian* Hesse raises an issue that has serious implication for his religious vision, namely the question of who can share in the hope of this vision. Why some individuals can share and not all and how is it decided which person can go forward and further in the journey of self-discovery, are points that Hesse does not address directly. In 1917, as he is writing *Demian* Hesse's main focus, I think, was to convince his readers that the shedding of skins that keep us in the slime of humanity is essential if we are to reach the destiny of our pilgrimage. Therefore, Hesse at this point, musters all his talent and skill to paint a picture of this journey into the inner-self that is a journey away from the reality of the outer world and into the dream-like, shadowy world of the individual.

Yet by this focus, Hesse is making a statement that has political as well as religious implications. Can we turn to any authority to give us some form of guidance as we travel on our journey to self-understanding? Clearly the answer that Hesse provides is "yes"; he as an "artist" can provide us with this guidance. In the writing of this novel Hesse begins to process of defining the role of the artist in a religious sense. He expresses this relationship in terms of his ability as a poet to "help" through his writings those who have a desire to embark on the journey to the inner self. In 1950 he wrote:

> I am a poet; I seek and profess. I have the task of serving truth and sincerity (and the beautiful as part of truth; it is one of the forms under which truth appears). I have a mission: I must help those who also search to understand and endure life. (Otten 1970, 45)

Yet the nature of this mission may be seen as suspect, as Hesse calls into question whether all humans have the capacity to embark on this journey or search for the True Self:

> Most people never become men [sic]; they remain in the primal state, in the childish state this side of conflicts and development; most people perhaps never even find the second stage, but remain the irresponsible animal world of their impulses and infantile dreams; and the legend of a condition beyond their twilight, of good and evil, of a rise from despair into the light of grace – all this seems ridiculous to them. I know it from my own experience and from the documents of many souls. Always, at all times in history and in all religions and forms of life, we find the same typical experiences, always in the same progression and succession: loss of innocence, striving for justice under the law, the consequent despair in the futile struggle to overcome guilt. (Hesse 1970,191-192)

Thus the pilgrim without a map has not yet found the path to bring hope out of despair.

Chapter 3: *Siddhartha*

1. Hesse's Reasons for Writing *Siddhartha*: The Journey turns East.

Siddhartha is ostensibly set in India and on the surface appears to be a novel about the search for inner wisdom following a Buddhist path. It is Hesse's most famous novel and the one that created the most interest in North America in the 1960's, at a time when many young people were also turning to the East for their inspiration. Again, on the surface the novel appears to be Hesse's call for the rejection of the material basis of life in favour of a spiritual journey that leaves behind the world of desires.

However, Hesse's understanding of the material basis of life is shaped by his own ambivalence toward Western as well as Eastern society. Specifically, Hesse, very much under the influence of the Jungian-Gnostic definition of authentic sources of knowledge that he had developed in *Demian*, considers any form of knowledge based on external authority to be part of the material realm.

On the other hand, Hesse is very much drawn to the philosophy and religions of first India and later China, in so far as they exemplify for him his own philosophy of the true inner self. India and all things Indian have also a stronger appeal as they relate to his relationship with his family and their religious background. Hesse imbues his story of Siddhartha with a very strong emotional element that makes the hero - Siddhartha - a much more realistic character than Emil. Siddhartha - as many young people - is trying to make choices about their life in terms of following the rules of society or following some

inner dictum that is in conflict with the wishes of parents, teachers and other authorities. In that sense, the story is similar to that of *Demian.*

The difference lies in Siddhartha's actual involvement in the material basis of life; meaning both the realm of commerce and that of relationships. Unlike Emil, Siddhartha does actually experience normal human relationships - he falls in love, has a child, works for a living - and all of these have an impact on his journey in search of "the true self."

In *Siddhartha,* I argue, Hesse sets up a polarity between emotion and reason. However, what constitutes emotion and reason for Hesse is very much influenced by both his Western Pietist background and his own appreciation of India and its philosophical and religious traditions.

In trying to understand understanding of the East for Hesse, we can start by looking at the background of his family and their involvement with India. His mother, Marie Gundert Hesse was born in Malabar, and although she had been educated in Germany and Switzerland, spoke three Indian languages. She often sang to her children Indian songs and told them colourful stories of her experiences in the far away world of her youth.

Hermann Hesse's father, Johannes Hesse, had spent four years in Malabar as an ordained pastor and missionary. He was following in the footsteps of his father, Dr.Hermann Gundert. After twenty-four years as a missionary of the Basle Missionary Society on the Malabar Coast of India, Dr. Hermann Gundert had returned to Europe and had been assigned by the Basle Missionary Society to the position of director of its Pietist publishing house in Calw. The Calw Missionary Press was a prominent German publisher of theological writings. Dr. Gundert was a leading voice in the preaching of the

Pietist view of religion, which included the belief in the "inherent sinfulness of man, in the necessity of breaking the will of the individual, and with its uncompromising renunciation of all that is of this world". (Hesse 1963, vii)

Dr. Hermann Gundert's scholarly interests were devoted to Indological studies, to a Malayalam grammar, the completion of his Malayalam lexicon and the translation of the New Testament and parts of the Old Testament into Malayalam. (Varghese & Philip 1983, 64) His home, which held special memories for Hermann Hesse, was a meeting place for scholars, theologians and visitors from the Orient.

Hermann Hesse's parents met when Johannes Hesse, at that time (1873), a Pietist missionary in Malabar, India, was forced to return to Calw due to ill health (the Malabar climate had done him in). He was assigned to assist Dr. Gundert at the Calw Publishing House of the Basle Missionary Society. At the same time the widowed Marie Gundert was assisting her father Dr. Hermann Gundert at the publishing house. Johannes arrived back in Calw in December 4, 1873, recovered his health, met and then married Marie Gundert in November 22, 1874. Both of Hermann Hesse's parents were devoted Pietists, both had been missionaries in India, and both writers of religious literature. Hermann's father's intellectual interests included Greek philosophy, Latin literature and Oriental religions. As Theodore Ziolkowski notes:

> Johannes published fifteen books on edifying subjects, ranging from stories based on his experiences in India to training tracts for missionaries and admonitions to slaves of masturbation. (Hesse 1991, ix)

Johannes Hesse served as Dr. Herman Gundert's assistant editor of the mission's magazine until 1893 when he succeeded his father-in-law as Director of the Basle Missionary Society publishing house in Calw. Marie Gundert, Hermann's mother, had previously married the missionary Charles Isenberg (1840-1870), and had born him two

sons, Theo and Karl. Following her husband's early death she returned to live and work with her father in Calw. Marie wrote extensively (letters and diaries), as well, she wrote four books including biographies of Bishop James Hannington and David Livingstone, pursued the study of languages and was a powerful force in local church politics. Marie also enjoyed writing poetry and playing music. Hermann Hesse was very much attracted by the songs that she sang were in various Indian dialects, the beautiful objects and other delights from India that he experienced in his childhood. He developed a dichotomy between that which he associated with his mother and India, and that which he associated with his father and Pietism. As late as 1950 in his autobiographical writings he maintained that while his mother "was full of magic, his father was not; he could not sing." (Hesse 1972, 69)

In speaking of things magical and musical, Hesse was using his voice as an artist. He was placing India and that which he associated with India in the realm of the imagination. The significance of the above quote for this study is not how Hesse viewed his mother and father, but rather in the role that "India" played in his developing view of the relationship between art and religion. The discussion of the relationship of art and religion Hesse would develop more fully in *Steppenwolf.* In *Siddhartha* Hesse moves beyond his earlier, rather simplistic dichotomy of the imaginative world of India and things associated with India, and the bleak Pietist Christianity of his grandfather and father.

Hesse was continuing his quest to overcome dichotomies such as good and evil (which had been the focus of his writing in Demian) and his search for a unity between polarities. In Siddhartha the polarity that Hesse seeks to unify, is that between emotion

and reason. Emotion for Hesse is identified with imagination, the aesthetic realm and the sensual aspects of life. All of these, Hesse had experienced in his early life as part of the Indian influences of his home and everything that he associated with his mother.

Reason, on the other hand, he had identified with the authoritarian and rigid religion of his father and grandfather. Hesse had clearly rejected the Pietism of his family much earlier in his life - as we had seen this in the previous chapter - as stultifying for the individual attempting to develop the true inner self. Reason for Hesse, while on the one hand oppressive to the individual in the guise of social authority, could also have a significant role to play in the development of the individual when it had a source such as the Jungian-Gnostic religion discussed in *Damien*. The type of reason that Hesse believed was able to bring the individual to the highest stage of individuation was mystical.

The influence of mysticism - both Eastern and Western - is the subject of the dissertation by Kyung Yang *Cheong, Mystische Elemente aus West und Ost in Werk Hermann Hesse, 1990* and discussed in Mileck. According to Mileck, Cheong argues Hesse was drawn to the thought of the German mystics of the Middle Ages through his reading of the late eighteenth and nineteenth century German Romantics. It was the influence of the German mystics as well as the German Romantics, according to Cheong, which shaped Hesse's religiophilosophical outlook. The most significant element of the mysticism was the *unio mystica* of life; the search for the experience of the Oneness of God. The means or path to this goal for the mystics was the *via contemplativa*, or meditation.[19]

Mileck in his review of Cheong's dissertation agrees with his view of the significance of the Western mystical influences on Hesse's religiophilosophical outlook.

However, Mileck's emphasis is while Hesse incorporated aspects of Indian philosophy into his views of religious thought, the predominant and guiding influence were the German, mystical influences.

> Hesse's pre-1914 evolving Western mysticism was never quite free of Indian influence. His family background had introduced him to India, Schopenhauer to Indian thought, he was quite familiar with the Bhagavad-Gita, Upanishads and sundry Buddhistic writings by 1907 ... Disenchanted with his family's staid institutionalized Pietism, Hesse's heart took delight in the magic world of Indian mysticism and his mind was taken with India's practice of meditation and its embrace of god both immanent (Atman) and transcendent (Brahman) and found consolation in Buddha's nirvana concept of ultimate release and Oneness. (Mileck 2003, 92)

While Mileck believes that German mysticism was the major guiding influence on Hesse, he also stresses Hesse's incorporation of Indian philosophy into his religious thought. While he could find sources in Western thought for understanding and affirming his views, he also believed that India and its religions could provide him with a path to achieve his goal. He had read Schopenhauer, he had experienced what he believed was genuine Indian culture throughout his childhood, and psychologically he was open to the meditative practices which he believed were the steps to achieve his goal of unity.

> Hesse found the inspiration to renew his interest in Hinduism and Buddhism in the writings of Schopenhauer, whose work he now preferred to that of Nietzsche. His reading of Schopenhauer's confirmed for him the significance of Indian ideas for understanding epistemological issues. (Boulby 1967, 121-123)

Furthermore, Hesse was attempting to overcome dichotomies in his search for a unified vision of life; and thus he needed to find some kind of a resolution to the dichotomy that he had experienced since childhood; namely, between the world of imagination, pleasure and sensuality and that of the rigidity of reason.

Hesse turned to India and the religions of India as a source for a solution to his problem of harmonizing the polarity of sensuality and reason. On the basis of his readings of the Indian sources, as well as the work of western philosophers such as Schopenhauer, we believed he had found in the religion of India the inner way to individuation, which he believed was the source of authentic religion. This was to be the unity of life that he had seen as necessary to overcome the chaotic philosophy and rigid religious turn that now marked Western society.

While this was indeed the way he constructed the novel Siddhartha, Hesse's own views of Indian religions and Indian way of life took a different turn. Particularly, Hesse came to recognize that the harmony that he desperately longer for in terms of the polarity between emotion and reason, he would not find its solution in the Indian way of life. In order to understand why such was the case, we need to turn to an analysis of the novel itself and then an examination of Hesse's views of the East.

2. The Search for the True Self: Siddhartha's Struggle between Reason and Emotion

In discussing Hesse's religious vision, *Siddhartha* seems to continue where *Damien* finished. The plot of this novel is both sparse and relatively uncomplicated. Siddhartha is a young Brahman dissatisfied with following the Hindu path to salvation. He asks his father's blessings to try other paths, and after some dispute, his father grants him his request. He leaves his home on his journey, with his friend Govinda.

In this first part of the book, Hesse does not allow Siddhartha to show much emotion either to his father or his friend. Siddhartha bows to his father when they part and he accepts the company of his friend without any expression of gratitude.

In the second chapter, Siddhartha and Govinda go into the forest and join the ascetic Samanas, with whom they spend three years. In this section, Hesse clearly specifies the way in which Siddhartha had to conduct his life in order to follow the path of the Samanas.

> Siddhartha learned a great deal from the Samanas; he learned many ways of losing the Self. He traveled along the path of self-denial through pain, through voluntary suffering and conquering of pain, through hunger, thirst and fatigue. He traveled the way of self-denial through meditation, through the emptying of the mind of all images. Along these and other paths did he learn to travel. He lost his Self a thousand times and for days on end he dwelt in non-being. But although the paths took him away from Self, in the end they always led back to it. Although Siddhartha fled from the Self a thousand times, dwelt in nothing, dwelt in animal and stone, the return was inevitable; the hour was inevitable when he would find himself, in sunshine or in moonlight, in shadow or in rain, and was again Self and Siddhartha, again felt the torment of the onerous life cycle. (Hesse 1951, 15-16)

The above quotation shows, I believe, that Hesse certainly understood many of the concepts of Buddhism, however, he clearly did not believe that they could bring Siddhartha - as the persona of Hesse - to the ideal which he was trying to attain. Hesse was on the search of the Self, while the object of Buddhism is the loss of the Self. Most significantly, Hesse's view of the Self was based on his own philosophy which he had developed in *Demian*; namely that the true Self can only be achieved through the struggle to rid oneself of all knowledge that is based on social authority.

By the time that Hesse was writing Siddhartha he has abandoned his view that the religions of India will provide him with a path to the true Self, based on a theory of inner authority. Therefore, Siddhartha also decides to abandon the Samanas and their path;

dismissing it as mere technique that has no religious basis. This is the knowledge of Elders who represent for Hesse outside authority. This is not the knowledge that will allow him to continue on his quest for a religious vision. Siddhartha tries to explain what he considers to be the true knowledge to his friend Govinda using Indian terms.

> There is, so I believe, in the essence of everything, something that we cannot call learning. There is, my friend, only a knowledge - that is everywhere, that is Atman, that is in me and you and in every creature, and I am beginning to believe that this knowledge has no worse enemy than the man of knowledge, than learning. (Hesse 1951, 19)

Nevertheless, when Siddhartha learns that Gautama the Buddha is in the area, and both he and Govinda set out to hear the teachings of the Buddha. Siddhartha is very impressed with the Buddha, and recognizes in him someone who has found the true Self that has the goal of Siddhartha's search. However, Siddhartha also recognizes that the Buddha has little to teach him, in spite of his great wisdom. In his discussion with the Buddha, Siddhartha makes the following statement.

> Not for one moment did I doubt that you were the Buddha, that you have reached the highest goal which so many Brahmins and Brahmins' sons are striving to reach. You have done so by your own seeking, in your own way, through thought, through meditation, through knowledge, through enlightenment. You have learned nothing through teachings, and so I think, O Illustrious One, that nobody finds salvation through teachings. To nobody, O Illustrious One, can you communicate in words and teachings what happened to you in the hour of your enlightenment. The teachings of the enlightened Buddha embrace much, they teach much - how to live righteously, how to avoid evil. But there is one thing that this clear, worthy instruction does not contain; it does not contain the secret of what the Illustrious One himself experienced - he alone among hundreds of thousands. That is what I thought and realized when I heard your teachings. That is why I am going on my way - not to seek another and better doctrine, for I know there is none, but to leave all doctrines and all teachers and to reach my goal alone - or die. (Hesse 1951, 33-34)

Siddhartha's search for the true self is constructed by Hesse following the notion that he had developed in *Damien*; i.e., it is not possible to discover that sense of self through the teachings of another. Rather, the true self can only be found through the inner path. Therefore, Siddhartha decides to continue the quest for the true Self without a teacher. Furthermore, he decides that even the presence of his friend Govinda hinders his journey to the true self.

