

**HERMAN HESSE'S *SIDDHARTHA* AS AN
INTERTEXT OF EASTERN AND WESTERN
PHILOSOPHIES AND MYSTICISM**



By

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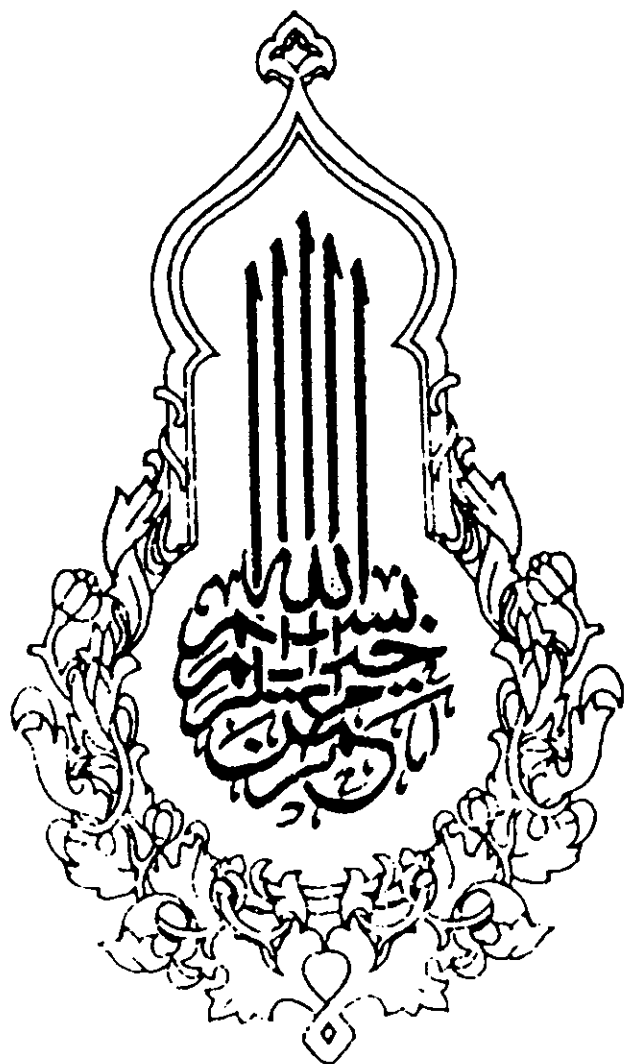
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**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MS in English**

To

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE
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2011



Dedicated to Lord Buddha who lighted the torch of true Moksha* in
the dark climes of South Asia that had been wrapped in the
indecipherable intricacies of Hindu ritualism 2500 years ago!

* Moksha or Moksa means liberation. The term is used to refer to liberation from
Samsara, the cycle of rebirth. This is a state free from all suffering and sorrow.

Monistic traditions such as Advaita Vedanta regard Moksa as Union with
Ultimate Reality.

Acceptance by the *Viva Voce* Committee

Title of the thesis: Herman Hesse's *Siddhartha* as an Intertext of Eastern and Western Philosophies and Mysticism

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Accepted by the Department of English, Faculty of Languages & Literature, International Islamic University, Islamabad, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Philosophy degree in English with specialization in Literature.


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ABSTRACT

The thesis deals with different intertextual aspects of Herman Hesse's *Siddhartha*, a novel that appeared in the German Language in 1922. The scope of an intertextual analysis is vast and contributes to an in-depth understanding of the meaning and significance of a given text. Hesse has drawn upon a number of Eastern and Western intellectual sources, particularly related with the philosophical and metaphysical nature of things and has incorporated them into his narrative. The scope of the thesis becomes even broader when intertextual analysis transcends the text of the novel under reference and explores the similar themes as dealt with both in the Eastern and Western philosophical and mystical traditions. The arenas of religion and science are natural corollaries and hence these have also been touched upon. For the most part of the study, such library resources were explored that bore relevance to the explicit ontological and epistemological aspects of Hesse's ingenuous expounding of a universal solution to the enigma of existence, and the fluid nature of all knowledge. It is hoped that the thesis will facilitate research on the same intertextual analytical pattern decentring the texts from their limited spatial and temporal axes.

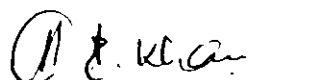
DECLARATION

I, Muhammad Ajmal Khan son of Muhammad Anwar Khan, Registration # 97-FLL/MSENG/ F08, student of MS, in the discipline of English Literature, do hereby declare that the matter printed in the thesis "**Herman Hesse's *Siddhartha* as an Intertext of Eastern and Western Philosophies and Mysticism**" submitted by me in partial fulfilment of MS degree, is my original work, and has not been submitted or published earlier. I also solemnly declare that it shall not, in future, be submitted by me for obtaining any other degree from this or any other university or institution.

I also understand that if evidence of plagiarism is found in my thesis/dissertation at any stage, even after the award of a degree, the work may be cancelled and the degree revoked.

This work was carried out and completed at International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan.

Dated: April 29, 2011



Signatures of Deponent
MUHAMMAD AJMAL KHAN

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All praise and thanks are due to Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* who has made this miracle of the world and who has allowed all of us to be a part of it as one big family, the Creation! My most profound submission and gratitude to the Best of the Creation, Prophet Muhammad *sallallahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* who brought the great universal religion to its finest and the last form, and whose Blessings, Love and Care encompass us all.

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Profound thanks are due to all of my other great teachers who let me learn the love-aspect of religion and its eternal nature, this great secret of oneness, togetherness and simultaneity leading to a feeling of universal brotherhood, love and harmony. These include my great parents Muhammad Anwar Khan and Salima Jabeen, my brothers Dr. Muhammad Sarwar Khan, Suleman Anwar and our dearest sister Iram. I have also been lucky enough to receive instruction from Respected Mian Anwar-ul-Haq Sahib, and Dr. Muhammad Jahangir Tamimi.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The present study provides the comparable thematic parallels to the text of Hermann Hesse's novel, *Siddhartha* within the framework of Eastern and Western Philosophies and Mysticism. The purpose of the study of a text as an intertext is one of the schemes in Comparative Literature through which a relative study of the international literature becomes possible.¹

Intertextuality deals with the links between one piece of literature and another, or several others, that have a mutual bearing. These links may be direct or indirect in nature and may also carry clear references or vague allusions.

The proponents of intertextuality assert that no text can be considered in isolation, because every text echoes, alludes to and is ultimately constituted by other previous and future texts. Working within the framework of Comparative Literature, there has been an extensive reading of the legendary as well as historical and factual resources, and it is sincerely hoped that it would prove a humble contribution to the continued and ever-expanding scholarship in this area.

Intertextuality embodies an all encompassing literary experience. It is one of the five major relational types of textuality (Waugh 2006: 277) that come under the umbrella term of *transtextuality*.

Intertextuality is a much broader term than 'influence', (the direct effect,

conscious or unconscious, of one author on another); intertextuality is the general condition by which it is possible for a text to be a text: the whole network of relations, conventions, and expectations by which the text is defined. Many modern critics argue that all texts are necessarily related by language and that there is no such thing as an absolute text.

If we look at *Siddhartha* from the view point of Constitutive Intertextuality, we discover that its chapterization and plot development that is divided into two main parts comprising four and eight chapters respectively is a well calculated phenomenon and reflect upon the four truths of human existence in Buddhism as well as the eight fold path leading to Nirvana. This does not seem to be a mere coincidence and it speaks of the fine nuances that are scattered throughout the text of the novel.

Rather than delving into the very complicated Hindu and Buddhist religious terminology, Hesse (1877-1962) has described Siddhartha's life only with reference to fictional turns of the story with a relatively modern sensibility. A good way of the intertextual study of the novel is therefore to revisit the story and to stop and ponder, along every turn of the road, upon the protagonist's creed and philosophy. Through it, we can try to read the author's credo and his understanding of the prevailing religious and mystical doctrines and faiths that have shaped his character and individuality.

Reading within the framework of Comparative Literature has made the whole affair very colourful because of the comparisons and contrasts that become

available in the background of the culture that the writer hails from and the culture that he portrays in his work. Culture being a very wide term includes a shared sensibility of a people. In case of a piece of literature, it also includes the triangular sensibility that the writer and the readers share through the text despite their differences of time and space.

Working within this framework requires an extensive reading of the legendary as well as historical and factual resources, and there have been some relevant discoveries along the way that may prove a humble contribution to the continued and ever-expanding scholarship in this area.

In *Siddhartha* Hesse has imbibed so much from Eastern and Western philosophy that it looks like a case of eclectic literary experimentation and to approach it as an intertext is much more than studying the novel as *bildungsroman* and *erziehungsroman*, it is rather a means of studying the transhistorical *weltanschauung*.²

The research has been an in-depth analysis of the text of *Siddhartha* focusing on Hesse's experiment of amalgamating the Western cultural, scientific and philosophical sensibility with the Eastern philosophical and mystical lore. Hesse has retold the story of Siddhartha Gautama Buddha and instead of repeating the historical- biographical account of the great sage, he has taken a few cues from the epic of Buddha's struggle and has introduced Siddhartha, a character of his own making, to take into account the universal mystical experience beyond the limitations of traditional religion and established legend.

He has even incorporated the ideals of his contemporary social and natural sciences that were challenging the available body of knowledge in his times. The novel was first published in 1922 as *Siddhartha : Ein Indische Dichtung* or *Siddhartha: An Indian Poetic Work* which indicates the inclusion of lyrical and romantic elements as well as legendary and feted aspects.

1.1 Thesis Statement:

Herman Hesse's novel *Siddhartha* carries many intertextual references from the Eastern and Western philosophical and mystical thought, particularly Vedic and Buddhist thought systems.

1.2 Research Questions:

1. What is the significance and scope of an intertextual theoretical study?
2. What is the range of relevant texts of both Eastern and Western sources that correspond to the intertextual paradigm with reference to *Siddhartha*?
3. Since intertextuality is an unbounded condition, what should be the delimiting and controlling factors in selecting the range of the comparative readings?
4. How can these comparative philosophical and metaphysical parallels be intertextually arranged under relevant chapters as a single continuous analytical study of the novel?

1.3 Research Methodology:

The research, for the most part of it, has been of qualitative nature. The research has entailed library research method and has been more of analytical and critical nature. The analytical study of the text has consistently been aided by the sensibility of reading an *intertext* and through it there has been an appraisal of the international literature in the field.

The research has entailed the study of multitudinous texts of various disciplines and has thus provided a blueprint for a more coherent understanding of comparative literature.

Intertextuality was originally proposed by Julia Kristeva (1966) and was later supported by Roland Barthes (1977) for whom the term generally implies the perception by a reader of the relationships existing between a given text and others preceding or following it either by means of direct quotations or indirect allusions. In order to accommodate this perpetual cross referencing, I had to go through a comprehensive reading schedule. I pursued the following line of action:

- i. An in-depth study of literary and critical theory to ascertain the existing parameters of intertextual studies and to determine how novel as a genre can be studied under the discipline.
- ii. Close reading of *Siddhartha* during which the major argument as well as the sub-themes were figured out.

- iii. Analytical study of the themes, plot and characterization with reference to the actual spatial and temporal realities.
- iv. A comparative study of various Eastern and Western philosophies and mysticism that Siddhartha (as Hesse's hero) reflects.
- v. Application of both deductive and inductive approaches during the research and thereby juxtaposing the microcosmic literary cues and macrocosmic universals to establish the novel's position within the literary canon and the possibility of eclectic interpretation.
- vi. The title of the novel has been written in *italics* throughout the thesis whereas the distinction has been made between the historical Siddhartha and the fictional hero by calling the latter Hesse's Siddhartha.
- vii. At places where the resources were in other languages, English translation has been provided with due acknowledgement of the resources.

1.4 Research Plan and Chapter Division of the thesis:

Chapter 1: Introduction:

In this chapter I have focused on a feasible frame work to incorporate the idea of intertextual analysis of *Siddhartha* while delineating the research methodology as well as limitations and significance of the study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review:

This chapter deals with various philosophical and mystical theories that hold relevance with *Siddhartha*. Later in the course of the thesis, their significance is discussed with evidence. This chapter also highlights that there are subtle biographical traces in the novel that have remained understated.

Chapter 3: *Siddhartha* and the Eastern Philosophical and Mystical Intertextual Parallels:

In this chapter, due attention has been given to those metaphysical and truth-seeking doctrines that hold a direct or indirect correlation with Hesse's story. It has been propounded that the principles of Brahmanism, Buddhism, Confucianism and the Islamic Pantheistic Monism have their share in shaping Hesse's thoughts. Where the direct influence could not be traced, intertextual latitude has given revealing similarities of comparative nature in the structuration of the bildungsroman.

Chapter 4: *Siddhartha* and the Western Philosophical and Mystical Intertextual Parallels:

This chapter explores the various dimensions of Western scholarship in fields as diverse as religion, Christian mysticism, perennial philosophy, physical sciences as well as the philosophical doctrines of the Occident. It is here that the scientific and philosophical as well as political and social atmosphere of post World War II

Europe of Hesse's time has been touched upon in connection with the attitude that the novel's protagonist consistently shows.

Chapter 5: Conclusion:

In this brief chapter the gradual realization of Hesse' ideal hero, his pursuit of self-identity and the quest for the ultimate reality has been shown to have reached its culmination. Evidence has been provided that a similar soul searching is present in Hesse's other works of fiction. The implied Taoist finale has brought the scope of intertextual elaboration to its conclusion.

1.5 The Framework of Intertextuality and its Various Dimensions:

Intertexture is a Latin phrase. It is the past participle of *intertexere* which means 'to interweave' (Neufeldt 1997: 707). It would thus mean that different designs or substances are interwoven to achieve new and more useful, more conducive and more enduring patterns.

The simplest definition of Intertextuality comes from Encyclopedia Encarta (Encarta 2007) where it is described as, "the relationship that exists between different texts, especially literary texts, or the reference in one text to others."

A further elaboration is provided by M.H. Abrams, '...one literary text echoes, or is inescapably linked to other texts, whether by open or covert citations and allusions, or by the assimilation of the features of an earlier text by a later text, or

simply by participation in a common stock of literary codes and conventions' (Abrams 1987: 200).

Intertextuality as a literary term was originally created in 1966 by Julia Kristeva to denote the inter-dependency of the literary texts. For her, intertextuality denotes the way discourses or sign systems are transposed into one another so that meanings in different discourses are mutually interspersed or overlapped. It is suggested that Kristeva's idea is a part of the wider psychoanalytical theory that questions the stability of the subject (Cuddon 1992: 454).

In her essay of 1969, translated as "Word, Dialogue and Novel", she describes the underlying concept of intertextuality. It implies that no text, much as it might like to appear so, is original and unique-in-itself. It is rather a tissue of inevitable, *and to an extent unwitting*, references to and quotations from other texts. These in turn condition its meaning (Kristeva 1986: 36–60).

Intertextuality has to do with the links between one piece of literature and another or several others that have a mutual bearing upon each other. These links may be direct or indirect in nature and may carry clear references or vague allusions. It denotes the perception by a reader of the relationships that exist between a given text and others preceding or following it (Waugh 2006: 277).

The scheme of intertext is in fact an effort to provide a context to any subject at hand. Kristeva's work is in line with the work of many other significant poststructuralist philosophers such as Jacques Derrida, Jacques Lacan, Michel

Foucault, Roland Barthes, and Louis Althusser. These writers and theorists always wrote in the context of political and social crises in France culminating in the radical events of 1968. The magazine *Tel Quel* provided them an opportunity to use the intricate literary theory to solve the political and philosophical challenges of the time.

Kristeva, the central theorist of textuality, was declared '*l'etranger*' or a foreigner on the charges that she displaces the instance of the signifieds and thus subverts the authority of the monologic science of filiation (Allen 2000: 31).

Since Ferdinand de Saussure had accentuated the significance of the correlation of signs among each other, one of the restrictions of structuralist semiotics is its propensity to view particular texts as disconnected units. The structuralist's first systematic undertaking is often articulated as limiting the boundaries of the structure to find out what can be included or excluded.

This is explicable on the basis of logic but ontologically, it becomes very complex. We have to presume that certain codes have the tendency to go beyond the structures. For Kristeva, the signifiers were plural and were full of the historical significance. She was thus working in the 'hidden spaces' of the texts rather than those lucid ones that concern with stable signifiers (Allen 2000: 32).

Kristeva describes two axes of the texts: *horizontal* and the *vertical* connecting the author and reader of a text and the text to other texts (Kristeva 1986: 66). There are mutually shared codes. Kristeva declared that 'every text is from the

outset under the jurisdiction of other discourses which impose a universe on it'.

According to Professor Adolphe Haberer (Haberer 2007: 56), an analysis of Julia Kristeva's notion of intertextuality must be judged with reference to the socio-political context as well as the rise of the 'problematics of the linguistic *sign*, *subject* and the concept of *enunciation*.

As the sign was considered divided into signifier and signified, the conception of meaning as something fixed and stable, was lost and replaced by that of the sliding, variable and suspended signified. Meaning could no longer be viewed as a complete artifact; it was now caught in a process of production. The subject of the *enunciation* was distinguished from the subject of the *enonce*.

On the basic level, intertextuality is the concept of texts 'borrowing' words and concepts of each others. This could mean as much as an entire ideological concept and as little as a word or phrase.

As authors borrow pro-actively from previous texts, their works gain layers of meanings. Also, another feature of intertextuality reveals itself when a text is read in the light of another text and in this case all of the assumptions and implications surrounding the other text shed light on the way a text is interpreted. We cannot underestimate the cultural impact of the constant process of decontextualizing signifieds, turning them into signifiers, and redirecting them toward other signifieds (Goldman 2010).

Culler (1976) builds upon Kristeva's "Word, Dialogue, and Novel," and criticizes the traditional notions of the author's "influences" and the text's "sources", positing that all signifying systems are constituted by the manner in which they transform earlier signifying systems. A literary work, then, is not simply the product of a single author, but of its relationship to other texts and to the structures of language itself. "Any text," it is argued, "is constructed of a mosaic of quotations...absorption and transformation of another".

Intertextuality continually refers to the impossibility of singularity and unity of a text and reminds us that all texts are potentially plural, reversible and open to the readers' own presuppositions as well as dialogic voices of the human society with increasingly fluid boundaries (Allen 2000: 209).

In response to Ferdinand de Saussure's claim that signs gain their meaning through structure in a particular text, implying that meaning is transmitted directly from writer to reader, Kristeva argued that because of the influence of other texts on readers' consciousnesses, texts are always filtered through "codes" which bring the weight of other, previous meanings with them. We are, then, already imbricated in a web of meaning created by other texts and the connotations surrounding them as opposed to deriving meaning directly from the structure of signs as Saussure would have it in his semiotics.

According to the New Critics, the meaning of the given text was to be seen within the text and with a reference to no other text that the writer might have had in his reading or intention. For example W.K. Wimsatt rejects even the writer's

intentions as these are not available at all (Wimsatt 1970: 3). But this is an ahistorical approach and does not conform to the standard set by T.S. Eliot, the forerunner of New Criticism, who refers to the textual pluralism by suggesting that a poet or a critic ought to undergo a gradual increase of knowledge in order to have a holistic view not only of 'the pastness of the past as well as its present' (Eliot 1965:24).

And without this formative 'historical sense' of the traditions of the past, he argues, the individual ramblings are baseless and deprived of the possibility of future existence. According to Eliot whenever a new piece of literary writing is added to the canon, the whole body of literature changes and mutually readjusts (Ibid).

Catherine Belsey also refers to the intertextual elements of intelligibility, the recognition of similarities and differences between a text and all the other texts we have read gives rise to a 'growing knowledge' ((Belsey 2001: 21). She has probably taken the idea from Northrop Fry who believes in 'archetypes' or the recurring images that connect the texts together and constitute the source of the intelligibility of the text. Fry affirms that these ritual patterns inform text after text in societies remote from each other till they become a matter of "total dream of man" which by implication makes the text invariably plural (Fry 1957: 119).

All texts, therefore, contain within them the ideological structures and struggles expressed in society through discourse. This means, for Kristeva, that the intertextual dimensions of a text cannot be studied as mere 'sources' or

‘influences’ stemming from what traditionally has been styled ‘background’ or ‘context’ (Haberer 2007: 36). There is thus no text that has the characteristics of hermetic totality.

Catherine Belsey believes that the recognition of intertextuality is the recognition of the reader’s experience of other texts as a source of intelligibility (Belsey 2001: 26) and this is ‘a radical development which is thwarted by its context in the theoretical discourse as a whole.’ Bakhtin has put it in his “The Problem of the Text”:

Each text presupposes a generally understood system of signs, a language (if only the language of art). If there is no language behind the text, it is not a text, but a natural (not signifying) phenomenon, for example, a complex of natural cries and moans devoid of any linguistic (signifying) repeatability. [...]

And so behind each text stands a language system. Everything in the text that is repeated and reproduced, everything repeatable and reproducible, everything that can be given outside a given text (the given) conforms to this language system. But at the same time each text (as an utterance) is individual, unique, and unrepeatable, and herein lies its entire significance (Bakhtin 2004: 105).

According to Kristeva, the text assumes the status of a *practice* and a *productivity*. This means its structuration of words and utterances that existed before, in Bakhtin’s words, are ‘double-voiced’. If texts are made up of pieces of the social context, then the on-going ideological pressure which characterizes language and discourse in society will continue to echo in the text itself (Allen 2000: 47).

Although the texts are unrepeatable, the linguistic and especially the semantic readjustments keep taking place before and after the production of the texts. Not

only are the word structures copied as symbols but also the characters and thematic similitude as per the need of the topic, the motif being the widening complexity that corresponds to the ever expanding magnitude of human experience.

The inclusion of a factual or legendary character that has proven its worth in history of ideas and whose reputation has stood the test of time is taken as an intertextual technique that the writers consciously or otherwise use to highlight their major themes. This has also come to be known as *hypersignification* and self-referential intertextuality in the modern times (Goldman 2010).

There are instances in the media when an actor or character is incorporated in an advertisement and he brings along him, certain values and traditions and expectations that add to the cumulative effect of the message implied. This type of intertextuality is known more popularly as media intertextuality.

Another type is the one in which the actor or character 'acts' what he is normally expected to do as per his character-actor role model. This is known as reflexivity. For example, if an actor is popularly known to perform the role of a mother and she comes on the television screen bearing a message that is of general interest to mothers, it would be taken as reflexivity, a sub-form of media intertextuality.

In *Siddhartha*, Hesse makes the use of both these techniques albeit unconsciously. The historical Gautama Buddha and Hesse's Siddhartha, the son of a Brahman

bear upon each other reflexively as well as intertextually as the one bears witness to another's words, silences and actions, and even inactions.

There are numerous other examples of literary intertextuality. For example, Ernest Hemingway has borrowed the title of his novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls* from John Donne's *Meditation XVII* (ISSN, 2010): "No man is an island, entire of itself ... and therefore never send to know *for whom the bell tolls*; it tolls for thee." Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) is a self reflexive intertext of the coded letter that Hester Pynne is sentenced to wear.

Ulysses (1918) by James Joyce which is a retelling of Homer's epic, *East of Eden* (1952) by John Steinbeck which retells of the story of Genesis set in the Salinas Valley of Northern California are two other examples. In the Film *Dead Poets Society* the refrain 'O Captain my Captain!' is the intertextual reference to Walt Whitman's allegory *Leaves of Grass*.

Intertextuality as proposed by Julia Kristeva (1966) means that a literary text is not a secluded phenomenon but is formulated by an assortment of quotations and that every text is 'the absorption and transformation of another text' (Harmon 2009: 279).

Delineating its other dimensions, William Harmon quotes the example of T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* in this context where there are foregrounding self-reflexive elements of repetition and annotation as well as intertextual elements of quotation, allusion, echo, parody and revision.

The literary construction takes place within the poise and contours of other texts. They are thus the palimpsests.³ Barthes declares that it is due to the verity of intertextuality that a text comes into being.

Any text is an intertext; other texts are present in it; at varying levels, in more or less recognizable forms. Any text is a new tissue of past citations. Bits of code, formulae, rhythmic models, fragments of social languages, etc., pass into the text and are redistributed within it, for there is always language before and around the text. Intertextuality, the condition of any text whatsoever, cannot, of course, be reduced to a problem of sources or influences; the intertext is a general field of anonymous formulae whose origin can scarcely ever be located; of unconscious or automatic quotations, given without quotation marks (Young 1981: 39).

In his essay, '*The Death of the Author*' he further says that no text should be expected to yield a distinct 'theological meaning' (Lodge 2007:167). The text should be taken as a multidimensional space in which a multitude of writings blend and clash. He refers to innumerable centers of culture without the constraints of time and space that provide cues for the production of the text which thus becomes 'an immense dictionary'.

According to Lodge, consistent referring to the author imposes a limit on the text because usually the critics fail to notice the defining forces of the authorship that include his society, history, consciousness and his personal liberty etc. One way or the other, intertextuality is a liberating technique although its parameters as a proper technique have not yet been identified.

Since *intertextuality* generally implies the perception of the relationships existing between a given text and others preceding or following it either by means of

direct quotations or indirect allusions, the literary parallels of *Siddhartha* in both the past and present texts are taken into account for comparison and contrast so as to establish the understanding in a wider perspective.

Julia Kristeva took the inspiration for the use of the term *Intertextuality* from Mikhail Bakhtin and the Russian Formalists although it was later associated with the postmodernist theories. In her book *Desire in Language* (1974), she uses this term in two of her essays: '*The Bounded Text*' and '*Word Dialogue and Novel*.'

These essays were written in late 1960s with a focus on narrative textuality. In these she writes of 'Text' as comprising 'a permutation of texts, an intertextuality', and of how 'in the space of a given text, several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and neutralize one other (Seldon 2007: 171). Thus she suggests the intersection of a given textual arrangement with a broader set of 'exterior texts', or what she terms the 'text of society and history'.

According to Mikhail Bakhtin, during the middle ages, certain types of texts were constructed like mosaics out of the texts of others. The discourses and the language uses of others were very often appropriated. The so called genre 'cento' was exposed exclusively out of others' verse lines and hemistichs.⁴

Bakhtin quotes Paul Lehmann that the history of medieval literature ... 'is the history of appropriation, reworking and imitation of someone else's property.' (Lodge 2007: 143).

Intertextuality is sometimes described in relationship with postmodern criticism and some of the literati seem to disapprove of it as well. According to them, it has faded away related terms and important fine distinctions. According to William Irwin, intertextuality has eclipsed allusion as an object of literary study (Irwin 2004: 227-242).

Intertextuality has become open to such a diversity of opinions and interpretations and has been defined in so very different terms over the past half century that it cannot be declared a transparent, commonly understood term (Allen 2000: ii).

Linda Hutcheon is against disproportionate interest in intertextuality because according to her it eclipses the role of the author and gives undue importance to the reader's point of view and does not necessarily convey the intentions of the writer. Hutcheon prefers the term "parody" as it always involves an author who encodes a text as a replication with significant distinctions.

According to her definition, parody comprises textual appropriation and imitation and not the popular sense conveyed through the word. It suffices her to present the comparative stand points of Michael Riffaterre and Roland Barthes who commonly define intertextuality as a 'matter of perception', an act of making out or deciphering texts in the light of other texts.

She tells us that for Barthes, the readers have the license for associating as many texts as may occur to their mind in the given moment of reading and analyzing

whereas Riffaterre claims that since the text has a structured entirety, the reading must be restricted and conditioned (Hutcheon 2000: 37).

According to Hutcheon, when Kristeva thought up the term 'intertextuality', she had before her, besides the text, three objects namely the author, the reader and the peripheral texts. Now, apparently, the combinations that we can expect to occur are between the author and his text and between the text and the reader and between the reader and other texts but owing to the fact that modern literary theory has suppressed the role of the author in most cases, the only relationship that we finally have is between the reader and his experiences of other texts. Thus the reader's mind is the receptacle of the entire intertextual experience (Hutcheon 2000: 87).

The via media in case of *Siddhartha* should be to give due emphasis to the story whereof Hesse makes selective appropriation i.e. the true story of Siddhartha Gautama Buddha. On the other hand, Hesse's sum total of lifelong experiences including the writing of the novel and the intellectual influences that he was under may also be taken into account.

The British film theoretician John Fiske has introduced some new dimensions to the field of intertextuality when he says that the works of art (which he prefers to call 'texts' in other places),

... locate their value in what they have in common, for their shared conventions...not only with other texts in the genre, but also between texts and audiences, text and producers, and producers and audiences. (Fiske 1987: 110)

Fiske has also given the idea of a vertical and horizontal aspect of intertextuality. The former denotes allusions that have a straight parallel i.e. a written treatise making references to others of its kind, whereas the latter is found when a script makes a reference to other art forms. According to him,

genres are intertextual or pre-textual for they form the network of industrial, ideological and institutional conventions that are common to both producer and audiences out of which arise both the producer's programme and audiences' readings"... "Understanding works of art generically, however, locates their value in what they have in common, for their shared conventions...not only with other texts in the genre, but also between texts and audiences, text and producers, and producers and audiences. (Fiske 1987: 111)

In case of *Siddhartha*, a parallel tension must run between the way Hesse perceived it and the way present researcher explores it. There should be no need of forced conformity and reasonable latitude should be assumed.

Fiske also suggests that readings involved during intertextual research should be those preferred by the text and this gives the present research a direction as most of the references in the novel pertain to the realm of spirituality, mysticism and religious philosophy.

On the basis of the above mentioned relationships between the producer of the text, the text itself, and the audience, Fiske suggests the development of a new genre that he calls 'Tertiary Text' (Fiske 1987:124) an example of which is the text that is being produced in the form of the present research thesis on *Siddhartha*.

Similarly, the linguist Fairclough distinguishes between manifest and constitutive

types of intertextuality. One refers to intertextual elements like presupposition, negation, parody, irony, etc. The other refers to the inter-relationship of discursive features such as structure, form, genre, etc. Constitutive Intertextuality is also referred to as inter-discourse (Fairclough 1992: 117).

1.6 Limitations of the Study:

- i. As the novel is approachable only in the English translations done from the original German version, I have to rely wholly on the veracity and authenticity of the translators which might or might not have left out some of the nuances as suggested or implied in the original text by the author.
- ii. Although a Noble Laureate like Hesse would have remained an incessant reader of many sciences and philosophies yet there is no way to determine the exact range of his studies and literary interests.
- iii. I have taken clues to Hesse's learning and interests through hints in his biographies or what he himself has provided in the novel. These hints have been explored through extensive study of the related material available in the accessible libraries as well as online electronic resources.
- iv. The present research cannot go into the vast arena of History of Philosophy or the History of Ideas as well as the details of the various Spiritual Schools of Mystical thought both in the East and the West. The scope of the present research is to look for the Philosophical and Mystical elements within the text of *Siddhartha* and find out their parallel

equivalence among the Eastern and Western resources.

- v. Thus, only those aspects of Philosophy and Mysticism have been touched upon that have congruent and parallel thought available within the text of the novel.

1.7 Significance of the Study:

I have concentrated on the text of the novel while bringing together the background and the foreground texts of multifarious related disciplines that aid not only in the deep understanding of the novel but also provide a foundation as well as a framework for future intertextual studies.

It has also opened a new opportunity in the field of Comparative Literature where the entire body of international literatures, *Weltliteratur*, may be taken as a single entity. There are clear philosophical and religious equivalents in the novel as it was written at a time when psychoanalytic movement and new conception of Orientalism were fast displacing the conventional religion and morality in Europe.

The timeless mystical writings of Vedanta and the Buddhist teachings and inscriptions as old as two thousand five hundred years as well as the scientific theories particularly in the field of modern theoretical physics all suddenly become relevant as one big mass of knowledge whose threads are intertwined.