Siddhartha recognizes at this point in the story rather than continuing to search for the true self by using reason, his search would be better served if he enters the realm of the senses and physical experience. It this point, Hesse also rejects the notion that the world of experience and all that is within this world is to be rejected on the grounds that it is not real, or Maya. Siddhartha now steps back into the world of experience and speaks of awakening. This is the language that Hesse had used in Demian when Emil "awakens" to the need to go to the inner self in order to search for truth and meaning in life. Siddhartha, on the other hand, needs to experience the world of desires, sensations - that is the world of emotion - in order to search for true knowledge. Siddhartha now needs to plunge into the material world, rather than follow what Hesse believed was the Indian idea that the entire material world had to be negated in order to reach enlightenment.

> How deaf and stupid I have been, he thought, walking on quickly. When anyone reads anything which he wishes to study, he does not despise the letters and punctuation marks, and call them illusions, chance and worthless shells, but he reads them, he studies and loves them, letter by letter. But I, who wished to read the book of the world and the book of my own nature, did presume to despise the letters and signs. I called the world of appearances an illusion. I called my eyes and tongue, chance. Now it is over; I have awakened. (Hesse 1951, 40)

The first part of the book ends with Siddhartha realizing that he is now all alone; the outsider without membership in any group. Yet, he was now happy because he saw

the possibility of moving forward in his quest. He had finally separated from his father; he was in the process of achieving the much-vaulted Hessian idea of individuation.

Hesse had a very hard time writing the second and concluding part of the book. He was now on unfamiliar ground, in so far as he himself had not harmonized the polarities of emotion and reason in neither his own life nor in any other books he had written.

Siddhartha now passes to the second realm of his journey, which involves a direct relationship through the body of the material world. This part of the journey begins by crossing a river in a ferry with a ferryman called Vasudeva. Again, Hesse creates a very shallow conversation between Siddhartha and Vasudeva that has been characteristic of all of Siddhartha's relationships.

The next person that Siddhartha meets is the beautiful and famous courtesan Kamala. In order to make the money necessary to secure Kamala's services; Siddhartha goes to work for a wealthy merchant.

In this part of the book, Hesse deals with Siddhartha's involvement with the world of emotions; the realm of desires, as well as that of relationships. In his discussions as well as the dialogues between Siddhartha and Kamala and Siddhartha and the merchant Kamaswami, the underlying issue seems to be one of power. Kamala has a great deal of power over Siddhartha, especially at the beginning of the relationship, as she has all the knowledge of love, while he is consumed by desire for her. Kamala, according to Hesse's descriptions, is not simply a businesswoman in the sex trade. Rather she is the ephemeral Beatrice, now with a body as well as a soul.

> Daily, however, at the hour she invited him, he visited the beautiful Kamala, in handsome clothes, in fine shoes and soon he also brought her presents. He learned many things from her wise red lips. Her smooth gentle hand taught him many things. He, who was still a boy as regards love and was inclined to plunge to the depths of it blindly and insatiably, was taught by her that one cannot have pleasure without giving it, and that every gesture, every caress, every touch, every glance, every single part of the body has its secret which can give pleasure to one who can understand. She taught him that lovers should not separate from each other after making love without admiring each other, without being conquered as well as being conquering, so that no feeling of satiation or desolation arises nor the horrid feeling of misusing or having been misused. He spent wonderful hours with the clever, beautiful courtesan and became her pupil, her lover, her friend. Here with Kamala lay the value at meaning of his present life, not in Kamaswami's business. (My emphasis) (Hesse 1951, 66)

Several years pass, Siddhartha and Kamala have a love affair, and Siddhartha has now become a wealthy and successful merchant. Siddhartha seems to have lost sight of why he was engaged in the world of the merchant. While at the beginning of his work in commerce he was primarily interested in the experience of being with people, he is now mostly interested in amassing wealth. He has joined the herd; becomes a member of the bourgeoisie. Siddhartha now have little value for the knowledge that he has gained from Kamala and Kamaswami, as well as their relationships. Hesse having allowed his hero, to "learn" from teachers experienced in the ways of the material world cannot allow his hero to be satisfied or ultimately fulfilled from this knowledge.

Siddhartha comes to the realization that he has also turned from the path that he had marked for himself; the quest for the true Self. That only the satisfaction of this goal can bring him the happiness and peace that he seeks. Kamala's love, as well as success in the world of commerce, is only able to give him a brief moment of bliss. In despair, he realizes that he is no closer to fulfilling his goal, than he had been when he left the world of the teacher, i.e., the Buddha.

In a state of complete confusion and disconsolateness, he flees from his life in the city and returns to the river, with thoughts of suicide. In the process of discarding his fine clothing, however, he feels the stirrings of his old desires to find the true Self, and he chooses to live. His decision is precipitated by the sound of "Om", and therefore by what Hesse would consider the sensual part of our self. Yet the sensual is now merged with the stirrings of the inner self; Siddhartha has been transformed. He now no longer lives in either end of the polarity of emotion and reason. He is on the path to individuation.

> Then from a remote part of his soul, from the past of his tired life, he heard a sound. It was one word, one syllable, which without thinking he spoke indistinctly, the ancient beginning and ending of all Brahmin prayers, the holy Om, which had the meaning of "the Perfect One" or "Perfection". At that moment, when the sound of Om reached Siddhartha's ears, his slumbering soul suddenly awakened and he recognized the folly of his action. (Hesse 1951,81)

Siddhartha's journey has now taken the route through his mind, his heart as well as through his desires. He has been in the forest with the ascetics, in the lush groves with Buddha, the teacher, in the city partaking of all the luxuries of life. Now back at the river he finds himself coming full circle to the starting point of his quest. Yet, he realizes that he is not the same person as he has been when he had left his father's home. Now he is able to recognize the truth carried in the moving waters of the river, as well as in the relationships that he has established with various people in the course of his journey.

> But today he only saw one of the river's secrets, one that gripped his soul. He saw that the water continually flowed and flowed and yet it was always there; it was always the same and yet every moment it was new. Who could understand, conceive this? He did not understand it; he was only aware of a dim suspicion, a faint memory, divine voices. (Hesse 1951, 102)

The concluding section of the novel takes place on the banks of the river, where Siddhartha lives in a shack with the ferryman, Vasudeva. Through contemplating the

river, Siddhartha gains the insight of unity and timelessness; crucial in the realization of Hesse's religious vision. As Mileck points out:

> Of all his protagonists, Siddhartha alone fully realizes this ideal; he lives himself. Learns thereby to know himself, and ultimately experiences complete self-realization. (Mileck 2003, 150)

Mileck suggests, therefore, that Siddhartha represents for Hesse the culmination of his religious vision. I do not agree. While Siddhartha may have achieved transformation of the self, he has not yet come to terms with the material aspects of life. Hesse had not been able to reconcile the individual self, to the desire of the self to live and order one's loves in society. For Hesse, the most significant issue is still of the authority of the teacher. Specifically, he is still searching for authority that is of society, without being crippling to the process of individuation.

Therefore, is not the end of the journey for Siddhartha, although it does bring him to another elevation in his path. Hesse had created a tension in the story between wisdom gained through a teacher and the wisdom gained through insight or *gnosis.* The river becomes the symbolic vehicle of this knowledge. Yet, in order to gain this knowledge, Siddhartha still needed an intermediary; namely Vasudeva. Thus, I would suggest that Hesse begins to expand his understanding of authority; the guide can be an authority figure who aids in the process of individuation. The metaphor of "the guide as source of authority on the inner journey" is one that Hesse again used in *Steppenwolf.* This time it was a prostitute who played the Vasudeva role for Heller. In both cases, the guide had to be some form of outcast, in order I think, not to be confused with an authority figure enmeshed in modern, institutional reality. Those who like Kamala or Kamaswami derive their values from the material framework of modern life can only provide knowledge,.

according to Hesse, which further ensnares the individual in the stultifying world of the herd.

Yet Hesse remains in the Western world, with its emphasis on life in this world. The mysticism that drew him to Romanticism, the German mystics, as well as Indian philosophy and religions, only satisfies one aspect of his religious vision; namely his instance on the inner self as the source of authentic knowledge. The other side of Hesse's religious vision - his need for an authentic way of living in the material world - cannot be satisfied by fleeing to the East. For in the East he sees the same bourgeoisie world that he had wanted to escape in the West. Furthermore he sees in the relationships of commercial and religious authority and the peoples of the East; the same kinds of problems which he had encountered in his relationships in the West. In the next section, I explore more fully Hesse's the impact of the East on Hesse's development oh his religious vision.

3. Hesse's Views of the East

The problem that needs to be resolved in this study is the impact that the religions of India had on Hesse's harmonizing the polarity of emotion and reason. Mileck concludes that Hesse was primarily interested in India as part of the "exotic heritage" of his early life and that Hesse remained a Pietist and Westerner all his life, he rejected all aspects of Buddhism by the time he was writing *Siddhartha*. (Mileck 2003, 127-128) The relationship that Hesse had with India, and particularly with the religions of India commonly called Buddhism and Hinduism, is however much more complex.

The primary point of dispute among scholars who have considered the impact that the East has had on Hesse's thought and art, revolves - according to Mileck - on the issue

whether Hesse moved from being primarily Western in his outlook to primarily a follower of Eastern traditions. Mileck documents how scholars of Western origin have tended to minimize the influence of the East on Hesse, while "... scholars of Eastern origin or Eastern choice have been prone to exaggerate Eastern influence ..." (Mileck 2003,123)

There appear to be two issues that have preoccupied scholars who have considered Hesse and the East; was Hesse writing as a Hindu or Buddhist or Confucian or Christian, or was he attempting at a synthesis of these traditions? The second issue is whether Hesse was mostly interested in the religiophilosophical tradition(s) of the East, or was he primarily interested in the East as a source of artistic and literary inspiration and material.

Mileck concludes that most of the studies done to date have drawn the wrong conclusions on both of these issues because they were written before much of the material that Hesse wrote concerning the East, was readily available. Furthermore, Mileck points out that most scholars have only considered Siddhartha to support their conclusion regarding Hesse and the East. According to Mileck, that is an inadequate basis for understanding the complex relationship between Hesse and the East. In his study, Mileck draws to our attention to the material in Hesse's Indian tales, as well as his essays dealing with India and his Indian reviews. After a careful examination of the scholarship to date, Mileck comes to the following conclusion:

> Contrary to his own occasional insistance(sic) and to widely accepted scholarly opinion, Hesse's Eastern quest was basically not intent upon Oriental enlightenment or even upon a synthesis of Western and Eastern thought and belief, but primarily upon comforting affirmation of his own evolving view of, and changing adjustment to life. Beyond this quest for confirmation, Hesse's preoccupation with the East was motivated less by a religiophilosophical than by a literary-aesthetic attraction. Hesse was and remained a Westerner, a Protestant, a German Pietist. (Mileck 2003, 124)

Mileck's analysis of both the relevant texts and events in Hesse's life, indeed does provide support for his conclusions regarding the relationship that Hesse had with the East. I shall review some of that material in the following pages. Mileck's final conclusion regarding Hesse as a Westerner, Protestant and German Pietist, however, requires I think further discussion, which shall be the focus of the last part of this chapter.

In an analysis of the relationship between Hesse and India, we need to move beyond his initial introduction to India by his grandparents. While India and all things Indian may have attracted Hesse at an early age, his introduction to actual texts dealing with Indian philosophical/religious ideas probably occurred in either late 1905 or early 1906, according to Mileck.

> Karl E. Neumann's *Die Reden Gotomo Buddhos*, *Der Wahrheitspfad*, and *Die Buddhistische Anthologie*, Hermann Oldenberg's *Buddha*, and Paul Deussen's *Sechzig Upanishad's des Vada* and *Die Sutra's der Vedanta* now followed in rapid succession, and for these translations, Leopold von Schoder's *Indiens Literatur und Kulture in historischer Entwicklung* provided appreciated information and interpretation.(Mileck 2003,131)

According to Mileck's interpretation, Hesse was greatly impressed by Buddhism on the basis of these readings, because it corresponded with Hesse's own view of life at that particular stage. At this time, Hesse and his wife and children had moved to a somewhat Spartan life in an old farmhouse in the German village of Gaienhofen. At this stage of his life, Hesse seems to have thrown himself into a rather bourgeois life style -

focus on family, good income, promising career - but with what Mileck calls "Rousseauesque" element; i.e. the romantic notion of simple, country living. In Buddhism, according to Mileck, Hesse would find a philosophical justification for this turn in his life.

> He was also very impressed [by the above mentioned texts] and particularly by Buddhism, and for good reason: Buddhism's determinism, resignation and asceticism confirmed the passive acceptance and self-denial that had gradually become characteristic of his own adjustment to life following his marriage. (Mileck 2003, 131)

Mileck's conclusion is therefore, based on Hesse's own views of the state of his mind at that point. As well, Mileck documents that Hesse's understanding of Buddhism is based primarily on Hinayana or Pali Buddhism. I think it is fair to conclude that Hesse read widely, but as he had with Christianity, mainly to affirm his own emotional and intellectual needs. It is worthwhile at this point to reiterate that Hesse was not a scholar of religions, nor did he ever claim that that was the purpose of his writing. While it may be of significance of scholars of various religious traditions to examine the validity of Hesse's approaches and use of material from these religious traditions, this is not the focus of this thesis.

What is significant for this study is the question: what did Hesse believe he was going to find in India and particularly in the religions of India?

Mileck argues that what Hesse was looking for was a view of life - specifically resignation to "fate" - which marked Hesse's own adjustment to the crisis which had engulfed his life during this period. However, by Mileck's own account, this "adjustement" was very short lived and constantly punctuated by "insatiable wanderlust" and "compulsive travel".

> He not only visited throughout Germany, Austria and Switzerland for variety of purposes, he also engaged with a commune of vegetarians, pacifists, anarchists, Tolstoyans, theosophists and European Buddhists, founded by Gustav Arthur Graser on Monte Verita near Ascona in 1900, and then [Hesse's journey] to Ceylon, Sumatra, and Malaya.(Mileck,2003,131)

By 1908, according to Mileck, Hesse rejects Buddhism and Hinduism as a solution to his quest for a unified view of life that would serve to bring him personal peace in his chaotic existence. Mileck in his analysis suggests that the most significant and pleasing aspect of Indian thought for Hesse was its mythology and cosmology, rather than its philosophical basis.

> Nor was Hesse's intellectual curiosity or religious bent better served than its immediate practical need. India's excessive concern with metaphysics quickly cloyed his initial intellectual interest, and its emphasis upon knowledge ran counter to his upon belief. And the more familiar Hesse became with India's religions the more uncomfortably reminiscent they became of puritanical Pietism. (Mileck 2003, 133)

Mileck's conclusion is based primarily on analysis of Hesse's correspondence to his family during this period, which are also quoted in this study. Clearly, Hesse's assessment of Indian philosophy is based on his own needs and approach to life rather than on a desire to become truly versed in Indian religions. Particularly significant to this study, is the assessment made by Mileck that Hesse rejected what he (Hesse) believed was emphasis upon "knowledge" in Indian religions. Hesse's use of the term "knowledge" was specifically reserved for scientific inquiry, which he identified with scholarship of the early twentieth century.

Ziolkowski in his approach to understanding the reasons why Hesse turned to the philosophy of India considers the intellectual climate at this time, rather than specifically Hesse's family situation. At this time, there was a great deal of interest in Germany in

Indian religions and philosophy and this interest was highly evident in European literature and scholarship.

> The Orient became a popular province for all those - writers, theosophists, and readers alike – who sought a philosophy of unity and totality to offset the fragmentation of existence produced by the scientific and technological progress of the West, whose decline Spengler was gloomily prognosticating. (Ziolkowski 1965,147)

Hesse turned to a rigorous study of the *Bhagavad-Gita* as a response to reading various theosophical writings. He read the standard German works on the subject of Buddhist and Hindu philosophy. (Ziolkowski 1965, 147) Moreover, he embarked on his so-called "Trip to India" from September 1911 to December 1911, which was actually a trip to Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Sumatra, as they were called in 1911. Initially Hesse was drawn to pursue his study of Indian philosophy concept of unity;" the ultimate oneness of all reality." At this point Hesse was looking for a philosophical and religious system that would allow him to escape the fragmented and disenchanted view that permeated Western society. In Ziolkowski's view, Hesse approached Indian thought with his characteristic critical stance. In an important journal entry in 1920 Hesse writes:

> My preoccupation with India, which has been going on for almost twenty years and has passed through many stages, now seems to me to have reached a new point of development. Previously my reading, searching and sympathies were restricted exclusively to the philosophical aspects of India – the purely intellectual, Vedantic and Buddhistic aspects. The Upanishads, the sayings of Buddha, and the Bhagavad-Gita were the focal point of this world. Only recently have I been approaching the actual religious India of the gods, of Vishnu and Indra, Brahma and Krishna. And now Buddhism appears to me more and more as a kind of very pure, highly bred reformation – a purification and spiritualization that has no flaw but its great zealousness, with which it destroys image-worlds for which it can offer no replacement. (Ziolkowski 1965, 149-150)

From the above assessment that Hesse makes of the religions of India – and in particular Buddhism – it would appear that his criticism is based on the intellectualizing nature of these religions. Hesse further elaborates on his image of Indian religions as overly intellectual in the following extract from a letter written in 1921.

> I'm a Protestant and, as a child, I believed in the value and meaning of the Reformation ... I only noticed later on that, while the Reformation was a good thing in so far as the conscientious behaviour of the Protestants contrasted nobly with the indulgence trading, etc., the Protestant church itself had nothing much to offer, and the various Protestant sects nurtured the cultivation of inferiority complexes. This is also more or less how I view Buddhism, which adopts a rational attitude toward the world without gods, and seeks redemption solely through the intellect. It's a beautiful form of Puritanism, but it is also suffocating one-sided, and I have become increasingly disenchanted with it. (Hesse 1919, 108)

I think we can draw some significant points concerning Hesse's stance regarding Buddhism in particular and the religions of India in general. While he initially had looked to India and Indian philosophy, as a means of overcoming the fragmentation and disenchantment in Western thought, eventually he arrived at the conclusion that the same conditions were present in Indian religions.

The realization - that he had not found the perfect, unified system - and contributed to the difficulty that Hesse had in completing the novel *Siddhartha*. The problem that he faced was; where does one look in the construction of a religious vision, once external authority is absent, teachers and teachings are primarily involved with the intellect - and as such devoid of any religious authority - and the world of experience only speaks to desires?

On the basis of his readings and the stories he had heard at his home, Hesse had probably concluded that the East would somehow provide an answer to his dilemma. Even after he had made his conclusions that Buddhism was "too intellectual", he

embarked on his journey to India. The India that he wanted to experience was the neo-romantic view of India found in his reading of both Jung and Nietzsche, which he had absorbed and refined.[21]

This was to become the ideal view of complete harmony of all the polarities that brought about the realization of the fully individuated person. An ideal that Hesse truly believed was possible in India, but impossible in the West. Mileck identifies this characterization as Hesse's "exotic" image of India. Edward Said in his work on Western approaches to the East, labels this type of view as "essentializing", meaning that it becomes devoid of the actual lived experience of the people. This process of essentializing often created images of the East that were romantic, in the sense of one-sided in emphasizing what came to be seen the pleasing and delightful aspects of Westerners, as they "learned" about the East. When these images were shattered by the actual experience of the many sides of life in the East as anywhere else, it often created a revulsion in those who were convinced that the East actually was represented in these "exotic" images.

Hesse experienced twice reactions to his experiencing of "India", significantly, neither of those involved actual contact with India. He read translations of Buddhist and Hindu texts, was very interested at first, and then lost interest as the study of the texts would require more effort then he deemed worthy. Even the practice of meditation, which he had encountered as part of his study of the life of St. Francis, as well as his readings on Eastern religion, he did not follow to any great depth.

> And when he finally went on his trip to India, as mentioned earlier, he never actually set foot in India itself. He aborted his trip, as he suffered from dysentery and general fatigue. (Freedman 1978, 132-156)

Hesse was not just writing about self-transformation; he was actually involved in the experiences of self-transformation. He went to the East, and then wrote about his experiences and his reflections of the experiences. I think it is characteristic of Hesse that while his non-fictional account of his journey is informative and highly descriptive, one can have a better sense of how the trip transformed his way of thinking about the East, through his fictional writing. I shall illustrate this point by looking at one of his short stories self-transformation he wrote in 1913 entitled "Robert Aghion".(Hesse 1971, 200-223)

This is a story of a young English theologian, Robert Aghion, who answers an advertisement for a missionary to go to work in India. The story is set at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and a London merchant, whose brother had made his fortune in India and there died childless, decides to allot a good deal of money for the purpose of spreading the Gospel in that country. A member of the East India Company and several clergymen were asked to act as advisors and to develop a strategy to select and fund young clergymen for the task. In the first few pages of the story, Hesse paints a most unflattering picture of the whole missionary enterprise. Those who search for the candidates are a mix of successful merchants and ambitious clergymen, all motivated by a desire to secure their good standing in the eyes of the religious authorities of stature.

Robert Aghion, a young Scottish pastor, who has few prospects, decides to answer the ad for the position. While he is interested in the missionary work, is major reason for applying for the post lies in his love of nature.

> Thanks to his deeply pious mother, he was animated by a simple Christian faith which he rejoiced in proclaiming from the pulpit. But his mind found its greatest pleasure in the observation of nature, for which he possessed a keen eye. A modest, unspoiled young man with capable eyes and hands, he found satisfaction in seeing and knowing, collecting and investigating the things of nature that came his way.... Most of all, he loved the butterflies; their dramatic transformation from the caterpillar and chrysalis state delighted him time and time again, while their colors and designs gave him pure pleasure of which less gifted men are capable only in early childhood (Hesse 1971, 202)

Predictably, Robert is a successful candidate for the position of missionary, and he goes off to India excited about the prospect of saving souls and equally excited about the opportunity to further his study of the natural world. This is a missionary who is interested in the details of this world. He can appreciate the beauty of the natural world; however, he also wants to be able to establish order in its manifestations. He has the charm and innocence of the simple soul; somewhat like Emil when we first meet him in *Demian.*

Upon his arrival in India, Robert moves into the home of a merchant named Bradley. He spends the first few months, learning the language he will need to do his missionary work. The merchant is a crude, uncommunicative individual who lacks any social graces. In order to find some more pleasant company, Robert begins to explore the local town and begins to interact with the people. He is very excited in seeing the flora and fauna of the area, as well as some exotic insects. Again, Hesse speaks of Robert's reaction to these sights as those of a small boy.

Next, Robert makes his first contact with Indians, and he quickly learns to appreciate their simple approach to life " ... and from the very first he loved them." (Hesse 1971, 209) Surely this must be Hesse at his mocking, ironic style, for in the next

few paragraphs he speaks of Robert's dismay and terror as he views a Hindu temple, and sees people exiting who obviously have no interest in Robert.

In the next few pages, Hesse mocks the romantic, naïve approach to life that Robert takes, and the clearly racist, dichotomizing approach of the merchant Bradley. In a dialogue, Robert talks about the beauty of the people and how his missionary work will save them. Bradley, on the other hand, argues that Indians cannot be saved given that they have no conception of right or wrong and unlike the innocent children of England, the Indians never develop beyond this brutish state. Over time Robert begins to realize that the people have a religious history and culture and indeed, may have little need or interest in his missionary work.

Robert sets about learning more about the Indian culture and does so by employing the same techniques that he has used to study nature, through classification, organization and control. His approach seems to work; he begins to gain the trust, he thinks, of the people and animals in the area. He begins to travel further and further from the local village in his search for knowledge that will help him become a successful missionary, although most of his efforts are directed toward the natural world, rather than toward understanding the religions of the people.

> He made no attempt to speak of God. Not only did it seem to him that there was no hurry; he also discovered that it was a thorny, well-nigh impossible undertaking, for he simply could find no words in Hindustani for the most common Christian concepts. Moreover, he felt that he would have no right to set himself up as these people's teacher and bid them to make important changes in their way of life until he knew all about this way of life and could live and speak with the Hindus on a more or less equal footing (Hesse 1971, 218).

Hesse is, I believe, setting Robert up as the enlightened missionary, who is certainly prepared and interested in learning about "his people", but solely for the goal of

changing them. Hesse is once again painting a picture of outer authority, of knowledge that is based on conforming to the power structure of society. After all, Robert loves these people.

One day Robert comes to a hut where he encounters an old man and an attractive girl. He instantly falls in love with the girl, yet he goes home troubled. That night he experiences a terrifying dream, in which his patron and clergy of the Christian church abandon him, and is followed by being abandoned by God. Hesse's description of what happens next in Robert's dream is the following

> After greeting them one and all, God entered the Hindu temple, where with a kindly gesture he receives the homage of the white – clad Brahmans. Meanwhile the heathen gods with their trunks, ringlets, and slit eyes went into the church, where they found everything to their liking Many of the devout folk follow them, and in the end gods and people were moving in pious procession from church to temple and from dark, silent Indians offered up lotus blossoms on sober English-Christian alters. (Hesse 1971, 223-224)

In the final part of the dream, Robert kisses and embraces a naked Naissa, the attractive girl he had met in the village. As a result of this dream, and an encounter he has with Bradley, Robert decides that missionary work is not his calling after all, and that what he really wants to do is marry Naissa, convert her to Christianity, and return with her to England. Robert goes off in search of Naissa and her father to whom he hopes to seek permission to marry Naissa. He finds Naissa, gives her a small gift and then begins to realize that while he longs for her, he has not made her own. Further, he contemplates the amount of time and work it will take before she would be under his control. While he mulls over his position Naissa runs to her hut, Robert follows her there and for the first time he meets Niassa's sister who looks almost exactly like Naissa. This double image of

his love causes him to lose his certainty about marrying Naissa, and consequently, he returns to England. This is the end of the story.

As any work of fiction, the complete meaning of the story is ambiguous and open to speculation and interpretation by the reader. The same, I believe, can be said about Hesse's view of India and the impact of colonialism. I suggest that Bradley is clearly the colonialist whose dichotomization is racist. The picture Hesse paints of colonialism at that level, "the arrogant colonializing mentality of Western man", is certainly negative. Hesse is equally critical of the essentializing position of the naïve Robert, "the haughty complacency of Christianity".

Another aspect of the story, which I believe, has great significance for the issue of Hesse and the East, is the dream in which Naissa is portrayed as both in the church and the Temple. When the two are superimposed on one another they become unstable. That is why in the dream, Naissa shatters. They can co-exist as reflections but cannot merge into one. Hesse, I think, in the symbolism of the dream rejects the idea of homogeneity of the church and the temple. In my view, Hesse shows interest and respect for the culture and religions of India, however, indicates symbolically that any synthesis of the two traditions will result in a shattering of both.

Mileck points out that the conclusion drawn by most commentators until recently was quite the opposite of mine.

> The friendly juxtaposition of church and temple in Aghion's critical dream, and the dream's subsequent intermingling of Christian and Hindu parishioners, blurring of Christianity's God and Indian deities and harmonious interplay of organ and gong anticipate a hope to come, the reconciliation of Western and Eastern religions that was to become Hesse's ultimate aspiration. (Mileck 2003, 142)

In order to appreciate the difference in interpretation, we must look at the conclusion to both Siddhartha and Robert Aghion and Hesse's next direction in his pilgrimage for a religious vision.

4. The Transformational Nature of the Pilgrimage to the True Self: The Shedding of Skins in Siddhartha

As I have argued in the previous section of this study, Hesse went on his trip to India hoping to find a place that would allow him to live out his ideal of unification of polarities of reason and emotion. He had earlier embarked upon a study of the texts of Indian religions in the same hope. Both the intellectual and actual trip did not bring about Hesse's goals. Nevertheless, I think it is possible to argue that some form of transformation in Hesse's ideas about reason and the material world did occur. Furthermore, Hesse developed a view of the relationship between the religions of the East and those of the West that also was to serve him well in the subsequent parts of his journey. I will start with this discussion.

In the conclusion to Robert Aghion Hesse suggests that if we attempt to superimpose the West on the East, eventually they will split apart. Furthermore Hesse's position on the issue of synthesis between the East and the West is that an attempt to merge East and West is neither realistic nor warranted.

The reasons for this conclusion by Hesse are difficult to ascertain from the available evidence. Hesse may have had some sense of the plurality of worldviews is more beneficial than hegemony, as that is the more likely outcome of some deeper sense

of humanity. Mileck comes to the conclusion that Hesse was indeed forward thinking in his approach, even if he formulated his ideas more on the basis of emotion than reason.

> Hesse's budding touch of ecumenism, broached in a dream that immediately is more sexual that religiophilosophical - an obvious metaphorical reflection of Aghion's subconscious desire to wish away the racial, cultural and religious obstacles that make impossible any serious relationship with Naissa, the beautiful bare-breasted Indian maiden whom he chances to meet and who leaves him smitten with sexual love - and overshadowed, as it is, by Hesse's disdain for all things Indian, his growing respect for India's people, culture and religions and concomitantly waning interest in bring Indians into the Christian fold, his infatuation with Naissa and his resultant decision to abandon his calling, almost goes unnoticed (Mileck 2003,142-43)

Indeed a constant theme in Hesse's writing following the publication of Siddhartha is the celebration of diversity. He writes in his acceptance speech for the Nobel Peace prize. "My ideal, however, is not the blurring of national characteristics. Such as would lead to an intellectually uniform humanity. On the contrary, may diversity in all shapes and colors live long on this dear earth of ours."[20]

Therefore, I would conclude that while Hesse may have wanted to shed the skin of his backgrounds in the pilgrimage for a religious vision - Pietist, the heir to a colonialist mentality, and a Westerner who longed for material aspects of life - he was only able to do so in a limited way. However, that does not mean that Hesse simply concluded that the East and India particularly hold little interest for him. This is the conclusion that Mileck reaches in his study. (Mileck 203, 143) Rather, I would argue that the conclusion of Siddhartha points to the direction that Hesse next takes.

5. Siddhartha and the Continuation of Hesse's Pilgrimage: Skins that Cannot be Shed

The direction that Hesse took was one that had been foreshadowed in *Damien,* namely the inward turn into the self. Mileck stresses the significance of the journey into the self, as the primary goal for Hesse in *Siddhartha.* "Of all of his protagonists, Siddhartha alone fully realizes this ideal; he lives himself, learns thereby to know himself, and ultimately experiences complete self-realization". [23]

This inward turn into the self is the answer that Hesse found to his question; where can we look to legitimate authority in a world full of competing sources of authority? The issue now facing Hesse, is what kind of a self? Is this the non-self of the Buddhist tradition, the ascetic self of the Hindu tradition, or some form of the Western self?

In the last part of the book, Siddhartha now stops wandering in order to find the perfect person and perfect setting for the answer to the quest for wisdom and enlightenment. In the final four chapters of the novel, Hesse reintroduces the characters that have been significant in the early parts of Siddhartha's life.

Yet, the tone of these encounters is primarily cool and distant. Siddhartha's life now consists of contemplating the river, as he works alongside the ferryman, transporting people from one shore to the other. The river becomes the new teacher for Siddhartha, now a teacher that only opens possibility of learning, the river is now the guide that provides the possibilities for the self to reach truth.

> ... the river taught him. He learned incessantly from the river. Above all, it taught him how to listen, to listen with a silent heart, with a waiting, open soul, without passion, without desire, with out judgment, without opinion. (Hesse 1951, 111)

This idea or characterization of the river is still within the Buddhist ideas of non-self. If Hesse had finished the story of Siddhartha at this point, it would have not been any further elaboration of his religious vision than he had done in *Demian*. However, the most significant part of the book, I think, is the last part, for unlike the story of Buddha, Siddhartha takes responsibility for and develops a relationship with his son. Although he had not known it at the time, Kamala was pregnant with his son when Siddhartha had left. Kamala brings the boy with her when she visits Siddhartha, who is now sharing a hut on the side of the river with the ferryman. Kamala is falls ill and dies, and Siddhartha takes on the role of father.