Thus the practice of studying texts sporadically can now safely be delegated to a broader level where the scholars of various disciplines can mutually contribute to

the understanding of their various viewpoints with a feeling of homogeneity and harmony. The application of intertextual framework on *Siddhartha* has successfully resolved the question of the *ultimate meaning*. The meaning, it has been discovered, comes gradually from the author, the synchronic and diachronic aspects of the text and the reader's exposure to life and its various shades.

I conclude this literature review with Shelley's aphorism when he said that the poets of all ages contribute to one Great Poem which is perpetually in progress (Bloom 1997: 19).

NOTES:

1. On the homepage of the International Society for the Study of Narrative, the editors have included Comparative Literature and Comparative Criticism as terms that are closely related to the conception of Intertextuality.
2. Bildungsroman means an account of the youthful development of the hero. It describes the processes by which maturity is achieved through the various ups and downs of life. Erziehungsroman is synonymous with the above with the exception of focus particularly on education of the protagonist. Weltanschauung denotes a world view particularly of a specific writer.
3. Palimpsest is originally a writing surface that has been used more than once for manuscript purposes. Because almost every piece of language has already been used over and over again, Ezra Pound and Hilda Doolittle have used the word metaphorically to suggest the many layers and tissues of meaning in any text (Harmon 2009:377).
4. Cento (Latin, 'patchwork'), a poetic compilation made up of passages selected from the work of great poets of the past.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

I shall now review the available literature, the theoretical background of the topic in order to contextualize the findings in relation to the existing body of knowledge. In order to take a larger view of *Siddhartha* and to provide a better perspective, a meta-analytical approach that permits us to combine studies of various characteristics to reach a unified conclusion has been used (McBurney 2007: 350).

The idea of applying the meta-analytical approach for the present study emerged while I was reading Titus Burckhardt who suggests that the Eastern and Western scholarships in the area of philosophical metaphysics are divergent though their focus of attention is more or less the same i.e. the estimation of the Reality and the Unity thereof.

... It is inevitable that such confusions should arise since a university training and bookish knowledge are in the West deemed sufficient authority for concerning oneself with things which in the East remain naturally reserved to those who are endowed with spiritual intuition and who devote themselves to the study of these things in virtue of a true affinity under the guidance of those who are the heirs of a living tradition.
(Burckhardt 2005: vi)

He believes that the focus of the discursive knowledge of the West is the *external form* and that of the East is the *essential element*. He attributes the reason to the evolutionist prejudices that determine the outlook of most of the Western scholars in this area.

Siddhartha in its essence is a biographical, autobiographical, historical, intellectual, spiritual and philosophical novel ... a genre that sidesteps familiar recognition. It is literary transcription, retelling of the story, myth making and problem-solving fiction.

The present research had primarily started with the comparative study of the available translations of *Siddhartha* and the other related texts of the writer side by side with a detailed study of Hesse's available biographical accounts for an estimation of his scope of reading and direct personal experiences both with the Occidental thought and the spirit of the Orient.

During the research I have taken into consideration the literary, social, and political circumstances of the times when Hesse wrote *Siddhartha*. The shaping influence of the new philosophies as they emerged and as he was exposed to them directly or indirectly has also been taken into account.

As per intertextual approach, the literary or otherwise ideational parallels to each and every aspect of the novel could be traced and for this purpose, I have looked deep into the history of Western Philosophy with particular stress on how the belief system stood in Hesse's time i.e. post World War Europe.

Correspondingly, the history of Eastern philosophical tradition ranges from the oldest Sanskrit Scriptures like Vedas and Upanishads to Lao Tse and other Taoist traditions as well as the Pantheistic Monism of the Muslim Sufi thought. It thus

entails a comparative religious approach including the study of the sacred texts of both Eastern and Western religions.

During the present research it has been noted that all religious philosophies imply transcendentalism with different levels of continuity of reality, and stress, one way or the other, on a primordial purity and a universal norm. Everything in the perilous world of forms and change can be approached through these principles. Schuon indicates the presence of a fluid theosophy in the ancient tradition of Shamanism that is reflected in the religious inclinations of people as far and wide as Mongoloid people of China and Japan as well as those of Siberia and the American Red Indians (Schuon 2004: 75).

This fluidity gives rise to a pantheism that is evident as early as the Buddhist Tradition of Anatman or not-self of Abhidharma or Higher Philosophy (Prebish 2003: 44). Whether we refer to the historical Siddhartha or the one we come across in Hesse's narrative deliberation, we clearly see that there is an urge to mingle in a special kind of pantheism where the restrictions of the worldly life ranging from ordinary selfhood to the karmic fixture of destiny are broken and deliverance is reached. We have to learn to differentiate the transcendent nature of human beings from the psychological nature in order to grasp the nature of religious experience involving its possibility, necessity and truth (Schuon 2004: 142). He says, "... this is the plane of gnosis, of the *religio perennis*, whereon the extrinsic antimonies of dogma are explained and resolved" (Ibid).

1

An evidence of this fluidity or amalgamation has been noted in Chinese Buddhist mythology that focuses on mythologizing the historical Siddhartha into the mythical Buddha, a process that began in India. They believe that at the time of his birth Chinese rivers overflowed their banks and several mountains collapsed and the wise men told the emperor that a great man had been born. The Taoists have another version that Buddha was in fact Laozi or Lau Tzu (Littlejohn) who completed *The Book of the Way and its Virtue* also known as *The Way of Life* or *Tao Te Ching* and then vanished into the West (the West to the ancient Chinese was India and not Europe).

During the research I found out that some Oriental scholarship of value considers Siddhartha Gautama Buddha to be a Prophet of God who came with revealed knowledge. For example, Martin Lings writes in his book *A Return to the Spirit*,

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The Buddha is not mentioned in the Qur'an at all, but the Qur'an states that for every people God has sent a messenger (Qur'an 10:47), and that some of these have been mentioned whereas others have not (Qur'an 40:78 and 4:164); and since the Buddha established a religion over two thousand years ago which to this day remains in possession of a large part of the East, he must have been a messenger in the full sense of the Arabic word *rasul*.

Can it not then be said that the absence in Buddhist doctrine of any word which can reasonably be translated by the word of "God" constitutes a kind of inter-religious contradiction? The answer is that Buddhism's insistence on the One Absolute Infinite Eternal Reality brings it into agreement with all other religions. (Lings 2005: 21)

In addition to these pluralist intertextual references, the scientific knowledge and more particularly the areas of theoretical Physics dealing with the unitary constitution of the matter and the holistic interrelationship of matter and energy

from the time of early Photon Theory to the modern String Theory also falls within the scope of the research as the novel clearly deals, particularly in its intricate references to the enigma of time and space and their ontological patterning, with the history of ideas, both scientific and artistic.

The point where Eastern and Western philosophies intersect is commonly known as Perennial Philosophy.¹ According to Huxley (1894-1963), the perennial philosophy is:

...the metaphysics that recognizes a divine Reality substantial to the world of things and lives and minds; the psychology that finds in the soul something similar to, or even identical with, divine Reality; the ethic that places man's final end in the knowledge of the immanent and transcendent ground of all being; the thing is immemorial and universal.

Rudiments of the perennial philosophy may be found among the traditional lore of primitive peoples in every region of the world, and in its fully developed forms it has a place in every one of the higher religions. (Huxley 1946: vii)

He also points out the method of the Buddha who declined to make any statement in regard to the ultimate divine Reality. This is what philosophia perennis and the Upanishad have in common. In his thought provoking essay "Notes on Zen", Huxley says that by meditation (man) can bypass language. 'His individual consciousness, deverbilized, becomes one with the unitary consciousness of Suchness' (Isherwood 1972: 400)..

This is so because in the moment of contemplation the knower, the known and the knowledge are all one. Man becomes at the same time the subject and substance of that experience. This is the moment and the disposition for which

Siddhartha is shown to have endeavoured in Hesse's narrative. When he achieves *sunyata* i.e. a mind which is void of greed anger and delusion, the transpersonal concept of God comes forth with its attributes of *sat*, *chit* and *ananda* (infinite being, awareness and bliss) and this is when *tathata* i.e. 'the suchness' is achieved through *vipassana*, the insight into the nature of things leads to *nirvana*, the realization of the ultimate reality (Smith 2002 b: 223).

This perennial philosophy is expressed most succinctly in the Sanskrit formula, 'tat twam asi' ('That thou art'); the Atman, or immanent eternal Self, is one with Brahman, the Absolute Principle of all existence; and the last end of every human being, is to discover the fact for himself, to find out who he really is.

Doctor Karl Theodor Jaspers (1883-1969), who is Hesse's contemporary German psychiatrist and philosopher, also took interest in the Eastern philosophies particularly Buddhism and gave the idea of an Axial Age or '*axis-time*' in which a great transformation of thought took place with Socrates, Confucious and Buddha as possible contemporaries though at different ends of the great spectrum. Karen Armstrong however suggests that a similar ideological transformation took place in the second axial age in Europe with Isaac Newton, Sigmund Freud and Albert Einstein and asserts that the axial insights need to be taken into account to face the challenges of thought even today (Armstrong 2006). Now, this is very interesting to note that Hesse can safely be placed in the period of the second axial age and that he takes his hero from the first axial age, i.e. Siddhartha.

Hesse's time was marked by a revolution in the field of philosophy and several

modern western philosophical doctrines were in vogue like Freud's psychodynamic philosophy of mind, Nietzsche's existentialism, Dewey's pragmatism, Saussure's structuralism, McTaggart's Idealism and Husserl's Phenomenology etc., and these afford an insight into Hesse's intellectual pursuits too.

At the same time, the East also had something to do with shaping Hesse's creative spirit. In many respects, the story of Siddhartha, the ancient Prince of Kapilavastu is the story of the inner turmoil and its final resolution that Hesse himself underwent in the formative years of his early youth. The fact comes to light by the enlightening biographical details provided by Joseph Mileck that detail the troublesome transition in Hesse's character along with many revealing truths that encompass his family life in the backdrop of socio-political changeover of the times (Mileck 1977).

His father Johannes Hesse (1847-1916) the son of Karl Hermann Hesse, a Russian Pietist Christian, was proficient in Latin literature, Greek philosophies and oriental religions and had served in the missionary services at Malabar, India for 4 years (1869-1873). Ill health brought him back and then he settled in Calw, Germany. His mother Marie Gundert (1842-1902) was born in Talatscheri, India. She was the daughter of the Pietist Missionary and Indologist Hermann Gundert. She was born in Malabar and was educated in Switzerland and Germany. Hesse's sense of belonging with India poignantly owes to this parental background. Until 1870 Marie had travelled to and from India quite frequently. Despite being a

devoted mother, she assisted her father and husband in Calwar Verlagsverein Mission and lived the career of a biographer, a poet and a linguist.

Hermann Gundert was quite fluent in English, German, French, Italian, Hindustani, Malayalam, Bengali, Kannada, Telugu, Tamil and ten other languages. Owing to the fact that her father was fluent in most of the European and Indian languages, she had a good understanding of different cultures and Hesse inherited this spirit from her. His maternal grandmother was of a French Swiss descent and the paternal grandmother was of the Slavic origin.

Hesse is reported to have developed a precocious personality from early childhood and was at the same time hypersensitive, imaginative, lively, and headstrong (Mileck 1977: 4). We see that the Siddhartha of his making has all the qualities that we see in Hesse. They were both constant source of annoyance and despair to their teachers and parents. Both had skeptical fathers and at the same time mothers who sensed that their sons would have extraordinary future.

Since 1883 Johannes Hesse thought of sending his inflexible child to boarding but in 1886 a change occurred when he was given the citizenship of Calw, Württemberg and his son started receiving free schooling at Maulbronn. Everything went on fine apparently till one day on March 7, 1892 Hesse went on a French leave from school and was discovered after 23 hours with intractable headache and insomnia. He remained listless and exhibited erratic behavior for many days. On May 7, he was taken out of school as his sanity was doubted.

As a matter of comparison, we see that both Siddhartha's father as well as the chief Samana do not understand his quest and the driving force that takes him out to explore and find the answer. Only Buddha understands because he has been through this himself. Only he has unraveled the mystery and knows that no teacher can actually take one out to the spring of eternal truth. He bids Siddhartha, in the novel, to beware of cleverness because the cleverness is the result of a candid self whereas, the spiritual way begins with conquering the self (Hesse 2007: 29).

He later discovers that fighting to conquer the self is also the wastage of energy and time. It is not in escape from the self that would guarantee success, nor could the search of an outward Atman, 'the Divine the Absolute' do that. He resolves that he would

...no longer mutilate and destroy myself in order to find a secret behind the ruins. I will no longer study Yoga-Veda, Atharva-Veda, asceticism or any other teaching. I will learn from myself, be my own pupil; I will learn from myself the secret of Siddhartha. (Hesse 2007: 32)

In terms of mystical philosophy, Hesse's Siddhartha is moving from Pantheism and Theism to Apparentism and Unityism as per the respective mystical methods followed by the great Eastern Spiritualists Ibn Arabi and Mujaddid of Sirhind though their response to Reality is divided most slightly as to what it is and what it appears to be (Hussain 1963: 65).

For Hesse's Siddhartha, he himself and the world around him are like the essence and its attributes or like the reality and its emanations. For him the beatific vision

is possible in his own reflection. To equate his body, mind and soul with *Om*² is his secret passion. He wants it to sound within and without in a way that there is nothing between the intermingling sounds.

According to Huston Smith,

... it is the spark of divinity that God plants in human beings that initiates the journey in the first place. Transcendence takes the initiative at every turn: in creating the world, in instantiating itself in the world, and in shaping civilizations through its revelations – revelations that set civilizations in motion and establish their trajectories. (Smith 2002 b: 31)

But this realization calls for a wrangling spirit that needs perfect purification and refinement. In Hesse's biographical account the next step towards refinement was falling in love with an objective reality in the form of feminine beauty. It started with an adolescence infatuation and then remained with him throughout his life, gradually bringing about a spiritual finesse beyond his control. His own journey from *kama* to *prema* had started.

Just like his Siddhartha who, during his agonizing journey towards a life of eternity, finds a semblance of peace in Kamala who becomes his sanctuary for his training in the art of love, the young Hesse at the age of fifteen fell in an unrequited love for Eugenie Kolb who was twenty four years old.

The future events in his life afford a parallel to the story of his Siddhartha who discovers the futility of *sansara* and falls into a deep depression and is reported to

have left his mistress, his wealth, his pleasure garden and his mango tree behind and who answers to Govinda's question about his riches,

I have lost them, or they have lost me – I am not sure. The wheel of appearances revolves quickly, Govinda. Where is Siddhartha the Brahmin, where is Siddhartha the Samana, where is Siddhartha the rich man? The transitory soon changes Govinda. You know that. (Hesse 2007: 77)

The following events lead Hesse's Siddhartha to quit all belongings and cut the basic human instinct to survive to its bare minimum till he is rescued by the ferryman Vasudeva. Mileck tells us that on June 20, 1892, Hesse decided to do away with his life and even took a revolver and wrote down a suicide note but somehow could not accomplish this desire (Mileck 1977: 6). The result was a very dejected and insolent existence.

Pastor Gottlob Schall's school for mentally retarded and emotionally disturbed children at Stetton was his next refuge but he returned before the winter and was found agitated and resentful due to the parental rejection. His rebellion against formal education was later expressed in the novel *Beneath the Wheel* (1906). Having rejected the schooling experience, he was involved in self-education. He worked with a book-seller and assisted a freelance journalist. He traces his bitter experiences in the novel *Peter Camenzind*, the story of a dissolute and depraved writer (Encarta 2007).

Fifteen years old Hesse then began to assert against the establishment, his father, adult authority, and religion in the same spiteful manner in which thirty three years later he, an equally distraught *steppenwolf* was to rail against sham Western

Culture and its establishment. Almost same is the case with Emil Sinclair, the young hero of *The Demien* who is also involved in the search of his own potential and self. His family is also, like Siddhartha's, wealthy, respectable and godly.