This is the next significant turn in the journey, as it marks the first involvement that Siddhartha has with another. In this relationship, I think, Siddhartha moves to another level of transcending the self, namely a love of the other. As we shall see, Hesse introduces this element into the story of Siddhartha, but only fully develops it much later in *The Glass Bead Game*. In *Siddhartha*, the father-son relationship as an illustration, to show that involvement in a relationship with an other may bring hurt and disappointment, also brings the possibility of further awakening of the self.

Siddhartha is determined to be the ideal fathers who only gives of himself and asks nothing in return. The boy is sullen, uncooperative and completely self-centered. Siddhartha answers all of the unkindness of the son, with what he thinks is pure, unselfish love. Yet, this love brings no peace to any of the three protagonists of the story. Finally,

Vasudeva the ferryman, who has also suffered because of the unhappy relationship between the father and son, speaks to Siddhartha.

> I knew it. You never force him, never beat him, never order him, because you know that soft is stronger than hard, water stronger than rock, love stronger than violence. Very good, I praise you. But is it not a mistake on your part to believe that you never force him, never punish him? Do you not bind him in binds with your love? Do you not shame him daily and make things even harder for him with your kindness and patience? Do you not force him, the arrogant and pampered boy, to live in a hut with two old banana eaters, for whom even rice is a delicacy, whose thoughts cannot be his, whose hearts are old and silent and take a different course from his? Does all this, not punished, not force him? (Hesse 1951, 105)

Finally, the son runs away and Siddhartha has to deal with the hurt and sorrow resulting from the loss. At this point, there is a marked change in the description of Siddhartha's approach to other people; he seems to actually enter the feelings and experiences of others. Siddhartha has finally become able to show empathy for others. The experience of love and the loss of his son has changed him from being an intellectual spectator of life to one who fully participates in both the emotional and intellectual states of self. In order to complete his work, Hesse must show how this self relates to the True Self.

The conclusion to the novel involves precisely the move from the self of the one to the universal self. The symbol for this all – encompassing self is the river. In the climax of the novel, Siddhartha is able to enter into the life of the river and hear the wisdom that it embodies, as he loses his need for knowledge and the desires of the ego. Moreover, he is able to accept good and evil, a necessary condition in order to be able to be part of the flow of the river.

> Siddhartha listened. He was now all ears, utterly engrossed in listening, utterly empty, utterly absorbing. He felt he had now learned all that there was to know about listening. He had often heard all these things, these many voices in the river, but today it all sounded new. He could no longer distinguish the many voices, the cheerful from the weeping, the children's from the men's: they all belonged together. ... And all of it together, all voices, all goals, all yearnings, all sufferings, all pleasures, all good and evil – the world was everything together. Everything together was the river of events, was the music of life.(Hesse 1951,118)

The conclusion of the novel, very moving and written in extraordinarily beautiful, poetic language is meant to be Hesse's unifying vision of religion. A religious vision is based on the journey to the inner self; the journey which will allow for transcendence of the soul. This understanding of the path of individuation, which leads to the development of the Soul, is the result of the influences of Indian ideas and Jungian psychology on Hesse. This is not, however, the final chapter in Hesse's religious vision as Hesse has not as yet solved the issue of the material world and its relationship to individuation.

Hesse's need to solve this problem arises out of the skin he cannot shed; the skin of the artist who needs to act in the world. In Siddhartha the desires of the body and the demands of the external world punctuate the journey to the inner-self. Siddhartha had to act in the world; to pay attention to the material world around him. Hesse continues the journey with a hero who wants to find a way back into the material world, yet still follow the path of individuation. Harry Heller, the hero of *Steppenwolf* is distinctly a Western man. This is the skin that Hesse could not shed.

CHAPTER FOUR: *STEPPENWOLF*

The Despair of Harry Heller: The Brutality of Modern Society as the Enemy of the Spirit

Steppenwolf is a strange novel, as it lacks any apparent normal structure, such as chapters. It is, however, divided into three parts; an introduction provided by a narrator who has a small role in the narrative, the body of the story, and the last section that deals with the last day of the story. This last part, however, is written in a manner that is more in the realm of fantasy, than in reality and as such it really belongs in a separate section.

In the introduction we learn about Harry Heller; we are introduced to him through the eyes of a nephew of Harry's landlady. We are told that Harry is forty-eight years old, has lived in the house for about ten months, and most of that time had conducted himself in a quiet manner. His room was always full of empty wine bottles, books and overflowing ashtrays. While he was not a particularly neat man, it was only in the last few days of his stay in the house that the young man noticed a marked change in Harry's manner and appearance. The most striking aspect of this change was the obvious extreme depression that had gripped him. Finally, Harry left without saying good-by, but he did leave a manuscript, which allowed the young man to understand the reasons for Harry's depression. Now the young man is planning on publishing this manuscript as a document that accurately describes the malady of modernity.

Our first introduction to Harry is therefore through the eyes of a young man; a man who we learn is very controlled in his behaviour, thoughts and appearance. In other words, this young man is a member of the bourgeoisie and a Burgher. He is providing us

with a view of Harry from the perspective of the bourgeoisie, rather than the import that Harry gives to these biographical details. Yet, the young man is both intelligent and kindly. Although he is both puzzled and at times repelled by Harry's manner of life, he also is interested and sympathetic toward Harry's plight.

When we hear Harry speak about his life and state of mind, the standpoint now is not objective but rather we feel the full force of conflicts that beset Harry's mind. The conflict involves Harry's ambivalent attitude about his place in society. On the one hand, he knows that he is out of place in normal society and that he is the lone wolf. On the other hand, he feels the loneliness and frustration of the outsider. Therefore, we now have two images of Harry; one through the eyes of a member of the bourgeoisie, the other through the eyes of the lone wolf himself. While they recount the same facts of the situation of Harry's life, the meaning that these two narrators give to the facts, is quite different. This approach Hesse uses throughout the novel to make the reader realize that the self in modern society is fragmented due to the lack of unity in our understanding of the world. At the beginning of the book, this point is not at all clear, nor do we yet understand the significance of the differences in view points between that of the young man and Harry.

While taking an evening walk to think about his predicament, Harry finds himself in an alley where he spots a doorway in the wall. Above the door is a sign that reads:

Magic Theatre

Admission not for everyone

--- not for everyone

As Harry moves in for a closer look, those words vanish and in their place he sees: "For madmen only". Completely puzzled by both of these signs, Harry continues to have an evening meal in a restaurant. However, he returns to the same spot after his meal and this time he sees a man bearing a placard and in it are written in "dancing, tumbling letters" the following words:

Anarchistic Evening Entertainment

Magic Theatre

Admission to for ev... (Hesse 1963, 31)

When attempts to ask the fellow for an explanation of the sign, his response is to hand Harry a pamphlet and them disappear. When Harry returns home, he sees that the pamphlet is entitled "The Tract".

"The Tract" turns out to be a discussion of the process of individuation. Unlike the discussion in *Demian* that starts with the development of the child, this time the discussion is an analysis of three groups, depending on their degree of individuation. The three groups discussed are the bourgeoisie, the Immortals and the Steppenwolf. The Immortals represent the highest state of individuation; they are the least concerned with maintaining their ego. Rather, they have been able to embrace all of life without any polarity or negation. All is seen as good including chaos, as the concepts of good and evil are no longer are part of their cosmology.

The bourgeoisie on the other hand, must not stray outside a very small circle of acceptable behaviour. Their very existence is perceived as threatened if they allow themselves to move in any direction outside this circle of acceptable behaviour. Particularly any form of chaos or disorder may prove fatal to the ego of the bourgeoisie.

The Steppenwolf occupies the position between the other two groups, and as such he is able to move into the sphere of either one of the groups, but only for a very short period of time. This makes Harry - the Steppenwolf in question - unable to ever be truly part of either group, which is the source of his dissatisfaction with life. His dissatisfaction reaches despair as he realizes that there is no solution to his problem and he is ready to commit suicide.

The "Tract" however proposes a solution to Harry's problem in the sense of allowing him to live a life with some peace. The solution lies in humour:

> To live in the world as if it were not the world, to obey the law and yet to stand above the law, to possess, as if one did not possess, to sacrifice as if it were no sacrifice - all those beloved and often formulated claims of a higher wisdom only humour is capable of realizing. (Hesse 1963, 56)

However, in order to be able to use humour as a source of solution for his problem, Harry needs to repair his own shattered self. He has to accomplish the task of resolving the conflicts of his own soul by allowing himself to move totally into the realm of the chaotic. As long as he holds on to a rigid view of the world, one that has clear distinctions between good and evil, right and wrong he lives in the appearance of order. This appearance of order, however, is only a mask to hide the fragmentation of the cosmos. In order to wrench himself from this unhealthy and stultifying order, Harry must have the courage to face the chaos of his own self. Having done that, he will have entry to the saving power of the fantastic reality of the Magic Theatre.

> It is possible that he will one day come to know himself - by getting hold of one of our little mirrors, or by meeting the immortals, or perhaps by finding in one of our magic theatres what he needs to free his depraved soul. (Hesse 1963, 57)

In the second part of the book, Harry indeed begins his search into himself. In order to that, he must be prepared to learn to live his life in a new way. Harry, like Siddhartha before him, learns from a prostitute named Hermine, who he encounters on the night that he has actually decided to commit suicide. Harry, still living in his narrow, bourgeoisie circle, learns to accept the directions of Hermine as she introduces him to dancing, jazz, the love orgies of her friends Pablo and Marie, his own sexuality and drugs.

The significance of this "learning" is not in those real activities, but rather in their symbolic value. Harry "needs" to learn to live in the world of sensuality, in order to break his habits that have enslaved him in the puritanical, life denying word of the bourgeoisie. In other words, Harry has now learned the other side of the polarity; he has moved from asceticism to sensuality. He needed Hermine and her world of sensuality to provide him with a means of moving out of the narrow sphere of the bourgeoisie. It is in this way that he may be able to even briefly touch the higher realm of the Immortals.

The realm of the Immortals takes on for Harry a significance that has a highly religious connotation. While he needs to have Hermine articulate the significance, clearly she now represents the mirror of Harry's soul. She is now able to express his purpose for living:

> It is not fame. Oh, no! But what I call eternity. The pious call it the kingdom of God. I think that we humans, we who are more demanding, we who have a longing, who have extra dimensions - we could not live if there were not a different air to breathe beside the air of this world, if there were not eternity as well as time, and that is the kingdom of the genuine. (Hesse 1963, 108)

Harry is now ready to try and enter this "kingdom", but in order to do so he must allow himself to experience all the chaos of the Magical Theatre. In other words, he must

move beyond the "real" to the fantastic or magical. As Richards points out in his extensive study of *Steppenwolf* Hesse had developed a specific meaning of the term "magic".

> For the most part, Hesse's use of magic differs from traditional in that his "magicians" use their magic to transform the inner world ... Another characteristic of magic is the sense that a higher unity exists beyond every apparent antimony is a realm that transcends time and space: this magical unity of opposites is represented in Demian by the god-devil Abraxas and is also important for Steppenwolf. (Richards 1996, 23)

The reason that it is important in *Steppenwolf* is because it is in the Magic Theatre that Harry learns from the Immortals that by transcending the needs for order and a rigid view of life, he may also one day enter the ranks of the Immortals. In order to be able to do that, however, Harry must learn to laugh; i.e. recognize the eternal beyond the temporal. And the eternal is to be found in high art, which should never be confused, according to the Immortal Mozart, with transitory reality. At the end of the book, Mozart imposes the following penance on Harry for having made the error of confusing the higher good of art with the kitsch like representation of it to be found in the reality of the bourgeoisie.

> You shall live, and you shall learn to laugh. You shall learn to listen to the accursed radio music of life, shall honor the spirit behind it, shall learn to laugh at the pother in it. That's all. No more is demanded of you. (Hesse 1963, 220)

Thus the story of Harry Heller ends on a note of optimism. The source of the optimism lies in the possibility of salvation, albeit by a very arduous path. The role of laughter seems to be given the prime function of overcoming the polarities that have brought so much suffering to the Steppenwolf.

This is a rather sketchy summary of the book and its complicated structure. The characters in this story are drawn in a very complex way, as they are all presented in

several forms to illustrate Hesse's point that our selves are fragmented in modern society. The two aspects that are of particular significance to this study are: one, Hesse's view that modern society is responsible for the lack of unity of the self, and two: Hesse's attempt to suggest that aesthetics - when properly understood - can be the source of salvation for the modern person. The question to be explored in the next section is; how did Hesse view art as a form of salvation?

2. The Return of the *Dichter*: Art as Salvation

In *Steppenwolf* Hesse continues his pilgrimage of a search of a religious vision, although the elements of this novel seem to suggest that he is going backwards rather than forwards. He returns to Europe and the book has not only a European setting but also has a strong sub-text that deals with Hesse's views of European culture. It appears as though Hesse is returning after his foray into the world of Eastern religions to his past, including the Pietism of his family. The polarity that he illustrates in *Steppenwolf*, while similar to that found in *Siddhartha*, also appears to deal more with the issues of a middle-aged man who is having problems related to alcoholism, than part of a spiritual quest.

Yet in *Steppenwolf* we meet a hero who is as much committed to the search for the true inner self, as were Sinclair and Siddhartha. In this book, however, Hesse does attempt to find the resolution of his polarity within the aesthetic life of Western man. This is the realm he turns to in attempting to harmonize the sensual aspects of life with their negation found in asceticism.

While asceticism has often been seen as a means for achieving union with the One, and thus seen as highly individualistic and associated with mystical experience, in Hesse's world view asceticism was primarily associated with the Pietism of his family, and thus with institutionalized, authoritarian religion. It represented for him the world-negating aspect of life, which he had rejected in favour of the life of the poet. However, Hesse's early writings were primarily influenced by German Romanticism, which he had rejected during his second period of writing. All of the novels that are discussed in this study are the product of this second period. Therefore, the question that we need to explore in order to understand how the aesthetic realm is seen as part of the religious vision for Hesse is how art and religion relate.

It is in *Steppenwolf* that Hesse explores this relationship, while in *The Glass Bead Game* these ideas are more fully developed. In *Steppenwolf* Hesse is considering another polarity in his search for a religious vision; a polarity that he had approached in the two earlier books we had discussed. This is the polarity between the sensual life and the ascetic life. In both *Demian* and *Siddhartha,* Hesse had touched on the issue of desires and its relationship to the journey to find the pure, True Self. Hesse was characteristically ambiguous in his approach to the relationship between the material life and the "pure' life of the self. In *Demian,* as I had previously discussed, the partial resolution Hesse implied involved a negation of desires. He suggested that the part of the world of slime that is necessary to overcome in order to reach the higher stages of individuation is the material world.

In *Siddhartha* Hesse had allowed his hero to taste the fruits of material life and enjoy the companionship of a beautiful woman, become involved in the world of

commerce, as well as experience a father/son relationship. Although the material basis of life did afford Siddhartha some satisfaction and even joy, ultimately it was the relationship that had the minimal material basis - namely that with the boatman - which became the most significant one in his life journey. Hesse, himself, had a seesaw relationship with the sensual side of life. Throughout his life, he vacillated between periods of being a recluse and partaking of all the joys of earthly life.

Furthermore, Hesse had rejected a path to the inner self that was solely intellectual. His emphasis on intuition as a way of knowing in concordance with Jungian ideas of Gnosticism, suggested the element of emotion in his religious vision. I have argued that in Siddhartha, the episode with Kamala as well as Siddhartha's life as a successful and prosperous merchant, are not treated as merely wrong turns on the journey to self-discovery. Rather, these are treated as integral to the path of individuation, as well as Hesse's religious vision. It is in *Steppenwolf* that Hesse returns to a reflection of the role of desires and emotions, as well as other aspects of the material life, in his religious vision. Before turning to the novel, however, we need to consider Hesse's evolving views of the artist in society and how those relate to his views of the polarity of sensuality and the material world.