Meanwhile Sinclair falls deeper in love with Frau Eva (another reverberation of Eugenie Kolb or Kamala). She, we are told, understands everything about him. She is able to interpret his troubling dreams positively. Sinclair is also in invariable conflict with himself over his love for her. She encourages him in his desire and tells him that he should not be afraid. But she also tells him that her love must be won, and for her to be attracted to his love he must be confident and unafraid. As we can see, this is the recurring theme in *Siddhartha* as well.

Hesse was later admitted to Gymnasium in Cannstatt but his nerves were frayed, headaches continued and studies became meaningless torture. Remorse led to truculence plus physical ailments and there were bouts of resentful self assertion along with a life of taverns, drinking, smoking heavily, incurring debts and consorting with people of questionable characters. Consequently, his formal education ended and he returned home with the hard won permission of his parents. The environs of the mental asylum were replaced by gardening at home and avid reading (Mileck 1977: 14).

In June 1894 his expressed desire of literary career was denied by his father and he became a machinist for fifteen months, his life almost reduced to the condition of hard labour. The storm seemed to have subsided and he gave himself over to prodigious reading, fixing on Goethe, the German romanticism and 19th century

aestheticism that reflected the incense shrouded gardens, beauty-worshipping, realm of imagination, retreat from and a substitute for the insensitive outer world in which he had become an unappreciated outcast. He had found a niche and a way of life for himself and it was that of a presumptuous aspirant.

At this stage of his life, he came across Julie Hellmann and he got busy in chivalrous wooing with flowers and verses till he won her heart but not her hand.

The pain of this ambivalence looks prevalent in Siddhartha-Kamala relationship. At about this time, Hesse got interested in all sorts of art forms and came in direct or indirect contact with the historian Dr. Rudolf Wackernagel, philosopher Karl Joel, Architect Heinrich Jennen, Islamic Scholar Adam Mez, Historian Johannes Haller, Theologian Alfred Bertholet and Philologist Dr. Jacob Wackernagel. He enjoyed Pastor La Roche's musical evenings and last but not the least fell in love with Elizabeth la Roche while writing *Lulu* his paeon to Julie Hellmann.

Tolstoy's *Resurrection* left him depressed due to its nihilistic unwholesome atmosphere. He turned with veritable passion to Dostoevsky by the end of the war and in 1921 declared Russian belle-letters of 19th century as the world's best literature. Medieval monastic life gradually became for him the symbol of eternal realm of the spirit (Mileck 1977: 34).

Hesse married Maria Bernoulli with the desire of settling down in life in 1904. The same year he came under the influence of the philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer and his tenets of theosophy. His interest in India and Buddhism was re-sparked

and because his relationship with Maria was on the decline in those days, he decided to take a spiritual pilgrimage and set out to the journey of discovery through Sri Lanka and Indonesia in 1911. He returned in 1912 but where on the one hand, his journey to the East was more physically tiring than spiritually promising, the rift between him and Maria increased and the birth of his son Martin Hesse promised little consolation.

His father died on March 8, 1916 and for Hesse this started an inner turmoil of guilt-consciousness for having thwarted his father's dreams. Although he had enlisted for the military service, the serious ailment of his son Martin due to an inappropriate vaccination, and his wife's schizophrenia forced him to leave his military service and he was so upset that he had to undergo psychotherapy as well as electrotherapy.

In more than one ways, Hesse can be compared with John Nash, the 1994 Nobel Laureate, the inventor of *Game Theory*, who also had to go through a long struggle with schizophrenia. Where Nash focused on solving the dynamics of threats and actions among the competitors (Britannica 2007), Hesse underwent a long preoccupation with psychoanalysis, came to know Carl Jung, and was challenged to new creative heights.

During a three-week period in September and October 1917, Hesse wrote his novel *Demian*, which was published following the armistice in 1919 under the pseudonym Emil Sinclair. The book's treatment of the symbolic duality between the dream character *Demian* and his real-life counterpart, Sinclair, that later

appear as the duality of Buddha and Siddhartha in *Siddhartha*, aroused great interest among German intellectuals of the 1920s.

Hesse's novels afterward became increasingly symbolic and psychoanalytical in approach. For example, where *Siddhartha* (1922) reflects Hesse's interest in Eastern mysticism, *Journey to the East* (1932) examines, in Jungian terms, the mythic qualities of human experience (Encarta 2007). His budding preoccupation with world literature was aided by his general interest in art, religion, politics, psychology, philosophy, history and biography with focus on the culture of both the occident and the Orient.

Josef Bernhard Lang (1883-1945) became Hesse's friend and consolation at this stage of his life and they had a relationship quite comparable to Siddhartha and Govinda. Lang, himself a psychiatrist was a troubled eccentric whose dream of a promising career was never realized, he rather became dependent upon Hesse, much so as Govinda did in *Siddhartha*. Through his support however, Hesse's anxieties were dispelled and he learned to cope more ably with his frustrations and emerged slowly from his deep depressions.

Earlier, he had fixed his attentions and hopes upon nature to uplift him and was happy with his passive adjustment with life but now he was determined to know the world and was prepared for drastic action. Introspection which was once a blissful indulgence soon became merciless self-analysis.

This began his painting career (Mileck 1977: 41). His pen explored life's shadows and his brush exposed its lively colours, at once at odds with the world and yet content. He depicted pastoral scenes, mountain landscapes delicately blurred in contour, rolling hills and scattered dwellings, surrealistic in their distortions, lyrical in expression, disarmingly naive in manner, buoyant in mood and fanciful in execution, quite comparable to his American contemporary, Kahlil Gibran (1881-1931). Their intertextual biographical comparison is also worth noticing. The latter published his famous book *The Prophet* in 1923 and it also deals with the spiritual questions of healing and hope and love.

Due to all these thematic commonalities that were observed during the literature review, the application of expressive realistic literary position became imperative, at least in the early phase of my intertextual response. Ruskin's view that a true writer or the artist should not only base his work on his personal and realistic observation of life (Belsey 2001: 9) but should also focus on the didactic objective of directing the attention of his readers or viewers to those particular aspects of life that ought to take hold of his attention, holds practically true in the case of Hesse's *Siddhartha* where the magic has been affected through submerged biography, myth making and retelling of the story in consonance with direct and indirect multiple Eastern and Western intellectual, and mystical references.

Notes

1. The term "Perennial Philosophy" was coined by Steuchus Eugubin (Agostino Steuco) of the 16th century, appropriated by Gottfried Leibniz, but popularized by Aldous Huxley, according to whom it pertains to a primary concern "with the one, divine Reality substantial to the manifold world of things and lives and minds."
2. Om is a Mantra of the meditative tradition: also written and pronounced as Aum: The *Chandogia Upanishad* begins with a long discussion on the sound Om, where it is held to represent all sound, to be the essence of the Veda and the key to immortality and Union with Brahman. There is an auditory representation of the three realms, the earth, atmosphere and heaven as a unified cosmos.

CHAPTER 3

***Siddhartha* and the Eastern Philosophical and Mystical Intertextual Parallels**

Despite the simplicity of the plot and the lyrical quality of the narrative, *Siddhartha* embodies a philosophy that is quite unique and intriguing. It is a combination of the thought of many climes and ages. The story on the surface of it is amazing but the underlying message is enchanting.

The Eastern Philosophies that came to influence Hesse include Buddhism, Hinduism, Sufism and Taoism. There are traces of Zoroastrianism, Confucianism, Shinto, Judaism, Jainism and Sikhism interspersed here and there but these are indirect in nature and feeble in impact. One common thread that runs throughout these philosophies is that these profess to have the direct experience of God and the Universe as one of their primary goals. They believe in the Unity of all things, consider beatific vision possible and involve ritualistic practices to experience both physically and emotionally, an ontological phenomenon of *Being* beyond mere consciousness.

The consciousness has to depend on common logic but the *visionary*, as Iqbal asserts, must go beyond the limitations of logic as it is merely a glare of the street lamp and not 'the light of destination' (Iqbal 1986: 376).

The Eastern literature that was available to Hesse included Vedanta, Bhagavad

Gita, Upanishads, Buddhist books like Gathas Yashts, Jaina Sutras, Sikh Scriptures, and various treatises of different Islamic schools of thought. All these blend most aesthetically in *Siddhartha*. The belief systems mentioned here were known to him through his personal scholarship and through the interaction that he experienced during his travels to the East.

All of this was the talk of the day in the household as his father Johannes Hesse (1847-1916) and his mother Marie Gundert (1842-1902) had both lived and worked in the missionary service in India for years. Both were ardent readers of Oriental religions. Hesse had thus genetically been coded for his interest in Eastern schools of thought (Mileck 1977: 1).

While retelling the story of Siddhartha, Hesse has taken a lot of latitude as he bifurcates the historical Buddha into two aspects of personality, the one that has been initiated and the other that has to set off. Such a style may seem to breach the historical truth of the legend but it fulfills the literary humanistic motif and makes the story more and more connected to the condition of the ordinary human beings who may never attain to such heights or depths but who, nevertheless, desire to be emotionally related to the spiritual dictum which cannot be fully described in words.

Myths prove to be the archetypes i.e. "recurring images or symbols which connect one text with another and constitute a source of the intelligibility of the text" (Belsey 2001: 23). In the universal context every entity serves the role of a text. In other words everything capable of any meaning is a text and is mutually

connected. The human mind looks around in the universe to locate the threads of connection between itself and what surrounds it from all sides.

A recent parallel of Hesse's retelling of the story can be found in Urdu Literature under the title, *Dasht-i-Soos* by Jamila Hashmi, a novel that retells the great legend of Hussain bin Mansoor Hallaj, a very important character in the history of mysticism (Hashmi 1988). Not only is the narrative method of the two texts comparable but also the thematic subtleties.

The initial happy life, the renunciation, the challenges of the Path and the moment of Oneness, all have the same 'textere' in both the works. Even the feminine companionship between Hesse's Siddhartha and Hussain bin Mansoor with Kamala and Aghwal respectively are comparable. Though reasons for these feminine sources of inspiration are of very different nature and intensity, the possibility of a comparative study is however possible.

Another tale of the Indian origin that deals with the travelling and discovering of the spiritual path is too familiar to be missed, and this is *Kim* by Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936). Teshoo Lama from Tibet comes to Lahore in the Buddhist quest of looking for 'the way' to emancipate himself from the 'wheel of things' and to dissolve his soul into the 'great soul'. He is looking for the 'River of the Arrow' that sprang from the falling of one of the arrows shot by Buddha. Although Kim has his other spying activities, he nevertheless joins in the quest of the lama to look for horizons beyond the ordinary appearances (Kipling 1996).

It is interesting to note that in all the three cases of Siddhartha, Mansoor and Teshoo, the story would end at a note of Nirvana, the moment of recognition and spiritual enlightenment. The three protagonists affirm this freedom from the binding forces of life and death with an all-pervading deep smile. This is a condition which sages have identified under different names like Atman (Buddha), Khudi (Iqbal) and Joy (Coleridge). The last of these may be elaborated in his own words from *Dejection: An Ode* (Johnson 1960: 286):

Joy is the sweet voice, Joy the luminous cloud ...
And thence flows all that charms or ear or sight,
All melodies the echoes of that voice,
All colours a suffusion from that light.

The desire of the human soul to be eternally related with the divine spirit is as old as the birth of humanity itself because it was the very creation of the human form that caused the first 'great divide' between the creator and the creation.

The basic premise of both Philosophy and Mysticism is a set of two questions: Who am I? And, what is my position with reference to the Universe? Iqbal presents this philosophical riddle in his poem *Philosophy and Mysticism* (Falsafa-o-Mazhab) in the following words: "I cannot decipher the secret of the journey of life; where can I find a sage who can see beyond the apparent? The scientist, Bu-Ali Sina is still wondering about the origin of life whereas Rumi the mystic is wondering what he would evolve into" (Iqbal 1986: 440).

These are the questions that have caused the great minds of the East and West to

ponder upon since the dawn of humanity. These have caused human beings a lot of travelling in the quest of knowledge and the requisite suffering along with a great amount of sacrifice. They have sometimes faced threats and torture, even the death sentences, at the hands of established tradition. But they have withstood it in the hope of a spiritual resolution and harmony and a consequent discovery.

Rumi says in his *Mathnavi* :

He hath caused the non-existent to appear existent and magnificent;
He hath caused the existent to appear in the form of non-existence.
He hath concealed the Sea and made the foam visible;
He hath concealed the Wind and displayed to thee the dust.
The dust is whirling in the air high as a minaret:
How should the dust rise aloft of itself?

Thou seest the dust on high O infirm of sight:
The Wind thou seest not except through knowledge given by induction.
Thou seest the foam moving in every direction:
Without the Sea the foam hath no turning-place.

The eye that appeared (came into being) in a state of slumber,
How should it be able to see aught but fantasy and non-existence?
(Rumi 1934: 63)

Where Rumi takes these questions and expands their scope by challenging the conditions and the premise that these dwell upon, Hermann Hesse has also tried to answer these two questions and he has very intelligently chosen Siddhartha as the center of his expanding circle of search.

The circle expands in all directions. He has not set any dimensions of the right and the wrong because the right and the wrong have relative values in the framework of time-and-space. The mystical search is value-neutral and cannot be measured by empiricist formulae or by the ethical standards of any one given

standard of time and space.

According to Veena Das, during the colonial period there did exist a tendency among the Western writers to understand Indian religions in a manner that is conducive to the Judaeo-Christian conception of religion, a process that may be called 'semitification of Hinduism' (King 1999: 104).

This charge may not be completely true in case of Hesse. Hesse involuntarily albeit invariably helped develop a colonial discourse by textualizing a unified and holistic understanding of the various Indian religions. He merged the *ahistorical* idea of the oriental religious experience with the active and historically changing Occident. Some of his ideas link up with the famous doctrinal stand points that define certain religious and philosophical schools of thought and experiences of individual truth-seeking.

The mystical dimensions which are stressed in Hesse's treatise are those of *love* and *unity*. In Samagama Sutta, Siddhartha is reported to have elaborated six principles of cordiality 'that create love and respect and conduce to cohesion, to non-dispute, to concord, and to unity' (Bodhi 2005: 132).

In the novel, collective morality and traditional religion seems to give way to pure individualism in which unity and love are synthesizing agents. In the title essay of his book *My Belief: Essays on Life and Art* (Hesse: 1931), Hesse states, "*Siddhartha* puts not cognition, but love in first place ... it disdains dogma and makes the experience of unity the central point."

In the novel, the way to the peace of mind and the path to truth are allegedly the same. Neither the protagonist's stopover with the Samanas, nor his attempted search for "the answer" to the enigma of existence in all 'God's plenty' stop the distress which is the chief product of his sense of individuation, or his fear of death. But 'Siddhartha' means the awakened one or the one who has reached the final goal (through unity, totality and simultaneity). This is liberation. According to Gai Eaton, what the ordinary scholarship does is to 'impose upon the final truth the limitation of our ignorance' (Eaton 2004: 42).

When Siddhartha desires to go out into the phenomenal world, he wants to break away from the ignorance that the subjectivity of the household has levied upon him. The safe environment has put him into a dream like condition and while he would remain in that dream, the terms of the dreamers alone could be applied to him and he could only be instructed in such terms. But he decides to wake up, and this is a complete transformation in terms of understanding and the possibility of discovery.

The story of the novel begins with Siddhartha in the full bloom of his youth and knowledge ability with everything favourable on his side including the sunshine of golden days, the beauty of nature and the gift of friendship (Hesse 2007: 03).

Now, this is a wonderful beginning ... a code that tells us so much. We see the majestic interplay of the elements among which the human agency is being fostered. There is sunlight as well as shade, there is nature as well as nurture, and there is home and the riverbank and the wood. There are the basic constituents of

the universe in absolute harmony: Air freshly blowing from the trees, Water generating music through the interplay of the waves in the river, Earth holding the foundations of his house firmly like a mother, and Fire of passion burning high within his heart.