A full and through analysis of the meaning of art and the artist for Hesse is the subject of the study by Kurt J. Fricker, *Hermann Hesse's Quest: the Evolution of the Dichter Figure in His Work.* Fricker incorporates the ideas of Ziolkowski, Freeman, Boulby, Mileck and others to develop his discussion of the evolution of Hesse's view of the artist throughout his writings. He begins his study with a discussion of the meaning of the word so closely associated with Hesse; namely the term *Dichter.*

> Making its appearance in the thirteenth century as an alternative to Poet, Dichter had the aura of the verb from which it derives-- to create. But it fell into disuse until the Romantics both restored it to common usage and elevated it to a status, which places the German author in the category of *sui generis*. ... Typically, a contemporary critic, Peter de Mendelssohn, converts abstractions such as these into the more readily comprehensible characteristics of an ideal: as prophet and seer, the Dichter is to reveal at first hand what existence is all about. (Fricker 1978, 1)

Fricker points out that De Mendelssohn distinguishes *Dichter* from another type of writer; namely the scholarly writer or the *Literati*. The point that Nussbaum had made makes regarding the relationship between literature and ethics is reiterated in the distinction between the scholarly writer and the *Dichter*; namely the *Dichter* is a writer who asks the question "how shall one live the moral life". As we see in the elaboration of the term *Dichter* in the quotation above, the role of the *Dichter is expressed in religious terms, as the prophet or seer who through his own experiences actually embodies his ideals*. Therefore the German Romantic genre clear exemplifies to possibility of art embodying religious significance. We shall elaborate on this point later in this chapter when we discuss the significance of the Romantic Movement for Hesse's view of himself as a *Dichter*.

Fricker's analysis of the evolving expression of the role of the *Dichter* in Hesse's life and writings is divided it into two periods. The first period was marked by Hesse's choice as a young man turning away from the life of the pastor to the life of the dichter. According to Frickert, however, this early stage of Hesse's writing is titled "the stage of the aesthete". (Fricker 1967, 15)

The hallmark of this stage is the influence of the German Romanticists in guiding Hesse's writings. The conclusion that Hesse had been deeply influenced by German Romantics is a common place one, found in the writings of Zialkowski, Boulby,

Freedman, Mileck and others. However, both Zialkowski and Freedman also suggest that there was an evolution away from Romantic influences in Hesse's writings. Others, on the other hand, argue that Hesse was always a Romantic author. Given that this argument has implications for not only literary analysis but also Hesse's approach to morality and religion, we need to examine in more detail German Romanticism and how this tradition may have had an impact on Hesse's view of the dichter.

Arthur Lovejoy is quoted by Baumer to start the discussion of the highly elusive meaning of the term Romanticism. Baumer frames the issue in the following way:

> What do we mean when you say that someone has been influenced by romanticism? If one attempts to find a clear, common definition of the term "romanticism", one quickly comes face-to-face with two seemingly contradictory statements. One, there does not seem to be a clear and common definition of this term, and two, it is a term that is commonly used in discussions pertaining to literature, history, philosophy, as well as other fields. Arthur Lovejoy in his discussion of this contradiction suggested that the only way around the dilemma was to acknowledge that there are romantic movements rather than one unified romantic movement. "The word `romantic'," he pointed out, "has come to mean so many things that, by itself, it means nothing". (Quoted in Baumer, n.p.)

Franklin L. Baumer in his lengthy article in Dictionary of the History of Ideas underscores the complexity of definition of the term, due to the variety of forces that emerged between 1780-1830 and shaped what is commonly considered to be the Romantic Movement.

> The romantic movement might be compared to a mighty river into which flowed scores of tributary streams, some of them commencing far back in time, others more recently. A list of these streams would include, in addition to those already mentioned, the individualism of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries of which romantic individualism might be considered the climax; Pietism in seventeenth-century Germany and the quarrel between Rubénistes and Poussinistes in seventeenth-century France; the growth of "sentimentalism" everywhere in eighteenth-century Europe; the Sturm und Drang of Goethe's Weimar which in some though not all respects is hardly distinguishable from early German romanticism itself; the new German Idealism. Toward the close of the eighteenth century all these streams had contributed to form the romantic movement. ... It is important, however, to distinguish the main river from the tributaries. Fundamentally, the romantic movement was just what Mill said it was, a reaction against a certain "narrow" kind of thinking epitomized by the "scientific" Enlightenment. (Baumer)

Baumer's discussion moves into the area of romantic ideas about God and nature; topics that are of particular significance for this thesis. Beginning with Schleiermacher's famous definition of religion -"sense and taste for the Infinite" - the search for expanding the universe in contradistinction of the Enlightenment's empirical narrowing moved the Romantic's quest for the Sacred away from reason and to the realm of the senses. Religion for the Romantics then was primarily the source for the re-enchantment of the world, a world that they saw bereft of heroes, imagination and the sense of sublime following the age of Enlightenment.

> It had become the world of science and particularly the world of quantification and mechanization. Thus, the Romantic Movement sparked a quest for God, a quest that did not necessarily meet that goal for all involved. It is true, then, that the romantic movement sparked a religious revival, but false to think of it as a simple return to orthodoxy. Even those who, like the Roman Catholic refugees and converts, flocked back to their ancestral altars found new and romantic reasons for doing so. Actually, romantic religiosity luxuriated in a great many forms, including some purely private religions like the bizarre mythology invented by William Blake. If these forms had anything in common, it was in the tendency to bring God back "inside" the Universe and to find him in the human heart and nature. In other words, *the romantics emphasized the* immanence rather than the transcendence of God. (Baumer) (My emphasis)

The immanent god certainly played a large role in Hesse's view of the sacred, as we have seen in the discussion of Demian. This is the notion of the sacred that we know through intuition rather than reason that can only be discerned by the true, inner self. Again this idea that human beings can attain knowledge of the infinite as Hesse clearly maintains in his religious vision, owes much to the Romantic Movement.

> Nevertheless, by comparison with the Enlightenment the romantics greatly enhanced man's capabilities. Enlightenment anthropology seemed intolerably narrow to them, belittling man, accenting, as Wordsworth said, the "inferior faculties" and thus denying him access to "principles of truth." For the wider vision of reality they yearned for they obviously needed far greater candle power than Locke could provide, an image of man less passive and banal than Condillac's statue man. Hence, the romantics countered with a conception of knowledge emphasizing man's activity and creativity. This theory, derived partly from the new German Idealism, posited a special "faculty" of the human mind, superior to the discursive reason, and variously labeled (depending somewhat on the reference, whether to artistic theory, philosophy, or religion) "Reason," "Imagination," "intuition," "feeling," "faith," "the illative sense," etc. (Baumer)

Hesse, throughout his life and writings, strove to develop that special faculty of the human mind. As Frickert points out, in the first stage of his writings, which were

directly under the influence of the German Romanticists, it is the realm of feeling and expression of beauty that is most prominent. (Fricker 1978, 24) This is not yet Hesse the dichter, although Frickert points to the gradual changes that occur in Hesse's writings in the characterization of his protagonists.

> Increasingly they are pictured as vagabonds (Knulp), the outsiders from bourgeois society (Veraguth), searching for both artistic integrity and the higher realm of life. Thus Hesse moves from preoccupation primarily with imagination and the realm of aesthetics, to that of the artist who combines a religious vision with elements of imagination and the world of the senses becomes centered on the idea that all outsiders- the dichter being the most elevated - are among the elect. It is in the dichter that we find the most splendid combination according to Hesse of the romantic view of human beings; namely imagination that leads to the immanent knowledge of the sacred. (Fricker 1978, 47)

Hesse, it would appear, had believed that the romantic ideal was one that involved only the beautiful and harmonious view of the world. Therefore, in his early works, it was this idea that underlined his writing.

> What happened to me, he explained, was that under the influence of models such as Goethe, Keller, etc., I constructed as a Dichter a beautiful and harmonious world, but a false one, because I submerged all that was dark and wild in me and suffered in silence, while I stressed the 'good,' the sense of something holy, awesome, pure and only put this on paper ... After all this, I have come back to myself, sick and half-insane with sorrow, and must now take account of myself and must now above all ponder all that I had previously lied or kept silent about, all that is chaotic, wild, instinctive, evil in me. (Frickert 1978, 55)

It is Frickert's argument that it in the second stage of his writing that Hesse moves from being an aesthete to a dichter, by which as he explains Hesse at this stage of his writings means " finding one's own identity". (Fricker 1978, 56)

Fricker suggests that this marks a move from the aesthete-romantic view of the dichter, to a view of dichter that sheds the influence of the romantic movement. Baumer,

however, points out that the Romantic Movement also incorporated the dark side of human life.

> Faust is a very romantic figure,
> not in his transcendentalism which he gives up as
> unattainable, but in his titanism, his restless striving,
> his will to wring an ever wider meaning from life. This
> emphasis on will is reminiscent of Schopenhauer's
> philosophy which, however, was pessimistic and
> suggests still another side to romantic anthropology. The
> romantics were also acutely aware of a "night-side,"
> of an anxious and troubled human nature, of forces
> hidden in man which could tear him and his world
> apart. In other words, the unconscious cut two ways.
> It could lead man to a higher purpose but it could
> also let loose the demonic in and around him, as is
> made clear, for example, in Schopenhauer's The World
> as Will and Idea (1818) which depicts a blind human
> will achieving only unhappiness, or in the frightful
> monsters and phantoms released in Francisco Goya's
> later work, notably in some of his Caprichos and Pro-
> verbios in which reason has abandoned man altogether. (Baumer).

By considering the dark side of the Romantic Movement and in particular Schopenhauer's view which was highly influential on Hesse's weltanschauung, we can trace Hesse's views on the relationship between art and religion. Just as Hesse had not shed his skin of a Pietist Christian while being influenced by the culture and religions of the East, he had not completely shed his Romantic skin either. However, his outlook was also significantly tinged by his view of modernity, which was as much influenced by his Jungian-Gnostic theoretic background, as it was by the Romantic Movement.

3. Hesse's Views of Nature and Spirit; from Romantic to Modern

The relationship between the Romantic Movement and Modernity can be viewed either as an either/or relationship, or as a one of a continuous stream with some run-offs. I would follow Baumer's view, which tends toward the later.

> Were there, then, after all at least two if not a plurality of romanticisms? It is preferable to think of several sides to the same movement. On the one hand, the romantics aimed to recreate wonder in a world become narrow and prosaic. At their most optimistic they thought they might restore unity, and hence meaning, to a civilization plagued by dualisms: the unity of man, God, and nature, as in Schelling's ambitious doctrine of identity. In these respects the romantic movement might be said to constitute the first great revolt against one kind of modernity—the modernity represented by the scientific Enlightenment. (Baumer)

In this sense, Hesse squarely falls into the Romantic camp. In this sense, we can see Hesse the storyteller who creates fairy tales, who focuses on the world of nature. This always remained an aspect of Hesse's view of the world, and his way of dealing with the world. This is Hesse the painter of scenery that always has a mystical tinge to it. This is Hesse the gardener, who spends hours meditating in his garden, and does so well into his old age. [24]

This, however, only one side of the relationship between modernity and Romanticism that Hesse paints using his skills as a writer as well as a painter. In this view, modernity and romanticism are two movements in opposition to one another. In another view, one can see overlapping characteristics between the two.

> Yet the romantics themselves were very "modern" in certain respects. They were aware, far more than the *philosophes*, of living in a world of endless Becoming. This was an intoxicating experience for those who could connect up the Becoming with some sort of Being even if it was not "orthodox." But for those who could find no Being either in heaven or on earth it was a cruel experience. A drama like Cain (1821) has a very modern ring about it. Cain speaks of an absurd universe, of man's homelessness, of knowledge turning to ashes in his mouth ("The tree was true, though deadly"). Rather than submit meekly he rebels against "the Omnipotent tyrant." Meanwhile, Schopenhauer was tearing off men's "masks" and revealing in their unconscious minds a "will to live" which inflicted suffering on itself and others. So the romantic movement also prefigured another sort of modernity which ripened fully only later in the worlds of Darwin, Freud, and Sartre. Nietzsche thought of romanticism as a shrivel ed up thing, poor in vitality, retreating from life. This is the last thing one ought to say of a movement which pursued "infinity" and exalted the "esemplastic power" of man. Nevertheless, it had different sides which could give birth to very different kinds of offspring. (Baumer).

Clearly, this is the side of Romanticism that fuelled Hesse's pilgrimage in search of a religious vision. This Hesse the rebel who is not prepared to accept the interpretation of morality as past on by what he sees as a stultifying tradition. This is Hesse who is only prepared to accept the authority of the true inner self, who also rips the masks of the Burgers and all those who would defend the powers of the establishment. This is the Hesse who believes in the truth of the unconscious, who speaks of the alienation of man in society. This is the Hesse who elevates the individual over the social. This is the "modern Hesse". Harry Heller is as usual for Hesse, the reflection of both the author and the idea that the author is portraying. The description that Harry Heller gives of his life - the subjective aspects of it - closely mirrors the situation of Hesse's life. Both exemplify

the alienated outsider that is such a common picture of man and society in modern literature. [25]

> The passing years had stripped me of my calling, my family, my home. I stood outside all social circles, alone, beloved by none, mistrusted by many, in unceasing and bitter conflict with public opinion and morality; and thought I lived in a bourgeois setting, I was all the same an utter stranger to this world in all I thought and felt. Religion, country, family, state, all lost their value and meant nothing to me any more. (Hesse 1969, 26)

Stelzig in his discussion of the making of the novel *Steppenwolf* points out that throughout the 20's Hesse spent summers in his house in Montagnola as a poet-recluse, but winters first in Basel and then in Zurich. While in the cities, Hesse immersed himself in all that the cities had to offer and started to write about his experiences almost immediately. (Stelzig 1988, 202)

Not only the setting, but also the life stage of the hero of *Steppenwolf* is also different than either *Demian* or *Siddhartha*. At the beginning of the novel, Harry Haller - the hero of Steppenwolf - is a middle-aged man who has reached what he believes to be the abyss of his life. Harry Heller is believed to be most accurate representation of Hesse of all of the protagonists of his novels.

> The extraordinary degree to which Harry Heller corresponds to Hermann Hesse has been repeatedly stressed, most recently by Mileck in his summary of the numerous parallels between author and protagonist, from their respective backgrounds, childhoods, ages and physiognomies to their psychological make-ups, social relations, proclivities, and prejudices.(Stelzig 1988, 202)

This similarity between author and protagonist leads Stelzig to conclude that:

> Hesse's desperate plunge at this time into an urban night life of bars, jazz, dancing, and worldly women was his attempt to deal with his mounting depression and sense of alienation after the failure of his second marriage. (Stelzig, 204)

While the failure of his second marriage may indeed have heightened Hesse's sense of depression and alienation, I would like to suggest that Hesse was actually continuing on his pilgrimage; a pilgrimage that often appears off course. Yet given where his path had led him in the East, he has to continue in the West; in his own culture as well as his own, chosen way of life in that culture. He had early in his life chosen the path of the artist - the Dichter - but now he needs to reconstruct that path so that it leads him forward. In his first forays into the world of aesthetics, Hesse followed the Romantic Movement. Now Hesse has journey following a path that was suspicious of any authority other than that of the Jungian-Gnostic view of the self. Thus Hesse now needs to rethink the role of the artist in society.

4. The Pilgrimage of the True Self in Modern Western Society: Enter the Magic Theatre

In the preface to *Steppenwolf* Hesse voiced his concern that his readers of all ages, who might misunderstand the book to be one of despair and primarily a negative judgment of Western civilization. "This book, no doubt, tells of griefs and needs; still it is not a book of a man despairing, but of a man believing." [26] This novel, therefore, is another chapter in Hesse's struggle to create a religious vision that provides a path on the journey out of despair to hope. In *Steppenwolf*, Hesse searches for a different answer to the question of how we can move from our self to our True Self in our religious journey, without relying on religious authority and its institutional traditions.

While Hesse speaks of art in many of his novels, I would argue that it is in parallel path to that of Siddhartha; coming to the realization that knowledge acquired from any teacher cannot bring one to the True Self.

In *Steppenwolf* as in *Demian* and *Siddhartha* a woman plays a major role in leading the hero out of a despairing, dissolute life. In all three of the novels, woman represents the sensual aspects of life, which for Hesse is the beginning point of his aesthetic theory.