The young man is in good health and has the comforting presence and a supporting comradeship in the form of Govinda, a friend who is never jealous, never competing, acknowledging his greatness of the head and the heart and in whose presence Siddhartha can think aloud. Govinda in Sanskrit means cow-finder, flock-tender or a careful herdsman. In Hindu mythology, Govinda is one of the titles of Lord Krishna who in turn is the personification of Vishnu, the sustainer and maintainer of the cosmos, an associate-principle of Brahman or Brahma, the creator of the world (Sullivan: 87).

Hesse's description of Siddhartha's surroundings as well as the names of different characters throughout the novel are carefully chosen and not a matter of mere coincidence. Such is Govinda, bucking up Siddhartha's spirit just like Lord Krishna, in Bhagavad Gita, keeps up the spirit of Arjuna in the battlefield (Mascaro 1970: 94).

According to all standards of normal psychology, such a person should be very happy. He could perform the esoteric pronunciation of Om with every inhalation and exhalation and could feel the presence of the indestructible Atman within himself. Besides, there was the blessed presence of his parents that blessed him in every breath (Hesse 2007: 03).

In the midst of all this joy and happiness, we come to know that Siddhartha was becoming 'an unhappy prince' growing sadder and sadder every day. The novel reads further into the peaceful dreams and the soul's restlessness that he used to experience. He was living and experiencing Vedanta (Hesse 2007:04).

But he was on his way to a new, solipsistic metaphysic that is his only hope as it would enable him to perceive a situation which eliminates transitoriness and promises total unity. This is where he must logically also belong, and the cyclical nature of reality, which allegedly minimizes the significance of individual extinction, must also progress. Thus the purportedly true nature of reality is determined exclusively by Siddhartha's personal distress, and is then adduced to demonstrate that that distress was groundless (Butler 1971:117).

In his book *al-Munqidh min al-Dalal* Ghazali also describes a similar feeling when he went out in the search of Truth and Reality:

The thirst for grasping the real meaning of things was indeed my habit and wont from my early years ... It was an instinctive, natural disposition placed in my makeup by God Most High, not something due to my own choosing and contriving. As a result, the fetters of servile conformism fell away from me, and inherited beliefs lost their hold on me, when I was still quite young. (Ghazali 2006: 19)

It is very difficult to trace Hesse's scope of reading and his direct or indirect understanding of the various philosophies. But unlike Kipling's rhetorical statement about the incompatibility between the East and the West, Hesse the representative of the West, deeply involved in the Eastern lore, assimilated the

universal feelings and sensitivities that the people in the path of spiritual quest commonly undergo despite the cultural and geographical variables.

Buddha is not to be taken as a man of a limited life span starting and ending in space and time. Buddhist elders, the *arahants* (noble ones) regard him much beyond the scope of a personality, a god, an entity or an idol. He is a phenomenon, a mindfulness, a principle, a philosophy. He claimed to have found a serenity the possibility of which he preached to everyone regardless of the gender, age or clime.

We are told that he could radiate energy from his entire body that could reach out to the corners of the world. He could replicate himself into many and be the manifestation of his own self in so many postures and guises. When a Brahman asked Buddha who he was, he invited his attention to the birth of a lotus flower which begins its life in the soil under the water and then in the form of a stalk grows through and out of the water until it sees, when it blooms, full light in view, so said the Buddha to the Brahman, “remember me as the one who woke up” (Grubin 2010).

Buddha lives and is remembered through his *dhamma*, the understanding and application of the universal law of nature: ‘He who sees me sees the dhamma and he who sees the *dhamma*, sees me’.

Originally, *dhamma* is the natural condition of things, their essence, the fundamental law of their existence. Buddhist *dhamma* is of two major types or

categories: *Dhamma Vinaya* (the Buddhist path of practice and ritual) and *Dhamma Vicaya* (the study of life). Thus the religion that attracted Hesse's attention has both a theory and practice i.e. a complete code. The complexity that is evident in the doctrine is due to unchecked influences that have veiled the teachings under several layers of interpretations and ritualistic stances that Buddha himself stood against.

The great minds share a common property: unrest and dissatisfaction. They are never fully satisfied with the scheme of affairs around them and the quest for 'the land of rest' makes them consistently unrestful and they start their journey of 'thousand miles' with a certain abrupt and yet firm step. "A perpetual enthrallment whether I am in front of my beloved or not: My story is not very long to narrate" (Iqbal 1986: 331).

Renunciation and homelessness sometimes becomes an important step towards reaching the destination. It is a journey within, a journey that must have a beginning in the elements without. It's a journey not in the search of God but within God. The mystic, the Wayfarer (*Salik*, in Islamic Mysticism) seeks oneness and the basic condition for such a search is that the one is not in the quest of a material other.

The quest apparently starts in the phenomenal world and places the man of flesh and blood within the confines of time and space; but the moment one crosses into the spiritual realm, the elemental conditionality is at once gone. Then there is no juristic differentiation, no sectarian identity, no religious nomenclature, and no

claims of superiority. The great Muslim agnostic and mystic Maulana Jalal ud Din Rumi says,

What is to be done o Muslims? For, I do not recognize myself.
I am neither Christian, nor Jew, nor Gaber, nor Muslim. My
place is the Placeless, my trace is the Traceless. 'Tis neither
body nor soul, for I belong to the soul of the Beloved. I have
put duality away, I have seen that the two worlds are one, I
seek one, I know one, I see one, I call one. (Iqbal 1956: 120)

The same theme has been presented by Baba Bulleh Shah: 'When '*Hoo*' (He) is both within and without, where does Bahu seek '*Hoo*' (Him)? The stain (or burn-mark of '*Hoo*' is a mark of love and it keeps burning all the time' (Sheikh 2007: 151).

There is no beginning and no end. There is no time and no place. Existence is dimensionless, surrounding everything and surrounded only by itself: ever expanding and flowing. And an example from the East may be quoted from Rumi when he says, "I have put duality away, I have seen that the two worlds are one, I seek one, I know one, I see one, I call one" (Iqbal 1964: 121).

Even the smallest glimpse of this supernatural universe of the Self can make a person go off the balance. His behavior changes, his values transform and his reasons for laughter and joy become different from the accepted familiar standards. "When you fell in love with the Divine, everyone exasperated you. They have labeled you an infidel and you should agree most generously" (Shah 1989: 54).

It is reported that when Hadhrat Umar (r.a.) and Hadhrat Ali (r.a.) went to see Hadhrat Uways al-Qarni in Yemen as directed by the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.): ‘When you see him, give him my greeting, and bid him pray for my people.’

They inquired about him from his townsfolk who were visiting Makkah, the latter replied in a very casual tone, ‘ he is a madman who dwells in solitude and associates with no one. He does not eat what men eat, and feels no joy or sorrow. When others smile he weeps and when others weep, he smiles’ (Hajwiri 2001: 159).

This mystical path is not in a straight line, nor is the manner and the etiquette of travelling. It is a strange spiraling way that changes the entire map every moment. It weaves around the traveler and makes him one with it. There is no more ‘I am on the path.’ There is only, ‘I am the Path.’ There is no more ‘I am in love’, it is only ‘I am Love’. This is what Turk-i-Garami has very beautifully described: “There may be someone who says ‘I am God!’, what I say is, ‘I am the beloved.’ I have my own head, my own ideas, my own keenness, and my own yearning (Abdullah 1978: 33).

With such subtle disposition of Quest and the shaping influence of Nature growing all around him, we see this sojourner, Siddhartha, the prince of Kapilavastu of the Sakya clan, born in Lumbini (now in Nepal) in the year 563 BC, the son of King Saddhodhana and Queen Maya, the husband of Yasodhara and Rahula’s father, who at the age of twenty nine experienced the first

rudimentary reverberations of 'Om'.

Here we come across a very interesting complexity. Siddhartha Wants an institution to be lead through the spiritual voyage and this he finds lacking in the Brahmanic discipline of his own father. He then joins the group of Samanas in the hope of finding the way. The samanas have in the place of their goal, only rituals and the rituals are dead exercises unless they have the surety of some spiritual benefit.

With no such surety on record, Siddhartha decides to leave them and allows himself to be fed by the thought of moving on. His words are very meaningful when he declares that all the knowledge he could gather from the childlike samanas was what he could have learnt in the company of carters, gamblers and prostitutes (Hesse 2007: 14).

On Govinda's flabbergasted challenge about the significance of what they were learning through meditation, control of the breath and insensibility towards pain and hunger , Siddhartha replies that these are all means to win a temporary escape from the puzzle of the self and not the freedom from its agonies. He declares all the exercises of yoga as palliatives and not the cure of the ailment of being in the cycle of existence. He compares such mediations with the idea of drinking and getting lost in the realm of the non-self.

One can find a parallel of this continuous cycle in Keats' famous *Ode to Nightingale* where the poet is tired of living an ordinary life 'where but to think is

to be full of sorrow and laden eyed despairs', 'where beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes, nor new love pine at them beyond tomorrow' (Jhonson 1960: 360). He suggests that he may turn into a nightingale and share her existence and that is what he succeeds in doing but he soon discovers that it is possible only for a while and that very soon he has to give up this negative capability and has to come back to the torment of the self.

The same is experienced by Siddhartha but much more intensely:

A heron flew over the bamboo forest—and Siddhartha accepted the heron into his soul, flew over forest and mountains, became a heron, ate fishes, suffered heron hunger, used heron language, died a heron's death....He killed his senses, he killed his memory, he slipped out of his self in a thousand different forms. He was animal, carcass, stone, wood, water, and each time he reawakened. The sun or moon shone, he was again Self, swung into the life cycle, felt thirst, conquered thirst, felt new thirst. (Hesse 2007: 12)

It means the Nirvana to him was not possible through the hollow ritual. It could not be attained through the relative liberation from the self into the not-self. Its only possibility lay going beyond the existence and this was not an easy task as he would have to break through the all surrounding cycle of existence which is practically impossible to break.

Having left the circle of the Samanas with their leader's permission as per his own desire, he goes to meet the Gautama Buddha, the Illustrious One who is famed to have 'stilled the cycle of rebirth and has conquered in himself the sorrows of the world.'

Hesse leaves his Govinda as well as the university students and the general public

wondering why Siddhartha refuses to tack on with Buddha! The biographical details take us to Hesse's personal experience with organized learning. He had come to believe that self realization can best be effective when either there is no teacher, and if there is one, he has to withdraw dictation and let the minds of his disciples grow independently.

The founder of Lin Chi line of Zen Buddhism commanded his disciples: "If you meet the Buddha, Kill the Buddha." He said so to highlight one of the basic tenets of this tradition that asserts the importance of individual effort to grow and develop intellectually and spiritually. This is to say, when the institutions and the established social order do not promise intellectual liberation and spiritual satisfaction, then the individual must get up and take the responsibility of self training.

What happens in the modern educational institutions is known to all whose souls have suffered the trauma of compromising their natural talents in the favour of a fixed and standardized curriculum followed by cast-iron assessment methods that make sure that a certain mindset has been framed to admit no creativity accept vain logic and hollow information. It is because the theory taught during those tedious lectures and muscle-cramping sitcoms holds no or little relevance to the real life situations and having perspired for hours, both the sullen lecturing authority and the glum students heave a sigh of relief because now starts the real drama of life. Hesse's Siddhartha calls out to Buddha in the Jetavana grove of Anathapindika,

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 and thousands ...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 2007: 28)

For the people pent up in luxury or otherwise apartment buildings in the modern busy metropolitans, reduced to sense perception and empiricist sensibility, thinking only in terms of their respective salary packages and other social and political fears and hopes with some kind of popular media as indispensable as oxygen, a journey like Siddhartha may not be an ideal thing to undertake.

But for those who have the desire to see beyond the ordinary appearances, and those who wish to unravel the mystery of creation, this Path is worth treading; its sufferings are worth bearing because the liberation that it promises is worthwhile. There is no idea of death in this idea of liberation. One frees oneself in one's present life and without leaving it (David 1971: 81).

Normally it is believed that Buddhism is all about attaining Nirvana which is generally translated as a state of inner peace and salvation but the Masters of the Secret Teachings in Tibet believe that this word cannot be adequately translated. Their equivalent for nirvana is the phrase *nia nieun les despa* 'gone beyond suffering'. According to these masters, to go beyond suffering is attainable not by wandering about here and there but through *tos med* 'non-activity' (Ibid: 83).

True liberation is attainable through observing non-activity. It is neither annihilating inertia nor abstaining from doing anything. According to this ancient wisdom, it is impossible for a living thing to do nothing. The very existence is a kind of occupation. It does not aim at regular deeds of life like eating, sleeping, walking, speaking or reading. The Buddhist teachers declare this concept and practice of non-activity utterly necessary for the creation of the condition of deliverance called *Tharpa* (Ibid).

The Buddhist masters have an oft repeated classic simile of the two chains. Whether one is bound by an iron chain or a golden chain, the person is bound all the same. The activity used in the practice of virtue is the chain of gold while that utilized in evil deeds is the iron chain. Both imprison the doer. According to *Dhammapada*, of the *Kuddaka Nikaya*, the fifth major division of *Sutta Pitaka*, 'He who has shaken off the two chains, that of good and that of evil, he is a Brahmin.'

It is very important to know the difference between *Brahman* and *Brahmin*. Hesse has also taken care of this distinction in his novel. *Brahman* means the one absolute God who is the originator of everything or the creator. And *Brahmin* is the one who has acquired the knowledge of the *Brahman* or the *Brahma*, that is to say a spiritually enlightened man who has gone beyond the phantasmagoria of *Samsara*.

When Siddhartha perceives the message of liberation, he treads the Path, without any hesitation. He breaks the chains of relationships and starts off doing the more

difficult thing, unraveling the knots of the self. The way it comes to him, it comes all of a sudden with an abruptness that is unprecedented in him. He is possessed to the extent that he talks about himself in the third person when he tells Govinda that he is going to join the group of ascetics and become the Samana (Hesse 2007: 8).

Wordsworth reports a similar epiphany when he receives this message of the eternal nature in the form of a gush of gentle breeze in the beginning lines of *The Prelude* and he welcomes it as a universal messenger and a spiritual friend (Wordsworth 2002: 8).

Siddhartha does not only renounce the family, he breaks away from divinity. He asks questions to which the conventional religion has no answers. He questions almost all forms of beliefs and rituals and conventions of his time. He takes pains to challenge the entire legacy of the religious phenomenon (Hesse 2007: 5).

He wants to know the reality of sacrifices, supplications to gods as well as reality of gods. He wants to know if *Prajapati*, who is referred to as the Creator God in Vedic Literature, did create the world, and if it were so, what was the function of *Atman*? He had been instructed that *Atman* was the self or the soul of a person that was to be regarded as eternal and unchanging. This metaphysical element was vehicle of reincarnation. It was the *Atman* that left the body of an entity at the time of death and went to another embryonic body for reincarnation or rebirth (Sullivan 2004: 31).

The Upanishads generally present the view that the individual atman is identical with Brahman, ultimate Reality or the impersonal and formless absolute, and the liberated Atman merges with Brahman at death. Hesse also seems to dwell on this explanation as far as Siddhartha's yearning after Atman is concerned.

Siddhartha wants to know if the gods are also forms created like human beings and are they also mortal and transient? Is not Atman the only one God fit to receive all our sacrifices and supplications? Where is Atman to be found, where does He dwell, where does His heart beat if not within the Self that each person has in himself.

What is the significance of the 'innermost thing' as referred to in *Upanishad of Samaveda* that reads: 'Your soul is the whole world'? Now this Upanishad which means 'sitting down around' are the end of the Vedanta and Hesse's Siddhartha has to start his journey from that point onwards which indicates Hesse's dissatisfaction with the available body of knowledge that claimed to know so much about the universe. Hesse also tells us the secret that had been revealed to Siddhartha as an answer to his great body of questions: 'One must find the source within one's own self, one must possess it. Everything else was seeking --- a detour, error' (Hesse 2007: 6).