In *Steppenwolf* Hesse searches for a way to overcome the duality of art as a pure form that is separate from the material aspects of life. Hesse proposes that the resolution of these two polarities lies in the process of creativity. Yet in order for creativity to be truly in the realm of aesthetics, it also cannot be in any way attached to any of the institutions of society. For example, Harry Heller cannot be truly a writer, as long as he has any part of bourgeoisie society.

In this formulation of art – as not being in any way of service or connected to society – I would suggest that Hesse is expressing a theory of art that can be characterized as modern. It is modern in two senses, and its modernity has two consequences for Hesse's religious vision. In the first instance, on the one hand art is liberated from religion yet it is identified as having some form of "religious language", particularly in being able to provide some hope of escape from the fragmented life of modern society. Nicholas Wolterstorff in a recently published essay on the relationship between art and religion characterizes the relationship in the following way:

> According to the modern grand narrative of art that I briefly discussed earlier, art in the eighteenth century finally freed itself from service to religion. ... The modern narrative of art was caught up by the Romantics into their even grander narrative of modernity, according to which modernity in the polity, in the academy, in the economy, in institutional religion, represents the fragmentation of what was once-upon-a-time unified. Art, however, provided it's liberated art, art produced purely for contemplation, represents the great social exception: here we still find unity. Perhaps, just perhaps, the unity that we still find in art will prove salvitic. (Wolterstorff 2004, 338)

Hesse, I think, clearly followed this "grander narrative of modernity" in his discussion of art and religion in so far as he insisted that art had to be pure of the influences of social life. Art as contemplation held its attraction for Hesse, as it echoed the idea of inner self that Hesse continued to hold as the basis for truth. Yet the contemplative path could not lead to the unity, which Hesse continued to seek. It did not solve the problem of unity of soul and body, nor of the self and others.

5. The Unresolved Tension in the World of Harry Heller: Life in the Material World and Life in the Spiritual World

The rupture between the soul and the body, as well as the self and the other, and its causes in modern aesthetics, is the subject of an essay by John Milbank, entitled "Sublimity". In this complex piece, Milbank develops the argument that the duality of beauty and the sublime underlines both modern and contemporary aesthetic theory.

> And yet it turns out to be no transcendental truth whatsoever, but a mere subjective gesture, derived from a "Protestant" genealogy, together with an unacknowledged resignation to a capitalist duality of public indifferent value mediating private and meaningless preference. (Milbank 1998, 279)

Milbank comes to this conclusion, as I understand it, because the duality between the beautiful and the sublime, has been based on removal of the erotic (in Hesse's terms the realm of desires) from the sublime. Milbank's point is, I think, that by doing so we are doomed to life where the fulfillment of our desires constantly moves us further away from our need to establish relationship with others, both immanent and transcendent. Thus the contemplation of "the beautiful" that cannot also be "sublime" robs us of the possibility of encounters with others that may lead to some form of salvation.

This salvation is the result, according to Milbank, from a specific form of participation with Other, in which we offer ourselves and receive from the Other in what he calls 'one single movement".

> Through this movement we are completed in our very incompletion, beautiful in our very sublimity. For no longer is this incompletion a source of anxiety, nor of a black eroticism that is but the inverse face of lack of bodily emotional warmth, but rather it is a source of erotic delight, both in human others and in the divine Other. (Milbank 1998, 279)

While Hesse did not have the benefit of Milbank's analysis of the significance of the duality between the beautiful and sublime, I do believe he was attempting to overcome this duality in his writings, in order to overcome the fragmentation that he experienced in his own being. The despair that filled Henry Heller and threatened to destroy him did not yet find a resolution at the end of *Steppenwolf.* The realm of the Immortals was still too distant from that of the material basis of life. In Steppenwolf there is no place for the ordering of loves, as the people who populate the novel are either in the realm of asceticism or in that of sensuality. The "reality of the Immortals" is in the realm of magic and fantasy. For Hesse the man and the author of a religious vision, this cannot be satisfactory, as it does not heal the fragmentation of the self. Hesse had not yet arrived at the conclusion of his religious vision. It required another chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE: *THE GLASS BEAD GAME*

1. The Pilgrimage of Joseph Knecht

The fourth novel that I discuss in terms of Hesse's development of a religious vision is his final novel published in 1943 in Switzerland; *The Glass Bead Game*. This is a novel of immense complexity; both thematically and structurally, in which Hesse returns to many of the same questions he had raised in his earlier work. Thus the themes of authority, the self and aesthetics are again part of the elements of this book. Most scholars have agreed that while there is a great intensity in Hesse's views on these themes in *The Glass Bead Game*, Hesse do not seem to refute or dramatically change his ideas on these topics. [27]

In *The Glass Bead Game,* however, there is a change of focus that I argue, has a great significance for Hesse's religious vision. Hesse turns his attention to the role of social life in the development of the individuated self in a manner that is different from his previous discussions of the relation between the individual and society. In my discussion of *The Glass Bead Game*, I shall focus on the significance of this theme for the development of Hesse's religious vision.

The Glass Bead Game is the story of a young man – Joseph Knecht - who is on a journey of self-discovery. In this way, it is very similar to the other three novels we have analyzed. The setting of the story is in some future time, in a place called "Castalia". Hesse was very concerned about the future at the time that he was writing this book as

first Europe - and then the world - was waging a war whose outcome would define the future. Hesse wrote *The Glass Bead Game* with an increasing realization that the world was is crisis, and that he as a *Dichter* needed to make a stand. As usual, however, Hesse created a personal refuge from the world, by retreating to Montagnola. There he created a fictional world that started out also as a refuge but was increasingly a reaction and challenge to Europe and particularly European intellectuals to recognize their role in defending civilization.

> From the autobiographical standpoint, this novel was the product of Hesse's attempts over the period of the 1930's and early 1940's to build a kind of personal refuge from surrounding barbarism and war. As the concept of the work grew, it seemed to develop more and more connections with the world outside the author's own spiritual and physical retreat in Montagnola. ... it is also to a degree an expression of reaction against the debasement of cultural values in modern life and a demonstration (through the order and the Glass Bead Game) of a type of intellectual bearing which might serve as a fortress not only for the author but for mankind in general. (Norton 1973, 79)

As Norton points out, Hesse's novel as a prescription for the salvation of humanity was generally not very well received. It was basically considered to be too far removed from the social and political realities of life, and in a word; lifeless. (Norton, 79)

Paradoxically, the story of Joseph Knecht does become most involving, I would argue, at his death. It is the manner of his death in the main part of the novel, which I argue provides the social aspects to Hesse's religious vision. Although it is not usually considered to be the most significant part of the theme of *The Glass Bead Game* I argue it represents the final step in Hesse's construction of his religious vision and as such completes the pilgrimage.

The path that Hesse follows is as usual for him, circuitous and often difficult to discern. I will begin, therefore with a general discussion of the book. The first

third of the book deals with the discussion both historical and theoretical of the glass bead game itself.[28] The middle third of the book consists of a chronological biography of Joseph Knecht, and the final third of the book contains various writings by Joseph Knecht. A narrator, who lives at some time after the death of Joseph Knecht, presents the very long, dry and pompous discussion of the glass bead game and the story of Joseph Knecht.

The relationship between Joseph Knecht, Castalia and the glass bead game revolves around the issue of how should we educate the elite of the society in order to establish, preserve and develop the highest form of civilization. This task is presented in the book as urgent as the civilization has fallen into disarray. Using his famous ironic style, Hesse expresses his views of the social institutions of education, as well as the state of the world of literature as having fallen to the lowest common denominator. Hesse is clearly arguing at this point for an educational system that emphasizes the arts and humanities, and strives to develop a disciplined dedication in its teachers and students.

Since these pleas had fallen on the deaf and unresponsive ears of the political machinery of the time - which was dedicated more to the development of commerce and technology - the Order of Castalia was established to further the ideals of education, arts and the humanities.

It is never made clear how this order was established, who funded and really anything in terms of its relation to the world outside it. Rather, Hesse begins the book with a discussion of the glass bead game, which is presented to the reader as a supposed resolution to this problem. We next follow the life of Joseph Knecht as he prepares to be a participant in the glass bead game and later to become the *Magister Ludi*, or leader, of

the glass bead game. Finally, we follow Knecht as he rejects the game as a means of achieving the highest ideal of society, and as he develops his own understanding of the goal of life.

The structure of the book itself gives the reader a clue to unlocking the many ironies and paradoxes that Hesse develops in the novel. The first part of the book that purportedly 'explains ' the meaning and history of the glass bead game, is highly theoretical and deals with mainly abstract concepts. The second part, which deals with the story of Knecht's life, has as its focus the relationships that Knecht develops from adolescence until death, as he pursues the goal of mastery of the glass bead game. The third part of the book details the inner reflections of Knecht as he moves from being a naive young man who passionately embraces the prescribed goals of the game, then the beginning of questioning of these goals, and finally the outright rejection of Castalia and the glass bead game.

Hesse wrote *The Glass Bead Game* during eleven years; from 1932 to 1943. The structure of the book changed radically from its inception to its publication. The most significant change to the final text is that Joseph Knecht becomes the central character in the final version, and the course of his journey has elements that are radically different from those of Hesse's earlier books. Before I elaborate on this statement, I want to turn to the meaning of the glass bead game itself. [29]

In trying to understand the nature of the game, one can sense the humour that Hesse uses in his work, namely irony. The reader who seriously ponders the first part of the novel, in hopes of unearthing the method, techniques and rules of this game, will be completely disappointed at the end of that exploration. For the glass bead game has no

beads, rules or techniques. Therefore, it is not a concrete, mechanical activity. Rather it a manner for Hesse of representing the goal of life that he had been formulating and reformulating throughout his novels; an appreciation of a unifying set of values that go beyond the concretely specific of particular time and place. The means for arriving at the symbolic unity is through the study of all disciplines, combined with the practice of meditation, to arrive at the distillation of the knowledge into a common, symbolic representation. Ziolkowski provides us with the following elegant summary of both the history of the development of the glass bead game and its eventual formulation.

> Very rapidly, however, two developments took place: the exercise outgrew the relatively naive form of the original abacus and developed a symbolic sign system of its own; but it retained the original name although no longer played with glass beads on an abacus frame. The technique was gradually adapted by other disciplines in which values could be expressed by a set of mathematical notations: mathematics itself, classical philology, logic, the visual arts, and so forth. For a time the techniques of the glass bead game were developed independently within the various disciplines, but finally it became apparent that cross-references were possible. ... The initiates gradually developed a set of symbols in which it was possible to express graphically the interrelationship of all intellectual disciplines. When this technique was combined with meditation on the meaning of the symbols, the Glass Bead Game in its supreme form was born. (Ziolkowski 1965, 290)

One can read *The Glass Bead Game* as Hesse's proposal for saving Western civilization, which in his view had been disintegrating since the First World War. All three of the novels that I have discussed had this subtext. In *Steppenwolf* Hesse had dealt with this disintegration in terms of modernity and the rise of the bourgeoisie class. Western society's hope for the future, according to Hesse, lay in the appreciation of the "Immortals". Hesse returns to this theme in *The Glass Bead Game*, in his incorporation of music as the essence of education of the elite.

Another theme that Hesse carries forth into *The Glass Bead Game* from his previous writings is that of the primacy of the individual. In *Demian*, Hesse promulgated the idea that it is the individual who is capable of moral development – or individuation – and this moral development is only possible outside the authority of church, state, family and education. Yet, as we have seen, the authority based in society and in social institutions, continued to reappear in Hesse writings as a point of unresolved tension. In particular, the significance of the authority of the teacher in the student/teacher relationship continued to be explored by Hesse in his novels. We have seen that it was a major theme in *Siddhartha.*

The significance of the *Siddhartha* novel for the development of Hesse's religious vision is particularly related to his move toward the East; most significantly in the direction of India and Indian religions. Now, in *The Glass Bead Game*, Hesse once more considers the significance of the East for his religious vision. *The Glass Bead Game* is the final summation of the themes that had been present in the works of the author, and as such is a representation of what Hesse believes is the way for the individual to move toward true enlightenment. It is "a refined, symbolic form of the search of perfection, a sublime alchemy, an approach to the spirit that is unified in itself above all images and quantities, an approach to God." (Hesse 1969, 114)

2. The Nature of Human Relationships and the Role of History in Hesse's Religious Vision

The element in this novel that is so significant is neither the intellectual life nor the aesthetic ideals; themes that have been central to his previous novels. In *The Glass Bead Game* the element that becomes the central focus is human relationships. This can be easily missed in trying to understand this very complex novel, which appears to deal primarily with the world of ideas. *The Glass Bead Game* itself is really not a "real" game, but rather an exercise in reflection upon the permanent values that Hesse came to believe could only be understood through meditation and reflection upon the great works of art and intellectual life, from various periods and cultures.

This exercise in thought, however, becomes completely vacuous when it is not done within the framework of human relationships. In order to develop this message, Hesse populates his last novel with characters that have been so important in his own life. For example, "Carlo Ferromonte" refers to Hesse's nephew; the musicologist Carl Isenberg. (Mileck, 1965)

Therefore, the core of the novel is the twelve chapters of Knecht's biography, which begins when he is sent to study at two great schools designed primarily for students who wish to devote themselves to the learning of the symbolic nature of the glass bead game. Knecht is a very apt student and he sails through the very difficult and intense curriculum of the schools without any problems. The most significant aspects of these years are his relationships with several men.

The first is Plinio Designori, another student at the schools. Plinio is an "auditior" student, which means that he will return to the outside world after completing his studies. Plinio serves to represent in the book the life outside the academy and all of its significant everyday aspects. After leaving the school Plinio becomes a father and has a son named Tito. While the world outside the school is not presented in any detail, one definitely gets the impression that Hesse meant it to be considered a worthy life. However, this outside world is populated by people who have not made the commitment to a disciplined life, which is required in Castalia.

The contrast to Plinio is Fritz Tegularius, the hyper - intellectual student, who devotes himself exclusively to the life of the mind. Fritz, Plinio and Tito become crucial to the resolution of the novel. They also represent two types of relationships: friendship between equals and, the father/son relationship.

The other characters in the story of Knecht's life represent student/teacher relationships, in various forms. One of the strongest characters in the novel is the old *Magister Musicae*, who represents the best the Castalia has to offer. He has found beatific bliss and harmony in this world, by pursuing the aesthetic ideal. Yet again, Hesse shows his appreciation for the contemplative life, as well as aesthetic ideal. However, this is not the path for Knecht, who has a higher mission in his life.

The next teacher with whom Knecht forms a relationship is the Older Brother, a Castilian who has devoted himself entirely to Oriental Studies, to the point where has become almost Chinese himself. Hesse with a great deal of respect and affection describes both of those teachers. They represent for Hesse two very significant aspects of his life and work; music and the East. I think that they serve the same purpose in this

novel that Buddha had served in *Siddhartha*; namely they represent the teacher who has come to his own conclusions or resolutions of the questions of life, within their own sphere. These teachers are to be highly valued, respected and even cherished, but they cannot be a substitute for the glass bead game. In this sense, the glass bead game now represents for Hesse the pilgrimage to the inner self, and therefore the possibility of a unified religious vision.

The next pair of teachers that Knecht encounters is Thomas von der Trave, the polished and urbane *Magister Ludi*, and Pater Jacobus. Both of those teachers represent the attempts at providing bridges between Castalia and the outside world. Von der Trave represents the scholar/diplomat. He provides the model of the scholar and artist who sees his mission in terms of promoting ideas to others. He is also painted by Hesse in a positive fashion, and may have been modeled by Thomas Mann. (Ziolkowski 1965, 289) Certainly, he is a model of an authority figure who is does not abandon the quest for achieving the development of the self that Hesse sees as the basis of genuine life. Clearly, Knecht has much to learn from von der Trave and although Knecht eventually takes a different path when he becomes the next *Magister Lundi* upon the death of von der Trave, Hesse paints him as a model for Knecht. Hesse had created finally a clear model of an authority figure based on mutual respect and admiration.