Interestingly, we find the same feelings and questions and resolution in the story of Hussain bin Mansoor Hallaj: 'What is this existence? He would ask himself. What is manifestation? He would repeat the question. Something would throb

near his jugular vein and whisper, 'Beyond your reach...beyond your understanding...and nobody is there to tell you' (Hashmi 1988: 155).

Govinda, Siddhartha's dearest friend, and by implication the personification of Krishna the Lord, is to be seen in the first scene of Siddhartha's life when as a reader we are introduced to him. Govinda is with him when he renounces the world. He becomes a Samana with him. They present themselves before Gautama Buddha together. And then Govinda is held back so that another incarnation of God may be afforded to Siddhartha.

According to various Buddhist textual traditions, Buddha's chief disciple and his personal attendant was his first cousin Ananda. Ananda was Buddha's own choice. Ananda is especially recognized for his role in the establishment of an order of nuns *Bhiksunis*. Buddha had earlier decided not to initiate an order of nuns but Ananda interceded on the behalf of his foster mother, Mahaprajapati who desired to enter the homeless life. Ananda is also remembered for his fabulous memory when after Buddha's death, the First council was held at Rajagraha and Ananda was chosen to recite all of the sermons preached by Buddha, thus establishing the canonical record known as Sutra Pitaka or the Basket of Discourses (Prebish 2003: 243).

So we have a very complicated intricacy to settle: Is Govinda Krishna or Ananda? Or are the three the same...existence? Who is Vasudeva? Who is Kamala? Who is Kamaswami? What is the role of his son? Why is Govinda restored to him again and again? Why do we have Him testify the Nirvana of Siddhartha even in the last

moment of the story? Is this not that same Oneness, the Unity in Diversity that rolls back to itself. Is it not the wheel of existence that comes to full circle?

The East also shows evidence of this kind of knowledge. A good example to be quoted may be Ashfaq Ahmad's Play *Shana-i-Saba* (Ahmed 1988: 354) in which through the example of a strange spirit that comes to the rescue of the protagonist in the form of a woman of different ages at every moment of trial and tribulation, he declares that all those seeming coincidences were in fact very special instruments through which the divinity shapes our ends.

At the time of Siddhartha's unfolding his resolution of departure from the house we witness his father with a 'heart filled with anger, with anxiety, with fear, with sorrow' (Hesse 2007: 9).

This description has a lot of force and is not without a meaning. His father is the paragon of selfless religious devotion but his mettle is not strong enough to face the great secret of the Self. He cannot bear the burden and intensity of this great illumination that his son is seeking to explore. He has identified his disposition and is content in postponing the enterprise of quest indefinitely.

Despite having led a pure and ritualistic life, his heart is capable of very ordinary human emotions. He may have sacrificed a lot of things but he may not and cannot sacrifice his son and when things come to this point, his heart retaliates and that is why Hesse graphically describes a heart which gets filled up with anger, with anxiety ('with' used again and again as if to show the brimming

nature of this over whelming emotion), with fear and with sorrow... the natural consequence of losing something that one has developed one's sense of possession for. Whatever we desire and try to possess, ends up leaving us in the pain of separation.

According to Advaita Vedanta the world is not unreal but we misperceive it because of our ignorance, and because of the power of Maya. We see the world and ourselves, as separate entities having particular names and forms, where in reality, all is Brahman. Thus the world is illusory, unreal in an ultimate sense because its manifestations are impermanent, and reality is Nirguna Brahman, Ultimate Reality, beyond all attributes and qualities.

For Advaita or the non-dualistic Vedanta, the world and the individual selves have only an illusory existence. They are not real in an ultimate sense as they are not permanent, and are only temporary manifestations due to ignorance. With the attainment of the knowledge of reality (*janana*) that the Brahman and the self are one, illusion (*maya*) ceases to have power to bind one, and one is free of *samsara*, the cycle of rebirth and suffering (Sullivan 2004:21).

Hesse quotes freely from the Vedantic literature which is a clear proof of his involvement with Hinduism as a religious philosophy. At no point does he concern himself with the social philosophy by way of censure or even a comment. This means he has consciously suppressed the usually dominant Western concern with the sociological aspect of oriental anthropology. But the very idea that Siddhartha was not happy with the scheme of things in Hinduism practiced in his

vicinity, indirectly carries a parallel to the reformative zeal in the character of the historical Buddha that had made his spirit revolt against the odds of the religion of his forefathers.

Siddhartha moves on with the ascetics in the woods learning the 'still passion, devastating service and unpitying self denial. He learns to hold his breath, hear his heart beat and then stop it by hearing it no more. He learns to match his spirit with the birds that fly, the fish that swim, the vegetation that grows, the organic body that is dead and decaying and the inanimate vastness of the shapes and things that do not move or grow. But he rejects all these arts as nothing but to equal to the dreams of a drunkard. He sets for himself a superior goal: Rather than fulfilling his ideal of the Self, he decides 'to become empty, to become empty of thirst, desires, dreams, pleasure and sorrow ---to let the self die, to experience the peace of empty heart, to experience pure thought ... when all the passions and desires were silent, then the last must awaken' (Hesse 2007: 11).

The same is what Iqbal has said in his poem *Khizr-i-Rah* in *Baang-i-Dara*, "Whoever desires to die on the cross of truth, must let the life be infused into his body first" (Iqbal 1986:259).

Siddhartha's disinterestedness in the known forms of religion and religious teachings is evident at several points in the novel. For example, when he makes up his mind to leave the Samanas, he tells Govinda: 'I have become distrustful of teachings and learning and that I have little faith in words that come to us from teachers' (Hesse 2007: 19).

Now this is very well related to Hesse's own experience as a protestant. He himself has suggested in his essay *My Faith* that his Siddhartha is a modern day protestant and that nothing in the novel is to be read in isolation.

Siddhartha does not stay with the Gautam. He enjoys Buddha's sense of achievement, his unfading light and his invulnerable peace. There are so many hundreds of people that travel far and wide to hear Buddha speak. But Siddhartha has no such craving. His deep vision has provided him enough of the teaching through the unspoken word. He can see that his very body exuded the light of knowledge (Hesse2007: 24).

Govinda as a fellow pilgrim is a man of smaller vessel. His measure is filled up very easily. He wants to settle down when and where he has a sense of fulfillment and thus represents those people who wish to take root at a given place and continue the vegetable life. For Siddhartha the journey is never ending. For him the destinations are meaningless.

Siddhartha is bold enough to request the Lord Buddha for an exclusive hearing and at this point Hesse gives us his understanding of the gist of Buddha's ontological teachings. Siddhartha recalls that the world is a complete and unbroken chain, linked together by cause and effect. There is a complete coherence, no loopholes, clear as crystal, neither dependent on chance, nor on gods. He needs to know how and where the chain of existence continues and also if there is any loophole in it (Hesse 2007: 27).

Buddha in the novel seems to have reached the point of equilibrium where all the forms that are visible are like the spokes in the centre of a wheel (Mascaro 1970:74). This relativity is also available in other modes of Eastern mysticism as Iqbal says, "The firm hill declared that the secret of life was rest but the feeble ant was of the view that the secret lies in the motion" (Iqbal 1986: 115).

The bifurcation that Hesse has affected between Buddha and Siddhartha, on the one hand might appear to be a mistake in understanding of the historical position but owing to the amount of interest and knowledge based on research with his physical presence in the areas of Buddhist learning and his being in contact with the masters of this spiritual science, Hesse cannot be charged with such a mistake. Hesse has divided one personality into two to determine the dimensions of oneness which could not be ascertained otherwise.

On the one hand we have the Lord Buddha who has attained the Light and on the other hand we have Siddhartha, his alter-ego who is made bright but who wants to glow independently. This is what the mystics of the East have referred to quite often, and the philosopher poet of the East, Iqbal has described it with the analogy of the ocean and the wave. The idea is that a wave can exist only within the Ocean and cannot have an independent existence: "The wave exists only in a water-mass and loses its identity without the water" (Iqbal 1986:190).

On the other hand, the Ocean can only exist if there are waves in it and since the wholeness is constituent of unity, it is the wave that makes the ocean flow. Still another idea of the philosophy is that those who do not become a part of the ocean

can never understand the reality of life. Iqbal says in his Persian poem *Zindagi-o-Amal or The Life and the Action* (Iqbal 1975: 128): “The tired shore of the sea lamented: Though I have lived so long, alas I know not yet what is my existence! A wave rose up out of itself quickly and replied: I exist if I move, and if I do not, I am naught.”

Buddha talks to Siddhartha about salvation from suffering and moving away from the life of suffering and desires. They talk at length but both of them know that words cannot decide the riddle of the heart that has developed a new artery into the heart of nature. Hesse tells us that in the final moment of their meeting, Buddha smiles with an imperturbable brightness and friendliness and then looking steadily at his face, he dismisses Siddhartha with a gesture that is hardly visible to the eye (Hesse 2007: 29).

Thus Siddhartha ultimately separates himself from the land of rest and decides to step into the phenomenal world so as to be able to suggest a philosophy which is the purest one, free of all such imperfections and flaws, a plausible and dependable philosophy that should be in harmony with the scheme of things.

The Buddha in *Dhamaapada* says that Nirvaana it is the supreme ecstasy or in other words, something above happiness. This happiness is an enduring, transcendental happiness vital to the stillness attained through Bodhi or enlightenment, rather than the happiness derived from impermanent things. In other words, the knowledge accompanying Nirvana is Bodhi.

The Buddha claims this to be ‘the unconditioned’ mind (*asankhata*)... a mind that has come to the point of perfect perspicuity and precision due to the cessation volitional structure. It is the condition of *Amaravati* or deathlessness. It produces wholesome *Karma* and finally allows the cessation of *Karma* with the attainment of *Nibbana*. Otherwise a Being would keep drifting through the transient and suffering realms of desire simultaneously termed *Samsara*.

The modern logical philosophy and mathematical reasoning are incapable of certain potentialities of Truth as these originate from conventionally accepted assumptions that have not yet been tested outside the fixed paradigms of scientific enquiry.

According to Allan J. Bishop, regardless of where we are in space and time, if we draw a flat triangle, measure all the angles and add the degrees together, the total will always be approximately 180 degrees. He says that it is because ‘mathematical truths are abstractions from the real world’. Such truths are context- free and universal.

But where do ‘degrees’ come from? Why is the total 180? Why not 200 or 100? The answer to all these questions is, essentially, ‘because some people determined that it should be that way’. ‘Mathematical ideas, like any other ideas, are humanly constructed. They have a cultural history’ (Ashcroft 2002:71).

Alan Bishop refers to the anthropological literature that demonstrates the fact that the mathematics learnt in the contemporary schools is not the only mathematics

that exists in the world. There are various cycles of numbers that are not based on ten. Counting can be done in other ways than 1,2,3...the finger count. This is fascinating as well as provocative for anyone imagining that theirs is the only system of counting and recording numbers.

Alan Bishop also refers to the conception of space whose unipolarity has restricted the sense perception of the modern mind. 'The conception of space which underlies the Euclidean geometry is also only one conception: it relies particularly on the 'atomistic' and 'object oriented' ideas of points, lines, planes and solids. Other conceptions exist such as that of Navajos where space is neither sub-divided nor objectified, and where everything is in motion' (Ibid: 72).

Iqbal also believed that Buddha had reached a point of enlightenment and knowledge that could provide a very strong basis of knowledge and civilization. He says in his poem '*Naanak*',

This nation did not pay any heed to the message of Gautam;
they did not recognize the worth of this precious and unique
pearl. How sad it is that they remained ignorant of the divine
message; isn't it so that a fruit bearing tree remains unaware of
the taste of its produce. It was he who revealed the true secret
of life. But Indians were proudly absorbed in their own
philosophical pretensions. Alas for the Sudras, India is a bleak
place to dwell; the true human sentiments are almost alien to
the land. The Brahmins are still intoxicated by the wine of
pride; the light of Gautam's teachings has illuminated foreign
lands. (Iqbal 1986: 239)

Hesse must have in his mind the Sanskrit meanings of the two major names of Buddha 'the enlightened one': his clan name Gautama and the name given to him

by *Mahamaya*, his queen mother : Siddhartha, which means 'he who achieves his aim.' The two alternative names suggested in the Buddhist texts are also symbolically very relevant: 'He is referred to as Bhagavat the Lord and as he reportedly calls himself: *Tathagata* which can mean both one who has thus come and one who has thus gone' (Britannica 2007).

Through these two characters, the historical and the fictional, Hesse has presented his theory of destiny without naming it thus. It is about finding one's path, one's place in life, a place where one can 'fit' and experience self-actualization. He tells us that this process cannot or may not be completed overnight. Spiritual maturation requires the experience of years. One may come across many teachers but one must continue to travel. It is reported that Buddha's last words were, 'Work out your own salvation with diligence' (Seth: 2004).

Siddhartha's quest brings him to both extremes, living as a rich man of the world and living without any earthly possessions, living a sensuous life to the fullest standards of Kama Sutra. But in the end of all the vicissitudes, he walks his own path. Thus the novel is a good piece of spiritual-success literature for anyone who feels lost or confused not knowing what to do when everything to be done is muddled up and the only path clearly available the way to go back. The psychological impact of the book is that we should listen to Siddhartha and then respectfully beg our leave and go our way.

Hesse tells us that Buddha, the Illustrious One is staying in the garden of Anathapindika, known as Jetavana in the town of Savathi. Like the story of

Govinda, there is a very interesting and complicated scheme of things here:

Anathapindika according to the Buddhist legend was a wealthy business man who was one of Buddha's chief patrons and lay followers from Sravasti (Hesse's spellings slightly vary). He built a monastery for the community, known as Jetavana, in Sravasti a site at which Buddha spent the last twenty five rainy seasons of his ministry. Anathapindika saw the Buddha regularly, and bestowed so many gifts on the community that he was eventually reduced to poverty (Prebish 2003: 43).

To fulfill the precondition of the Eastern principle of the esoteric renunciation best summarized in the words of Baba Bulleh Shah '*kannak, kodi, kamni*' (food-grains, minted coins and the beautiful woman), Siddhartha must also experience the world of commerce of his time. Hesse brings forward the character of Kamaswami, the tradesman to highlight the mundane element in the exotic spiritual journey of Siddhartha. The name Kamaswami is also interesting: Kama which means desire or love or the god of love and Swami which means a Master or a spiritual teacher and is a word of great respect (Sullivan 2003: 215).

It is interesting to note that Kamala and Kamaswami enter his life simultaneously. Kamala's name itself seems made up of the root kama, the desire, the love, the god (dess) of love. As per dictionary entry, as this might also have some relationship here, Kamala is also the name of an East Indian tree of the spurge family and the powder obtained from the seed pods of this tree is used as the base of an orange-red dye for silk and wool (Neufeldt 1997: 736). Hence this is a fit

name for a maiden in the Indian subcontinent.

The word Kama Sutra, the name of a famous Tantric Hindu manual of erotic love written by Vatsyayana in 300 A.D. also comes to the mind and since Siddhartha is there with Kamala to learn the art of love, the etymology of the names may be significant (Ibid).

In conformity with the Kama Sutra principle of sexuality-spirituality coordination, Hesse describes the art of love that Siddhartha learns from Kamala with almost religious devotion. One is also reminded of the Chinese principle of I-Ching known as *Yin* and *Yang* meaning literally the “dark side” and the “bright side” of a hill.

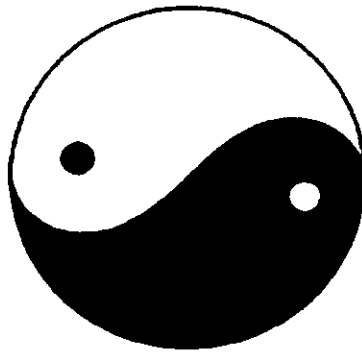
In the philosophies of the Far East they symbolize the opposites of which the fruition is composed: dark and light, male and female, heaven and Earth, male and female, birth and death, matter and spirit. It is a system of dualism. These forces *yin* and *yang* are believed to be harmonizing and complementary values. One makes up for what the other is short of, and the unity of the world would be deficient if there were an insufficiency of either (Britannica 2007).