Hesse, however, maintains his views the individual who is committed to the search for truth from an inner authority can only achieve that complete individuation. The most significant teacher to enter Knecht's life is Pater Jacobus. Knecht meets and learns from Jacobus when he is sent by von der Trave to the Benedictine monastery of Mariafels in order to help establish diplomatic relations between the two orders. The two

chapters that describe the relationship between these two men can be considered the axis of the story, because Jacobus is the intellectual whose work is the study of human life – the aspirations, values, accomplishments, within the framework of time and place. Jacobus is the historian, and he is modeled on a particular historian; Jacob Burckhardt. Thus along with Nietzsche and Jung, Burckhardt becomes the significant intellectual influence upon the work of Hesse.

Burckhardt's view of history is based on three principles, as he outlined them in his work, *Observations on World History*. His first point about the nature of history was that it is primarily factual rather than philosophical. That is, that the role of the historian is to document the events in human life, rather than develop an overarching system of explanation for events. He was particularly opposed to the understanding of the events in any kind of a dialectical manner, but rather believed that it was the work of the historian to unearth and make clear the constant and repetitive factors that have made up human life. Thus, Burckhardt does really have also an idea of the underlying nature of history, and that is "the human spirit". The nature of history for him is to distil those elements of social life that have been the impermanent and changing aspects of this human spirit. These are the institutions that human beings have devised to house the elements of the human spirit, which are according to him, both imperfect and changing. Human institutions, therefore, must be seen in a relative manner, rather than as a constant in history. Human institutions are the product, according to Burckhardt, of the interaction of three forces or powers upon one another: the state, religion and culture. (Burckhardt 1966, 12—121)

In Hesse's view, the significance of Burckhardt's conception of history (who has reference to the historian's work in his letters) is that it becomes the academic authority for rejecting all forms of abstraction as a basis for achieving the vision that had been Hesse's life goal. Specifically, the realm of aesthetics as a means for understanding and giving the underpinnings of the meaning of life is not possible. That is why; the bliss of the Music Master cannot be the path that Knecht can follow.

It also establishes the relativity of Castalia for Knecht; for after all, Castalia is but an institution, and as such an imperfect and impermanent manifestation of the "human spirit". Hesse now seems to have realized that some institutions may be nobler than others; Castalia represents education at its finest, and its schools are not portrayed as the horror house of Hesse's youth. Still, no institution – be it religious or educational – can be in Hesse's view the true representation of the "human spirit" or the home of the True Self. Thus, the lessons learned from Jacobus, are not the "ultimate" resolutions for Knecht.

3. The Turn to the Political in the Glass Bead Game: The Move from the Abstract to the Concrete

The most significant aspect of the relationship between Knecht and Jacobus is that it gives Knecht the intellectual basis for action in the world. Thus, while Knecht returns to Castalia, becomes for the next eight years of his life, the *Magister Ludi* of the glass bead game, finally he rejects the position and the institution. And therefore, the most dramatic aspect of Knecht's life occurs not as the result of intellectual work or vita

contemplativa but rather as a result of a relationship to his friend and later as we shall see, his friend's son.

Knecht in his role as the *Magister Ludi* gradually becomes more and more disillusioned with Castalia, as he recognizes the paradox that the deeper he moves into the glass bead game the further he is from the ideal of the game; namely to be able to represent the unity of all experience. It simply cannot be expressed in any system, no matter how sophisticated one may become in symbolic language. Therefore, the glass bead game can never be anything other than a game, rather than what Knecht in his early years believed it to be; a means for understanding and promoting the human spirit. In fact, based on the view of history that Burckhardt developed and Hesse accepted, it brings us further away from understanding of the true aspects of human life, as it becomes more and more of an abstraction. The matter of history is the life of the human spirit unfolding through human relationships, according to Burckhardt. Thus Castalia represents the pursuit of knowledge in either a small realm, such as aesthetics or one form of religion, or in an increasingly abstract manner, that creates complete ignorance of human relationships. Furthermore, it creates an illusion that the world of abstract mind is independent of others. But Castalia is only possible as long as those who live outside its confines support it, particularly financially.

Upon realizing the full impact of these ideas, Knecht feels compelled to act, and clearly that action must be in the material world. It must also be action that involves human relationships and its concomitant condition; risk. Risk is the most crucial component, I would suggest, as it moves Knecht from being an objective analyst to an actual presence in the life of a particular person; in this case Tito. Life is no longer a

game, once one takes risks. It become open-ended, and beyond the duality of win or lose. It creates the possibility of what Buber called, the I-thou relationship.

Such, I believe is the crux of the conclusion of the story of Knecht. He takes the step into human relationships and on-going, material culture. To state it briefly; he leaves the post of *Magister Ludi*, becomes the tutor to Tito, and the second day on the job drowns in an icy lake.

This ending has often been considered a sign of the failure of both Knecht and of Castalia. Both had ultimately failed in their attempts to create a new world order and with it the fully individuated individual. But is this really the case?

4. The Death of Joseph Knecht as the Final Statement of Hesse's Religious Vision

Let us examine more carefully the figure of Knecht. Knecht, much like the previous heroes of Hesse's novels, begins his journey as a young man and as a student. He learns from many teachers, and eventually becomes the *Magister Ludi*. He becomes disillusioned in that position, I think, as he begins to recognize that Castalia is an abstraction, a collection of individuals who cannot ultimately accomplish what the Knecht is meant to do; namely to serve society.

By service to society, I believe Hesse had two ideals and his two great masters; Music and History represent both in *The Glass Bead Game*. Knecht is a gifted student of music, but he is not a master, and certainly cannot aspire to the status of "The Immortals". Therefore, we must consider the realm of history.

As I have previously discussed, the understanding of history that Hesse expressed was one of events and actions that occur within the stream of human affairs. Castalia hardly seems to qualify as such an arena. For one, it is a world completely populated by men, and therefore outside much of the maelstrom of human life. Except for the education of the few young men, and the tournaments of the glass bead game, we are told nothing of the historicity of Castalia. What kind of weather does it experience? Who takes care of the buildings and the everyday maintenance of the place? How are decisions made that deal with the everyday life of the members?

I think that Hesse left all such discussions out of the book, precisely because he wanted to paint for us a picture of what appears as an ideal environment that is ultimately unsatisfactory even for the aesthete and scholar. For as much as Hesse had raged against the institutions of society, particularly as he had experienced them personally throughout his life, I think Hesse also recognized that one must take the plunge into the icy waters of human relationships if one wants to be a servant.

Hesse who had often been labeled as a Romantic, chose to end the story of Knecht with a rather bleak, melodramatic ending. Knecht drowns. This ending has often been interpreted as an indication of Hesse's view of life as devoid of hope.

I would like to suggest another interpretation, which leads us to a critical analysis of Hesse's "religious vision". I believe that in the act of attempting to swim the lake, Knecht is meant to exemplify the risks of life in history and therefore in society. Knecht by becoming the tutor to Tito takes on a relationship that is outside the safety of relationships in Castalia. Relationships in the course of history are likely to be at times messy, and may even lead to death.

Death, however, is not a tragedy within the realm of religious discourse. Hesse, as a keen student of religious traditions, would have clearly understood the relationship between death and service. Hesse, the son and grandson of Pietist missionaries, would have learned the Christian and Hindu meaning of death, among the books, discussions and sermons in his childhood home. Death in all of these influences that had been so central in Hesse's development of his religious vision represents not the end but rather a new beginning. It can be argued that the archetype of beginning is birth cKnecht through his death actually gives birth to Tito, and as such performs the ultimate service. Furthermore, there is no greater risk, than the risk involved in giving new life. Thus, I would agree with the conclusion that Roger Norton gives, as to the meaning of Knecht's death. "Knecht's leap into the water – into a milieu which is, significantly, represented as one that is foreign and forbidding to him, yet one in which his pupil is at home - partakes of quixotic irrationality, and yet also full commitment."(Norton 1973, 212)

Thus, I believe that Hesse does with conclusion of *The Glass Bead Game* reach the unified religious vision, which had been his life long quest. Again, I would agree with Norton's assessment of the meaning of the leap into the lake.

> Thus, Knecht's 'leap' is certainly not a meaningless gesture any more than it is a confession of defeat. While various commentators have been unwilling to accept Hesse's labeling of Knecht's act as a sacrifice, this term is very appropriate if one considers it not as the product of reason or ordinary volition but rather as a symbol of self-surrender to what Hesse called 'the great unity'. Implicit in this concept of sacrifice is the individual's willingness to cultivate the sense of responsibility as well as the spiritual integrity and all the other qualities of mind that formed Knecht's character and could be passed on to mankind (sic) through his works and his individual example. (Norton, 153)

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

1. Hesse's Religious Vision: A Response to Personal Crisis or a Map in an Age of Confusion?

The first thing to be said about Hesse's religious vision is that it is marked by ambiguities, tensions and often contradictions. I believe this is the case because Hesse developed his religious vision primarily while struggling with questions arising from his life. The highly autobiographical nature of Hesse's work has been commented upon by various writers, and is the guiding thesis of Stelig's work. The reason that this is important for this thesis is that it makes Hesse's quest for a religious vision highly compatible with the contemporary view of religion as a journey based on the needs of the individual; as a form of self-transformation. This first aspect of Hesse's religious vision is the metaphor of the inner journey with its goal of self-transformation.

The metaphor of the inner journey is crucial for Hesse. The person on this inner journey is removed from the influences of the outside world; in particular from *the world of outside authority*. Outside authority was represented for Hesse by parental, educational, political and religious authority. In Hesse's view, all of these forms of authority prevented the individual from achieving individuation – the possibility of being who they really are – as they were a source of pollution of the self. Hesse had certainly experienced all of these types of authority during his early years, and he judged all of them as thwarting in own development, both as an artist and as a person. In particular, his

> Religions consist in part of insights about God and self, in part of spiritual practices and methods of training that allow one to free oneself from one's moody private self and thus facilitate greater intimacy with one's own divine inner qualities.
>
> To my mind, all religions are more or less equal in value. While any one individual religion could make a person wise, it could become degraded and get turned into a silly form of idolatry. Virtually all real knowledge, however, has been lodged in the religions, particularly in mythology. All myths are wrong unless we approach them with due reverence. Each one, however, can unlock the world's heart. Each one knows ways of transforming the idolatry of the self into the worship of God. (Hesse 1991, 227)

His justification for this stance came out of the idea of individuation put forward by Jung, with which he became familiar through his own psychoanalysis and readings of Jungian theory. Yet, Jung himself was a proponent of Gnostic religion, in terms of his development of the notion of knowledge and God. Thus, Hesse moved from a rejection of the idea of God as an absolute religious authority, to *his* particular formulation of the God of Gnosticism.

This marks the move that Hesse made in his religious the religious vision to an inward turn. For Hesse, the authority of the Self became the way to reach authenticy and implicidly to bring the individual to some possibility of true goodness. The early experiences of his life created in him a limitation of vision in terms of the possibility of development of an authentic self within any form of institutional life.

However, it is important also not to overstate Hesse's insistence on the individual as the only source of goodness. Hesse continued to look to relationships, as well as art, as a means of creating a society that allowed for ther development of the individual.

opposition to the government of Germany during World War I, had a critical impact on the rest of his life.

The most significant question for Hesse, I believe, was the issue of authority. In terms of authority, the focus for him was the search for the source of truth. In his approach to this question, he was very much influenced in his early life by the writings of Nietzsche. His approach to the issue of authority was highly coloured by his own rebellion to any form of authority - be it religious, parental, political or educational. His refuge from all these forms of authority was the individual, and in particular the individual who stands outside the rules of society, or even the 'criminal', as in his use of the Cain and Abel story in *Demian.* In rejecting religious authority, Hesse was rejecting what he considered to be Judeo-Christian tradition and specifically the idea of God as an authority figure that the individual had to conform to without question. Hesse rejected the Kantian notion of God as an authority figure that would provide humans with the practical grounding in moral beliefs and values for guiding us toward happiness. The basis of his rejection was his own experience with the Christian church, and in particular the Protestant/ German churches.

Hesse, however, did not declare himself an atheist. Throughout his life, in letters to family members, friends and readers, he affirmed a notion of God that clearly followed from his rejection of the authority of the traditional God, to that of God of the inner self. In the later part of his life, Hesse summarized in a letter to a young person, his idea of religion and God.

Furthermore, Hesse whiles always critical of any form of institutional authority, continued to search for legitimate institutional authority, particularly educational ones, throughout his writings.

The second aspect of Hesse's religious vision flows directly from his rejection of any authority outside of the self, namely the inner journey. Hesse, who had been highly influenced by Eastern religions since his early childhood, at this point sought the way following the path of Buddhism. Yet Hesse, while very much influenced by individualism and the rejection of outside authority, was not able to move outside the material aspects of life which very much are the bases of Western society, including religious thought. That is, the Siddhartha of Hesse's construction clings to the sense of self that is rooted in relationships with family, material objects, as well as history. Hesse realizes that he cannot be a Buddhist or Hindu, although there are aspects of those traditions that he can certainly incorporate into his religious vision. The most significant one, I believe, is in his appreciation of the totality of experience, the possibility of synthesis of all into one. He maintains this aspect of from his inner journey as he returns to the issues of material society and life in history.

Having basically rejected the Eastern way as the solution to the problem of religious authority, yet increasingly more dissatisfied with Western, modern society, Hesse renews his search for the legitimate way for the individual to achieve individuation. In his earliest years as a writer, Hesse had been deeply influenced by the Romantic tradition in German literature. While he later abandoned this romantic tradition

in his own writing, nevertheless, he continued to be influenced by the romantic notions of art, particularly the role of the *Dichter*. In *Steppenwolf,* the novel where he most explicitly deals with his dissatisfaction with modern, bourgeoisie society, Hesse explores the possibility of art as a form of religion. Quite significantly, I believe, Hesse chooses to define *The Immortals*, as a group of primarily German, eighteenth and nineteenth writers and composers. Hesse has returned to the life of Western society, searching ways of transformation with its context. Thus, Hesse's evolving religious vision now has as its emphasis the development of the individual who is on an inner journey, searching in the realm of the aesthetic for guidance in the process of individuation.

However, Hesse is not satisfied in remaining in the aesthetic realm as the source of his religious vision, as he has attempted to move beyond the Romantic influences of his youth. The realm of aesthetics is too individualistic, and cannot satisfy Hesse in terms of life in society. Creativity cannot be a refuge from the desires of material life; it requires the tension between the two that Hesse had alluded to in *Siddhartha.*

Yet Hesse was highly critical of the modern society that he saw in Europe in the twenties and thirties. Therefore, the issue of classification of Hesse as a primarily modern or Romantic author is a complex one. Ralph Freedman does consider Hesse to be a modern writer, primarily on the basis of his "reconciliation of opposites" as well as what he calls his sharper and more analytical approach these issues, as they concern art and imagination. Freedman sees this emphasis on more analytical approach primarily the result of the psychoanalytic underpinnings to Hesse's work. At the same time, Freedman

in his conclusion to the article considers Hesse " a romantic writer in the twentieth century". (Liebman 1977, 42)

Whether one classifies Hesse primarily a Romantic or modern writer is an interesting question, however in the conclusion of this thesis I want to look at Hesse's "religious vision" and its place in the twentieth century. For as I have argued throughout this thesis, Hesse's religious vision is within the context of historical, philosophical and intellectual markers of the twentieth century. Thus, at the culmination of his journey he turns to the issue of the kind of society that can sustain the transformative process of the individual with an authority structure that allows for true religious development as he has envisioned it.

In *The Glass Bead Game*, Hesse creates a character that I believe is the most complete representative of his religious vision, namely Joseph Knecht. Knecht retraces the journeys that Damien, Siddhartha and Henry Heller had taken in the first three novels that we have discussed, and yet he extends the journey much further. Unlike the other characters, Knecht does not reject the material goals of his society; he does become the Magister Ludi. He also acts as the ambassador from Castalia. Thus Knecht takes on responsibilities and takes risks in a society that seems to have been created for primarily abstract thought. Knecht the servant must be a man of action in society.

Yet what kind of service can he perform in a society that has as its ultimate ideal an abstract game?