In other words, Yin is the principle of darkness and negativity in Chinese philosophy and Yang is the principle of light, heat, motivation, and positivity and complement each other in all things.

Yin and yang are represented as a circle, half dark and half light. Inside the dark half there is a small light circle, and inside the light half there is a small dark one.

It insinuates that there is a necessary connection between the two. Neither exists in itself and of itself alone (Encarta 2007).

Fig.1



But for Siddhartha, the attainment of this balance is not that easy. He has to follow a certain course of action, a whole ritual before he becomes *Yang*.

Kamala is ready to accept Siddhartha but only with the condition of his involvement in business of the world. Perhaps by putting this condition, she is trying to cure the Samana from the forest of his remaining links with the previous life. A Samana wears no lavish clothes; Kamala wants him to be dressed as gentlemanly as possible. Samana are ascetics and go barefooted, Kamala wants him to break away from the dust and trample it under the shining shoes. A Samana begs for food to keep alive, Kamala wants him to have lots and lots of

money and all delicacies of life. A Samana observes celibacy and keeps away from the touch or even the sight of a woman, Kamala wants Siddhartha to buy gifts for her and win her with the perfect art of love.

To understand Kamala-Siddhartha eroto-spiritual relationship, we have to go beyond the localized genital phenomenon of sex. It is more than the generally understood libidinousness. The softness of their approach and the experience of togetherness and then the lesson of mutual appreciation and thanksgiving seem to be the training of 'psychic energy' as Jung calls it, corresponding to the '*elan vital*': 'the vital urge' of Bergson (Elis 1967: 79).

Hesse has made the Kamala-Siddhartha relationship more overtly graphic and illustrated and has depicted it as a turning point in his life because the novel is meant for the modern audience for whom the mechanization and dehumanization of the human sexuality has created certain prejudices that amount to the negation of higher sentiments.

This is, to quote Harold I. Lief,

... due to the daily sexual bombardment and titillation by advertising and other mass media whereby every conceivable product is sexualized, or advertised with the aid of sex. If sex has become a commodity dispassionately bought and sold instead of a basic aspect of human feeling and interaction, the blame must be fixed on our culture and its institutions... (Brecher 1969: 124).

Siddhartha sings the praises of Kamala because in her he can feel the culmination not only of all his desires but also the answer to the question of atman. From her clasp he is to be released as an arrow is released from the bow, or a soul from the

God:

Into her grove went the fair Kamala,
At the entrance to the grove stood the brown Samana....
Better thought the young Samana
To make sacrifices to the fair kamala
Than to offer sacrifices to the gods. (Hesse 2007: 48)

This is in line with the Eastern mystical sensibility that the *ishq-i-haqiqi* or the Divine Love can usually be understood when a person has some exposure to or experience of *ishq-i-majazi* or the love of the worldly appearance. This idea is aptly related with the Eastern mystical and pantheistic philosophy that seeks to see in everything a glimpse of God. Hesse spent a considerable amount of time in India and he could not have been unaware of this tradition.

Kahlil Gibran interprets the mystical dimension of the marriage between two individuals as the union of two divinities that a third might be born on earth. In his words,

It is the union of two souls in a strong love for the abolishment of separateness. It is that higher unity which fuses the separate unities within the two spirits. It is the golden ring in a chain whose beginning is a glance, and whose ending is Eternity. It is the pur rain that falls from an unblemished sky to fructify and bless the fields of divine Nature. (Gibran 1958: 50)

According to the pantheistic philosophy the universe is composed of egos. There is a rising note of egohood. Out of the combination of minor egos, new forms of higher egos emerge. There are physical egos, plant egos, animal egos and human egos. Even the whole universe is also the Ego, the supreme and all comprehensive

ego viz. God. God is the ultimate Duration and ultimate Reality (Haque 1991: 225).

One way or the other Siddhartha is passing through the process of transmigration of the soul just like he has experienced the metamorphosis when he perfects his Samana discipline in the second chapter of the book.

The feel of the money, the confidence of the craft, the capability of winning and the spiritual fruits of his previous training, as Siddhartha himself declares to Kamaswami, 'I can think, I can wait, I can fast.', all join together and make his personality just ripe enough for the next lesson that awaits him on the journey. This time it epitomizes itself in the form of Kamala.

Iqbal has described a surprisingly similar emotion in one of his poems titled *aashiq-i-harjaey* in which he traces a beginner's journey within, a journey in which on the one hand there is celestial aspirations and on the other hand the wonders of feminine beauty and the corresponding emotion of love:

You are an assortment of the contraries. You are the soul of the thrill in the gatherings and yet you are all alone. You are swiftly progressing towards the destination like the thrust of a wave and yet you are as desolate and stationary as a riverbank. The beauty of a woman has an electrifying effect for your nature and the strange thing is that your love at the same time is so full of contentment. (Iqbal 1986: 122)

The concern and the detachment expressed in these verses is indicative of a moment when the mundane concerns get translated into divine feelings, when the constriction of the world of materialism expands into the unbounded universe and

the petite body experiences the unfathomable expanse of the spirit. For Hesse's Siddhartha, this comes when he conquers Kamala's heart completely and the confidence that it affords to him leads him to new possibilities as is glimpsed in the following lines of the novel:

At times he heard within him a soft, gentle voice, which reminded him quietly, complained quietly, so that he could hardly hear it. Then he suddenly saw clearly that he was leading a strange life, that he was doing many things that were only a game, that he was quite cheerful and sometimes experienced pleasure, but that real life was flowing past him and did not touch him. ... 'You are Kamala and no one else, and within you there is a stillness and sanctuary to which you can retreat at any time and be yourself just as I can. (Hesse 2007: 59)

Siddhartha must go on. He is in no hurry to reach anywhere. In fact he has to go nowhere. And yet he must go because the continuity cannot be halted. Journeying is all important. Movement is life. Stagnation is death. This is the point where he leaves the world of Sansara, the cycle of perpetual existence with no ultimate creation and no final destruction. Never to return.

Omer Khayyam (1050-1122) says something of the same effect:

Dear love, when you are free to slough your skin
And become naked spirit, soaring far
Across God's Empyrean, you will blush
That you lay cramped so long in body's goal. (Graves 1972: 54)

We see him next wandering by the river. Flowing water, the pure and the purifying water.

He looked down and was completely filled with a desire to let himself go and be submerged in the water. A chilly emptiness

in the water reflected the terrible emptiness of his soul...
might the fishes devour him, this dog of a Siddhartha...(Hesse
2007: 72)

Water has had a very important role in the religious analogies of the East. For example, it is written in Prasna Upanishad (Mascaro 1970: 74): 'When rivers flowing towards the ocean find their final peace, their name and form disappear and people speak only of the ocean.'

Mahayana Buddhism carries this basic Sufi premise that in mystical consciousness all directions disappear to an inconceivable paradoxicality. This is to say, during the moment of mystical union, consciousness, on the one hand, becomes empty, a pure nothing and on the other it reached the highest pinnacle of existence, the supreme light of life, the ultimate reality of the universe (Stace 1960:83).

Nirvana that the Buddha reached and that Siddhartha is on his way to attain, is usually taken as the opposite of Samsara which in other words mean, as an analogy, that there is a distinction between eternity and time, between the herein and the hereafter. But since in the instance of Nirvana, all duality must be conclude into one wholeness, in this moment, nirvana as well as sansara must also disappear. And since nirvana is the ultimate truth of the world, it follows that in reality, there is no difference between nirvana and samsara. Thus both of them are empty nothingnesses. And if there is nothing, there is no object and therefore no knowledge, no noble path and even there is no Buddha. This seeming *reduction ad absurdum* is known as Prajna Paramita in the Mahayana (Stace 1960: 86).

And this is the state where Hesse leads his Siddhartha to reach till, as he narrates, Govinda sees in Siddhartha's face, 'all present and future forms' and comments, 'His countenance was unchanged after the mirror of the thousand-fold forms had disappeared from the surface. He smiled peacefully...' (Hesse 2007: 121).

In Islamic mystical tradition, there are pairings which relate to the existent things in the cosmos and there is a condition, when an entity moves away from the Source, it attains a kind of density known in the Islamic mysticism, *tasawwuf* as *Kathafat* and the entity in this condition is known as *kathif* or 'dense'.

The objects in the material world are experiencing the state of maximum density and the human beings that attain direct spiritual experience known as *kashf* suddenly become aware that the density around and about them was just an illusion and whatever was perceived as dense or *kathif* is in fact very subtle or *latif*. When that person attains the moment of ecstasy or *wajd*, through a spiritual state *hal*, he experiences an inner disintegration and mingling with the surrounding world till he experiences becoming primordial dust *al haba* (Armstrong 2001: 110).

This condition of purity when the self reflects the entire universe that one beholds and is beheld by has been variously identified and defined by the Sufis of the East, for example, Maulana Jalal ud Din Rumi conditions it with an unsullied heart that is white as snow and says, 'He who has an impressionless mirror for the impressions of the unseen' (Hakim 1941: 112).

Out of this self abasement, came the recognition, after the constriction, the release. Siddhartha experienced the right understanding which had to be conveyed to the samgha in clear terms, in the form of concrete words. The first principle of *astangika margha*, the eight-fold path as delineated by Buddha himself in his famous *Dharmacakpravartana Sutra*, 'The Discourse on Turning the Wheel of Law' in which he delineated the Four Noble Truths, *Arya Satyas* (Prebish 2003: 105) These four truths include, first of all, that all life is *dukkha*: all of life's experiences, from birth to death, yield unsatisfactoriness either through physical pain, change or conditioned phenomenon.

The cause (*sa mudaya*) of *dukkha* is craving or *tarasna*: whether one craves for sensual pleasures, *kama tarasna* or for existence, *bhava tarasna* or even for non-existence, *vibhava tarasna*, the net result of craving is rebirth. The cessation of *dukkha* can come through *nirodha* which is elimination of craving.

The elimination of craving can come through following the eight-fold path which is *astangika margha* i.e. rightness of understanding, thought, speech, action, livelihood, effort, mindfulness, and concentration. When all these rightnesses are achieved, the person would enter the Phase of *Nirvana*.

The path is called bodhisattva and the pre-requisite of the path is *boddisatta* or the thought of enlightenment which has the two components of intention to become and the setting of this intention into motion.

When Siddhartha finally moves away from *Sansara*, he walks up to the river. It is

the same river that had led him to *Sansara* some years back. His crossing the river was one journey, one conscious activity, a volitional activity and therefore an act of Karma. His stay out there was another journey, another *Karma*. One thing would lead to another. The retributive appropriation of every deed would affect per se and would be determined by the nature of the deeds done. Buddhists believe that any volitional act is *Cetana*. But now that he leaves again for the river, it is in the search of *Moksha*.

A comparative study of Zen Buddhist philosophy offers a further intertextual explanation of this phenomenon: If we desire to get into the deepest existence of Zen, we must sacrifice all our run of the mill habits of thinking which have power over our daily life. If there is something in our usual way of living that takes away from us the free will in its most consecrated sense, we must venture to find a way somewhere which gives us a sense of definiteness and contentment. The Zen scholars call this *satori* and say that it is not an easy task. One has to go through the tempest, the seismic activity, the collapse of mountains, and breaking into pieces of the rocks (Stace 1960: 89).

He tries to experience it when he is with the *Samanas*. He finds that he can become one with everything. He can exist in different shapes and forms. But he wanted to know more. He wanted to transcend existence. Nirvana was one thing but he had to reach *parinirvana* where the proclamation of his human existence would come to a halt through the death of his physical being.

In *Siddhartha*, this has been symbolically shown in the last chapter and on the

very last page, when we see Govinda with tears in his eyes, realizing, understanding and then prostrating before Siddhartha while the latter sits in *samadhi* with a complete resolution of purpose and fulfillment in an absolute peace.

This is the moment when Siddhartha, to speak in Buddhist discourse, undergoes *anatman*, literally meaning “not-self”. Buddha, after his Nirvana had asserted that something pure, subtle and eternal like the Atman could not associate with something impure, gross and impermanent like the body.

In other words, Atman can be best reached and realized through the path of Dharma which is one of the Three Jewels, *triratna* of Buddhism, namely, *Buddha*, *Dharma* and *Samgha* in which *Buddha* is the initiated, *Dharma* is his teaching and *Samgha* is the community of the noble ones (*arya pudgalas*) Buddha according to this tradition would be the individual who can put an end to the entrapment in the cycle of perpetual rebirth in *samsara* but as an individual himself, he has only *anatman* which can be valued only at a higher plane of conviction and this is *abhidharma*.

For the general masses, it is good to observe the ritual practices, community worship and preaching and teaching of the faith and belief systems. But for those who cannot slip their questions under the carpet, new dimensions, new horizons and new vistas are required. They attain to the highest knowledge and yet they desire more.

Religious truths can be known and understood and even conveyed but the mystical experience can only be gone into. It is not like diving into the sea and then surface as soon the oxygen ends. It is to dig through the sea bed and pour into the unfathomable depths. No reports are to be conveyed back to the headquarters, for there is none out there. It is the search of the spiritual headquarter and there are no witnesses required.

When he is offered to finally rest at Jetavana by the most illustrious Buddha, he decides to be in motion, and when he chooses to leave Kamala and Kamaswami and everything that belongs to him in the daily movement and carries on with a journey that might never have ended, he meets the river and then takes to rest and the rest is so absolute that even Vasudeva cannot continue with him and he leaves for the woods.

This restlessness and agitation is perhaps the cause of all change and transformation that we experience around us. As Iqbal had said, 'The absolute rest is impossible within the realm of nature. The only thing that is consistent in the universe is inconsistency' (Iqbal 1986: 148).

It is only that Siddhartha, like Hesse himself wanted to rise to the possibility of the happiness of the intellectual love of God. And that God for him was not out there. The external symbols of time and space (the river) that Hesse has quoted during the final musings of Siddhartha find an interesting intertextual parallel in Iqbal when he says, 'It is He who is the reality of time and space. And what is temporality except a way of describing an experience! How would a spiritual

guide answer the riddle if a swimming fish should want to know the address of the water?’ (Iqbal 1986: 378).

The simple answer, would it not be that it is within and without and inside out and over and above and down and below and on the right and the left and in dimensions measureless to man. And will this amount to an untruth that the fish is born within the water and then it dies and is assimilated in the water and that the fish is water.

And is it not what Siddhartha tells Govinda when he picks up a stone and describes the chain of existence, and is it not what the water-cycle on the earth is: the vapours rise from the surface of the rivers and oceans and then they form the clouds and then the clouds become so heavy and so chilled that they turn in too drops and fall back on the surface of the earth in the form of rain? So what is a cloud and what are the vapours and what is a cloud and what is the water? Is not everything the same something and is not every something everything and nothing at the same time?

Siddhartha goes across the river. Siddhartha comes back to the river. Is it the same Siddhartha? Is it the same River? Is it a universal principle that all things come full circle? Is it a kind of rebirth? Can the journey have an end? Is perpetuation of life the only available religious option?

Buddhism affirms a basic Hindu worldview that sees time as progressing in a circular fashion, referred to as the Wheel of Samsara, with rebirth anticipated at

the end of each successive life. It accepts the Indian cosmology of time, including belief in a variety of non human realms.

But Buddhism seeks to break this system and in doing so it goes beyond religion. Gautama Buddha taught a way of life devoid of authority, ritual, speculation, tradition, and the supernatural. He stressed on intense self-effort. His last words before he died at the age of 80 were: Work out your own salvation with diligence (Seth 2004: 6).