This is the puzzle that Hesse leaves for us in trying to both understand and evaluate his religious vision. For at the end of the life story of Knecht, his ultimate action is to die. While death is present in the other three novels, it has, I believe, a different meaning in the *Glass Bead Game*. Knecht's death is the result of a risk that he took, namely to act in society in service of another human being. Developing a relationship with another human being makes us vulnerable to danger that could never occur while playing the glass bead game. Knecht, the tutor who plunges into the icy lake is vulnerable in ways that Knecht, the *Magister Ludi*, could never imagine. Yet, the death of Knecht in that lake has a reality basis that is not present in any of the other conclusions of Hesse's novels.

This rather abrupt ending of the novel brings us to the point of asking the question: did Hesse's quest yield a 'religious' vision, or is it basically a secular understanding of the meaning of life?

After examining the complexity of Hesse's religious vision, I think we can come to the conclusion that Hesse's view exemplifies the often contradictory stance in modern society toward religion. Hesse wants to have a religion that embodies the individual and personal qualities of religion – and particularly the sense of "awe" found in religious life – and reject the historical and institutional dimensions of religion. Hesse thus speaks of a "spirituality" that transcends the boundaries of historical religions in a manner that is similar to both popular discussions of religion as well as some of the discussions found in the scholarly material.

The question of religious vs. secular presupposes that there is a clear distinction or boundary that demarcates the religious from the secular. It is very much contested ground within the field of Religious Studies that such clear boundaries exist, and that we can clearly express what are the essential aspects of 'religion'.

Jonathan Z. Smith has suggested that we can look at definitions of religion in terms of monothetic and polythetic approaches. Monothetic definitions attempt at identifying an essential, decisive characteristic of a religion. The essentialist method of defining religion can be traced back to Plato and Aristotle in terms of attempting to find the one, true meaning of a concept. Some of the recent debates on this question have been very clearly summarized and discussed in Benson Saler *Conceptualizing Religion.* [31]

A polythetic definition refers not to one element that defines the category, but rather grouping based on several features or properties that the class may to some extent share. Any member of the class may share one or more of the features, but not necessarily, all of them are dependent upon one notion or truth. Furthermore, rather than placing the emphasis on an essential aspect of the religion that is true for all the members without taking into account the changing nature of the religious tradition, Jonathan Z. Smith, argues that polythetic definitions change and are mutable.

A further refinement in the process of understanding what do we mean when we speak about religion deals with methods of classification of religions. For if we are to look at subclasses or types bases on similarities that some members of a group share, we need to consider the basis for this classification. Again, the discussion by Jonathan Z.

Smith is significant for appreciating the significance of classification systems for our approach to the study of religion. Most of the classifications used entail a binary system, such as polytheistic and monotheistic, ethnic and universal, and established and new. This type of classification system is used in most textbooks that are written as introductions to world religions. As Jonathan Z. Smith has pointed out, these classifications have a judgmental underpinning; namely, that one end of the pole is superior to the other. Particularly the relationship between the classification of polytheistic and monotheistic religions often involves the assumption that the monotheistic religions are superior or at least a refinement of the earlier polytheistic traditions.

Hesse's "definition" of religion as I have shown can be viewed as an attempt to move beyond binary classification, as well as a monothetic definition. I would characterize Hesse's approach to religion as moving from religion to spirituality. Furthermore, I would argue that Hesse's evolving understanding of religion is instructive as an illustration of the territory that we traverse if we follow his footsteps.

The most significant issue that I believe Hesse's religious vision raises is his notion of ' the True Self' as the basis for authority. Steven M.Wasserstrom[1] has carefully argued in his study of Gershom Scholem, Mircea Eliade and Henry Corbin, that definitions of religion that substitute the historical basis for a mythological one, create a religion that is devoid of ethics.

Yet, Hesse on his pilgrimage, came to the realization that a religious vision must speak to the life of the individual in the material world, which allows us to order our loves. Thus, we must live in the material, historical world, and struggle with its imperfections. One of those imperfections may be the authority figures and the institutions that they serve. What is required, it seems to me, is the willingness to engage in critical reflection as well as political action, to affect change. Retreating from the history of our religions to a vague notion of spirituality will only postpone that work.

Hesse's ideas about what constitutes a religion that promotes an authentic, inner directed religion do raise some interesting challenges. I would like to address those in terms of four questions that arise out of Hesse's work.

1. The issue of inner vs. outer authority

Gnosticism has had much appeal throughout the ages, and it seems to be making come back in modern society. There is something very appealing about the notion of secret knowledge that is given/received directly by the individual.

Yet I believe that the appeal of this idea is based on the individualism that comes out of a social situation that is marked by the lack of cohesion and trust in society. In "Gnosticism and Modern Nihilism" Hans Jonas points out that the modern age is ripe for Gnostic ideas as were the times of early Christianity due to the breakdown of the unity between social laws or *nomos* which provided the moral, religious and social basis of society. Jonas writes:

But the new atomized masses of the empire, who had never shared in the noble tradition of *arete*, reacted very differently to a situation in which they found themselves passively involved: a situation in which the part was insignificant to the whole, and the whole alien to the parts. The Gnostic aspiration was not to "act a part" in this whole, but - in existential parlance - to "exist authentically." (Jonas 1963, 325)

Hesse is therefore saying, I believe, that because we have lost all possibility of belonging to a whole society, we must therefore retreat to the only source left that give us some hope of the authentic; our atomized self.

2. Is this a religion of the elite?

Supposedly by looking at the individual rather than the masses we are locating our selves in some sphere of potential equality. Our worth is no longer to be measured by our membership in a group; be it national, religious, gender, ethnic or any other. Yet these social markers do not only set up barriers to equality (which they certainly often do) but they also provide us with a significant sense of our self.

In Hesse's view of individuation, which is the basis of his religious vision, it would appear that all have an equal chance to achieve this lofty state. However, as Hesse himself began to realize, we do come with histories as part of our identity. And some of those histories have significant meaning for us; they give us our sense of self. They provide us with a direction in our own religious paths; paths that we may not want to have dismissed as being based on authoritarian ideas and therefore somehow inauthentic.

Our membership in groups may also provide us with the protection we need, at times, to be authentic. Does it necessarily means that we are following the herd if we participate in rituals that link us with the past of our ancestors?

3. On the idea of Unity of Religions

Now that we are the atomized individuals, each searching for our True Selves, we also need to belong to a whole that provides us with All. Certainly, if we were able to achieve this kind of unity, we would eliminate all conflict based on competing interpretations of the Ultimate. Hesse experienced the horror of war, and even if he was not personally involved, I am persuaded that these tragedies created the utmost impressions on his thoughts.

However conflict among peoples cannot be eradicated at the expense of social belonging. That is why any form of action in society is risky for it always brings the risk of conflict and ultimately wars and death. Yet without the act, we are sterile in our approach to life.

In terms of religion and religions, it would seem to me that scholarship that recognizes the need to act within the various religious traditions is likely to be more fruitful than negating the differences or designing a world based on a unified religious vision.

4. What can we learn from Hesse's religious vision?

We do not need to accept his religious vision, in order to find some merit in it. And its major merit, I think, is in the questions it poses as to the kind of religious vision

has merit and validity. A religious vision that primarily focuses on the development of individuals is like a family that has no sense of a being something other than a collection of individuals.

We can dismiss Hesse's view of religion as the work of a misguided amateur and a relic of the twentieth century. Yet I believe that Hesse's religious vision will continue to have a great appeal, particularly among young people, who like Hesse often view themselves as the Outsiders; desirous of maintaining and protecting their individuality and at the same time developing what they believe is their authentic inner self. Hesse's construction of a religious vision had great appeal to the youth of the twentieth century. I think it will find also great appeal among the disenchanted youth of the globalized world of the twenty first century.

ENDNOTES

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[1] The significance of the *Pilgrim's Progress* lies in the ideas of interpreting someone's vision is such a way as to portray that which is valuable in it. This study attempts to show what is valuable in Hesse's religious vision.

[2] This point will be discussed in detail in the section dealing with the review of literature.

[3] By the content I am referring to the substance of Hesse's view of religion, while the context refers to the circumstances of his formulations of this content.

[4] For a complete bibliography dealing with various aspects of Hesse's work see: Joseph Mileck, *Hermann Hesse. Biography and Bibliography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977).

[5] While Ziolkowski has been one of the main literary main scholars of the work of Hermann Hesse he has also devoted the most attention to the significance of religious symbols in Hesse's work. See particularly: Theodore Ziolkowski, *The Novels of Hermann Hesse. A Study in Theme and Structure* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965)

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[6] The relationship between Hesse's life and his writings is not the focus of this study. However, as noted by Boulby, Freeman and Stelzig, the events in Hesse's life forms the background to the novels.

[7] David G. Richards, *The Hero's Quest for the Self* (Lanham, Md., University Press of America 1987).

[8] Jane Adamson et al., eds., *Renegotiating Ethics in Literature, Philosophy, and Theory* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. 1998).

[9] This is the main focus of Eugene Stelig's discussion of the writings of Hesse. See Eugene Stelzig, *Hermann Hesse's Fictions of the Self: Autobiography and the Confessional Imagination* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988.

[10] Hesse's use of these terms follows the influences of the German Romantic Movement. For a full discussion see Freeman 1961.

[11] Hesse experienced at this point his first major conflict in terms of an individual's social responsibilities as a citizen whose country is about to go to war. He does not act decisively, and his indecisiveness leads to caution and consequently he does not place himself beyond what Freedman characterizes as "the pale of the German establishment as a real antiwar protestor." Rather, Hesse elects to "straddle the political fence," by denouncing the war in some of his writings and showing support for Germany in other writings. Freedman (1978), characterizes Hesse's indecision in the following way:

"As he had done when he was a school boy he made a point of his subversive convictions, but at the same time he wanted to be accepted by those in authority, whether they were his parents, or school, or the government. There was always the misdeed and the need for forgiveness, for the saving goodnight kiss." (Freedman, 1978)

In 1914, at the outbreak of the First World War, a further reflection of Hesse's ambivalence is evident in his actions. Although he had lived in Bern, Switzerland for two years, Hesse volunteered for service in the German army. However he was assessed as unfit for active service (shortsighted), and was assigned to the German Consulate in Bern. While Hesse was relieved that he was not to become directly involved in the war, he did become involved with the Prisoners of War Welfare Organization. The primary role of the organization was to provide German prisoners held in France, Italy and America with reading materials.

Between 1914 and 1917, Hesse wrote numerous political essays, admonitions and letters that were published in the German, Swiss and Austrian press. The central theme contained in all of these writings was an appeal to the reader to reflect upon what Hesse thought of as a bond of European culture. Hesse characterized this culture as held together by spiritual values and virtues of "justice, moderation, decency, and love," a common bond held together by the works of Shakespeare, French poetry and German music. Thus Hesse's public position on the Great War came primarily from his identity as a writer. As Freedman points out "...the sentiment about a common humanity was not only mild and diffidently expressed; it

was also non-activist, indeed, non-political, for whatever pacifist sentiments were voiced were channeled into comments about literature and art." (Freedman 1978, 168)

Hesse's public appeal (a feuilleton titled "O Friends, Not These Tones,") nonetheless generated a strong negative reaction – especially in Germany – where the press and Germans in countless anonymous letters, branded him a traitor. Yet Hesse's ambivalence remained, as illustrated by a letter written to his father. He stated that while he grieved the deaths of his countrymen, now that the war was underway, he hoped that there would be a revolution in India or a sudden disaster for the British fleet, for if that happens, and Austrian Empire manages to survive; "Germany would have the principle voice at the peace conference, and as a result, there would be some hope for the survival of life and culture for the immediate future. Otherwise, England would be on top and then Europe would be left in the hands of those moneybags and the illiterate Russians." (Freedman 1978, 167)

Quoting from a letter Hesse wrote his father, Freedman suggests that Hesse believed in the official German position and that he hoped for a German victory because "... the central Powers were fighting a war of survival not only for themselves but for European culture as a whole." (Ibid.)

Given that Hesse had spent his life with his loyalties divided between a Swabian (German) and a Swiss home, the conflict that he felt between German patriotism and his antiwar sentiments influenced in a profound way his future development as a writer.

[12] This is a short story from the early part of Hesse's life that has been recently translated by field and is available on the Internet. http:// www.gss.ucsb.edu/projects/hesse/works/Field-Presse/01 (accessed Jan10, 2003)

[13] We shall consider the implications of the politics of Hesse's religious vision in our discussion of *The Glass Bead Game*.

[14] For a discussion of Nietzsche's influence on Hesse see Herman William Reichert, *The Impact of Nietzsche on Hermann Hesse.* (Mt. Pleasant, Michigan, Enigma Press, 1972).

[15] For a full discussion of this point see Ziolkowski, (1965).

[16] The concept of" individuation is integral to Jungian psychology. There is something in the human psyche, which in its fullness of time, struggles to produce what Jung refers to as the "true personality." This struggle to bring about the birth of one's "true personality," is the basis for what Jung called the process of individuation, a process that involves bridging the gap between the treasures of the archetypal world of the unconscious and the everyday world of ego-consciousness, in an attempt to actualize the unique potentialities of one's individual psych.

"I use the term 'individuation'," writes Jung, "to denote the process by which a person becomes a psychological 'in-dividual', that is, separate, indivisible unity or 'whole'". (C.J.Jung, The *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*. Collected Works, Vol. 9i, par. 490.)

Jolande Jacobi, a Jungian analysis, in her book entitled *The Way of Individuation,* provides a description both of the human condition, and of what is involved in

consciously trying to live this process referred to as individuation. She writes, "Like a seed growing into a tree, life unfolds stage by stage. Triumphant ascent, collapse, crises, failures, and new beginnings strew the way. It is the path trodden by the great majority of mankind, as a rule unreflectively, unconsciously, unsuspectingly, following its labyrinthine windings from birth to death in hope and longing. It is hedged about with struggle and suffering, joy and sorrow, quilt and error, and nowhere is there security from catastrophe. For as soon as a man tries to escape every risk and prefers to experience life only in his head, in the form of ideas and fantasies, as soon as he surrenders to opinions of 'how it ought to be' and, in order not to make a false step, imitates others whenever possible, he forfeits the chance of his own independent development. Only if he treads the path bravely and flings himself into life, fearing no struggle and no exertion and fighting shy of no experience, will he mature his personality more fully than the man who is ever trying to keep to the safe side of the road". (Jolande Jacobi, *The Way of Individuation* New American Trade Library, 1983, 16).

[17] For a critical discussion of Jung and feminist views of religion, see Naomi R. Goldenberg, Changing of the Gods (Boston, Beacon Press, 1979), passim.

[18] For a through study of the influences of Gnosticism in modern literature see Josephine Donovan, *Gnosticism in Modern Literature*. New York: Garland Publishing, 1990.

[19] See Hans Jonas excellent discussion on this point in Jonas

[20] For a thorough discussion of mysticism see Katz (1983).

[21] For an excellent discussions of those two points see Graham Parkes, "Nietzsche and East Asian thought: Influences, Impacts, and Resonances" in *Cambridge Companion to Nietzsche* eds., Bernd Magnus and Kathleen M. Higgins (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996) and Luis O.Gomez "Oriental Wisdom and the Cure of Souls; Jung and the Indian East" in *Curators of the Buddha: The Study of Buddhism under Colonialism* (Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1995).

[22] Hermann Hesse, Acceptance Speech for the Nobel Prize in Literature, http://nobelprize.org/literature/laureates/1946.

[23]Joseph Mileck, *Hermann Hesse, Life and Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978) p.163

[24]Freeman, (1978, 372-377).

[25] See Colin Wilson, *Hesse, Reich, Borges: Three Essays* (Philadelphia, Leaves of Grass Press, 1974).

[26]Preface to *Steppenwolf*, iv

[27]See Mileck (1984).

[28] When referring to the book I use capital letters, while referring to the "game" I use lower case letters.

[29]For a full discussion of the progress of the book, see Ziolkowski, *The Novels of Hermann Hesse*. 293-301.

[30]Mileck argues that Hesse lost interest in the religions of India after 1908, but became extremely interested in the religions of China, particularly Taoism. See Mileck (2003)145-165.

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