It is almost what the Muslim Mystics mean when they say: *mootoo qabla an tamoot*: Die before you actually die i.e. learn the lesson of unity and oneness while being in the realm of diversity and multiplicity. The search for this oneness and wholeness has been the central doctrine of Sufism. A Sufi is a lover of Truth, of the Perfection of the Absolute. As the great Sufi mystic Jalal al din Rumi illustrates with his story of the elephant in the dark, the Truth can only be seen in the light of the Spiritual Path but the entirety of the Experience of Truth cannot be compromised.

According to his story an elephant belonging to a travelling exhibition had been stabled near a town where no elephant had been seen before. Four curious citizens, hearing of the hidden wonder, went to see if they could get a preview of it. When they arrived at the stable they found that there was no light. The investigation therefore had to be carried out in the dark. Individually touching its trunk, ear leg and back the four found the elephant to be a hosepipe, a fan, a pillar and a throne respectively.

None could form the complete picture; and of the part which each felt, he could only refer to it in terms of things which he already knew. The result of the expedition was confusion. Like the elephant, Existence, according to Sufi Cosmology, is like an unimaginable vast tapestry woven from the Divine qualities. Only by distancing ourselves from the surface immediately before us can we hope to find its meaning as well as our own place in the tapestry (Waley 1993: 22).

The Buddhist tradition relativises even its own most refined utterances, for example, Nagarjuna praises Buddha for presenting a doctrine that cannot be expressed by words. According to the tradition of *Madhyamika*, the wayfarer has to experience emptiness '*sunyata*' which is not annihilation. The emptiness is supposed to be unhindered, omnipresent, without differentiation, wide open, without appearance, spotlessly pure, unmoved, without coming to be or passing away, without being, empty of emptiness and without possessions (Dumoulin 1994: 118-23).

In the Taoism, there is the *tao* that can be spoken and the *tao* that transcends speech (Smith 2002 b: 222).

Lao Tze refers to it as *Experiencing the Mystery* and suggests that it can be done by preserving unity (Rosenthal 2009):

Without form or image, without existence,
the form of the formless, is beyond defining,
cannot be described,
and is beyond our understanding.
It cannot be called by any name.

Standing before it, it has no beginning;
even when followed, it has no end.
In the now, it exists; to the present apply it,
follow it well, and reach its beginning.

Hesse very cleverly picks up the imagery of the river to describe this *undescribable* and he takes us to witness a strange and silent world where Vasudeva and Siddhartha are ritualistically practicing listening to the river which at the same time is omnipresent (Hesse 2007:88).

We are told that the river has many voices, thousands of them and yet they are all one: Om. And we are told that there are so many images and yet all images are one. And we are told that all forms of existence are in fact the same being that is perpetually 'Becoming' (Hesse 2007: 89).

The water flowing in a river in a given instant might be determined as a moment but the moment itself is too weak to tie the flow of the river. Every moment there is a movement and the continuity can only be marked by perpetuity that defies momentarism. In the history of Islamic philosophy, it is known as *inna al-aarad la yabqa zamanayn* which means: No accident remains in existence for two units of time (Izutsu 2005: 168-170).

Ibn 'arabi goes one step further when he says that there is absolutely nothing in the world, be it a substance or an accident, remaining in existence for more than one minute. Since accidents must inhere in substances, all the accidents are the accidents of the ultimate and only self-subsistent Substance which is none other than the Absolute. All existents in the world – whether so called substances or the

so called accidents – are in reality accidents that appear and disappear on the surface of the Ultimate Substance, just like innumerable bubbles that appear and disappear on the surface of water. Ibn ‘Arabi concludes: *inna al-alam kulla-hu majmu a’rad*, ‘The world in its entirety is a whole composed of accidents’ (Izutsu 2005 a.: 168-70).

But even if this Aristotelian ‘substance-accident’ terminology is admitted, it remains to be seen if the Absolute is above such categorization or not. It also remains to be answered if the being of the creation and the creator are the same or hierarchical. The flowing river, although the beginning and the terminating ends may not be visible, or they may not be there at all, is usually seen to have a certain direction. Iqbal solves this enigma beautifully when he says: ‘The intellect has become acquiescent to time and space. There is nothing as time and space except Allah’ (Iqbal 1986: 477).

While Iqbal brings us, as does Hesse in *Siddhartha* to the point of *Timelessness* and *Placelessness*, Ibn ‘Arabi asserts: If we contemplate deeply till we get, through gnosis and illumination, the vision of god to the extent that he is pleased, then we say we know God and that there is no god but He. A man cannot understand a thing unless there exists in him some knowledge of a thing similar to the one to be understood. But for this, he cannot understand it.

When one cannot understand a thing unless he has in him the knowledge of something resembling it, it follows that one can know only things similar to which one already knows. God does not resemble anything (*laiisa kamislehi shayun*),

and there is nothing similar to god in anything. Therefore god shall never be known ... none shall know God either directly or through reason (Hussaini 1970: 146).

Hesse seems deeply impressed by the similar ancient philosophy of Tao when Siddhartha tells Govinda that knowledge and not wisdom can be communicated. One may be equipped with it, do marvels through it, but one cannot impart it (Hesse 2007: 114).

At this point we can clearly see the echo of *Tao-te Ching* again as Tao is intangible and is without a form. Unlike the sun, it does not shine when it rises and is not darkening when it sets down. It cannot be taken hold of and it is absolutely silent. It cannot be defined or circumscribed by a definition. No name can be given to it for the purpose of recognizing it. However, it exists in the present moment, in the 'now' (Blakney 1955).

Coming back to the image of the River, one finds that the river flows in a cyclic way. The water-cycle moves unerringly and continuously from vapours to clouds and from clouds to rain, from streams and lakes to the rivers and from the rivers and tributaries to the seas and oceans, and then to the vapours again: the beginning culminates into an end and the end becomes the beginning. Lao Tzu discovers a mystical property of water that Siddhartha has also discovered, 'The highest good is like water. Water benefits all things generously and is without strife. It dwells in the lowly places that men disdain. Thus it comes near to the Tao' (Rosenthal 2009).

The world according to Ibn Arabi exists at every moment of time with a new life. At every moment we are supposed to be enjoying the original creation of the world (Izutsu 2005 a.: 167). Ibn Arabi also believed in 'perpetual creation' is based on the continuous transformation of the mystic's heart. Izutsu asserts that if we behold the red colour of a flower, it would not be, according to the Ash'arites, a temporal continuum. On the contrary, its quality of redness appears and disappears till it establishes as one impression. Iqbal says, 'The states of rest and inertia are illusory, as every particle in the universe is consistently quivering' (Iqbal 1986: 126).

This has been felt by the poet philosopher Ghalib as well when he says, 'When there was *nothing*, there was *God* and so, had there been *nothing*, there would still have been *God*. *Being* is the only flaw in us, for had there been no *being*, there would still have been God (Ghalib 1977: 19).

That everything comes to full circle; Ghalib attests it when he says,

The reality of manifestation, he who witnesses manifestation
and that which is manifested are all one. I am surprised then,
at the process of the witnessing itself (Ghalib 1977: 45)

The ancient Greek, Roman, Egyptian, as well as Indian and Arabian mystical thought has always referred to one or more external forces that control the human element and the knowledge or ignorance of the will of God or gods has always been taken as the crucial measure of an individual's religious and ethical existence in this world and the decisive factor in his blessedness or damnation in

the life/lives to come.

In Gita, Chapter 6, Lord Krishna tells Arjuna that *Yoga* is a *harmony* and when the mind of the *Yogi* is in *harmony* and finds rest in the Spirit within, all restless desires gone, then he is a *Yukta*, one with in God (Mascaro 1970: 70).

When Hesse is sure that his readers have understood this sense of harmony, he takes us to the next esoteric truth and that is *oneness* (Hesse 2007: 107).

... Siddhartha felt more and more that this was no longer Vasudeva... this motionless man was the river itself, that he was God himself, that he was eternity itself.

Taking Vasudeva to be a god is not without a history. In Chapter (*adhiyai*)¹¹ of Bhagavad Gita, there is a very interesting scene when Lord Krishna reveals his true reality to Arjuna. Let us consider the following verses in collocation:

Verse 38: *Arjuna*: thou God from the beginning, God in man since man was. Thou treasure supreme of this vast universe. Thou the one to be known and the Knower, the final resting place. Thou infinite Presence in whom all things are.

Verse 49: *Krishna*: thou hast seen the tremendous form of my greatness, but fear not, and be not bewildered. Free from fear and with a glad heart see my friendly form again. In verse 50 *Sanjay* relates: 'Thus spoke Vasudeva to Arjuna, and revealed himself in his human form. The God of all gave peace to his fears and showed himself in his peaceful beauty. (Mascaro 1970: 92-94)

The other way to realize *God*, that Siddhartha ever talks about, is Love: '... love is the most important thing in the world...it is only important to love the world... to be able to regard the world and ourselves and all beings with love, admiration

and respect' (Hesse 2007:117).

According to Dalai Lama, the unifying characteristic of all spiritual qualities of all religions is some level of concern for others' well being. He calls it *sken-pen kyi-sem* which literally means 'the thought to be of help to others' (Gyatso 1999).

When 'I' is there no more, the *other* would be everything. Time and space would be resolved into dimensionlessness. The transmigration of the soul would stop only to occur every moment. '... His countenance was unchanged after the mirror of the thousand-fold forms had disappeared from the surface.' Such are the concluding lines of the novel under reference (Hesse 2007:121).

Where the familiar Western sensibility prides in the solipsistic and materialistic reality and admits only the empirical and scientific truths as reality, the writers dealing with the East have focused on the meta-reality as the panacea of all modern ills and answer to all the postmodern questions. They have tried to suggest several parallel solutions to this.

Rajnesh Bhagwan gives the example of Rinzai, a Zen Buddhist master once said that *sansara*, the world, was false and that the *moksha*, the liberation was also false (Osho 2008: 247). The people who heard Rinzai were very surprised. To all their questions Rinzai replied: *Sansara* is a creation of your mind and so is *moksha*. When the mind is no more, who is there to think about liberation.

Vivekananda (1863-1902) the founder of non dualistic Advaita Vedanta in the form of Ramakrishna Order perpetuated the supremacy of the Indian spiritual

sensibility over the mundane nihilistic and materialistic Western Culture and its values. Richard King believes that in Vivekananda's preaching, the 'otherworldly' and 'mystical' notions of universalistic Indian religion were presented as India's special gift to mankind (King 1999: 93).

Vivekananda declared Christianity as a patchy imitation of the Indian religion and declared that the salvation of Europe depended on a rationalistic religion and *advaita* the philosophy of non duality, the oneness, the idea of an impersonal God was the only religion for the intellectual westerners. He insists that time, space and causation are interlinked and abstract space is inconceivable.

Time depends on two events, just as space has to be related to outside objects. And the idea of causation is inseparable from time and space. This is the peculiar thing about them that they have no independent existence. They have not even the existence which the chair or the wall has. They are as shadows around everything which you cannot catch. They have no real existence; yet they are not non-existent, seeing that through them all things are manifesting as this universe.' (Vivekananda 1896)

But for those who have to experience gnosis, it is important to avoid entangling into these obstacles of time, space, and causation. For the mystics even these are the veils that hold back the full view of reality. For them these are akin to other physical barriers that hinder a clear perception. Hesse wanted to get rid of these as Buddha had desired to do in his time. Buddha had the energy to shun this materialism; Hesse chose a character to do that miracle for him.

William C. Chittik writes under the heading *The Ascent of the Soul* that the journey towards 'perfection' begins in 'nonexistence' with God. He takes the

journey from God to this world and from this world back to God as two arcs of the same circle of existence. To support the idea, he quotes from the Qur'an (3:83), 'To Him has submitted whoso is in the heavens and in the earth, willingly or unwillingly, and to him they shall be returned.'

The Sufis insists that the human beings have a prerogative of a voluntary return as they have been given a sufficient share of the divine freedom to shape their own destinies (Chittik 2005: 85). But they also tell us that only the *perfect man* can actually do it with perfection and this implies the attainment of a perfect knowledge and this entails a clear consciousness that he (the perfect man) is a self manifestation of the Absolute, one with the absolute and himself the absolute (Izutsu 2005 c : 265).

This is what the sufi writer of Pakistan Ashfaq Ahmed has described from the mouth of his fictional character Ramzaan the cobbler, "There comes a time when the Presence steels upon you. One walks in the world, yet above the world as well, meeting the daily routine, yet never losing the sense of Presence (Ashfaq 1999: 450).

In the preface of the same book, Ashfaq Ahmed describes the relationship between the scientific observation and the mystical meditation and declares that the sufi as well as the scientist both have an empirical approach towards the universe and its mysteries. Both hold this empiricism in realms where ordinary senses have no approach. In the sub-atomic world, the mechanical elucidation gives way to organic construal and in the world of sufic spiritual inquiry, there are

extraordinary palpable feelings that ordinary sensations cannot fathom. Both admit mystical interpretation.

Ramazaan the cobbler compares the body and the mystical experience with the existence of matter at the subatomic level. Here the matter does not 'exist' in its true dimensions, it is only expected to exist because it has the tendency to exist, its existence becomes a wave, not like the sound wave but like the wave of thought (Asfaq 1999: 83).

This leads us to the Western world where the triumph of science and technology has reached its peak and they are now fast reverting to spiritual-philosophical understanding of life and its mysteries. We hear of Quantum Buddhism, Transcendental Meditation and Invincible Defence Technology of John Hagelin, Psychoenergetic Sciences of William A. Tiller and Microcosmic spiritual behaviour of water crystals as reported by the Japanese scientist Masaru Emoto (PQB 2010).

Hesse is one of the pioneers who opened this theoretical intellectual argument in his works, especially *Siddhartha* and stressed the transcendental universality that fuses the possibilities emanating both from East and West to be utilized without prejudice for the realization of the human dream.

CHAPTER 4

***Siddhartha* and the Western Philosophical and Mystical Intertextual Parallels**

When Hesse's *Siddhartha* was published in its earlier translation and was circulated in Europe and America, nobody had the idea how well it would be received. This is partly because the questions that it raises are universal questions and the answers that it has to offer are not easily available in the modernist West. Like so many other queries of the postmodern world, only the domain of philosophy and mysticism has the answers. It was about the time when the West had already started experimenting with a philosophical transcendentalism.

It involved a rejection of the strict Puritan religious attitude as well as strict ritualism and established dogmatic theology. In 1845, American naturalist philosopher Henry David Thoreau had deserted his family to live in a one room self constructed shack on the banks of Walden Pond in Concord, Massachusetts (Encarta 2007).

Same was the condition in mainland Europe and the United Kingdom where the Romantic Movement had focused on individualism and semi-religious feeling towards nature and the creative processes to the level of establishing a clear relationship between the individual, the microcosm and the Universe, the macrocosm.

By the turn of the century, the West had experimented with philosophical idealism, imaginative romanticism and utilitarian individual and social action to attain the universal humanistic goal of happiness but the materialistic trends had practically failed the entire project. The intellectual inquiry aimed more and more on harnessing the powers of nature, and amassing the resources of the world to be utilized in dominating other nations finally became self-destructive and gave way to the First World War that ended almost one hundred years of relative peace in Europe that had lasted since the end of Napoleonic wars in 1815.

Joseph Conrad (1857-1924) wrote '*Heart of Darkness*' in 1902 in which he lamented the idea of 'the conquest of the earth' which had caused a lot of suffering worldwide. The East had been awe-struck by the technological advancement, purposeful harmonized political action and social stability and the West was enchanted by the natural resources and the spiritual richness of the East and particularly its promise of a great mystical potential which had yet not been materialized as far as the European readers were concerned.

The Europeans read the Eastern mystical traditions only in the crude translation and they had yet to realize that this was a tradition less to be read and more to be adopted and practiced. The realization came to them in the wake of the world war that almost shook the foundations of their philosophy and made them turn to the East for the possibility of rediscovering spiritual panacea.

Hesse's attempt of re-establishing this relationship may be taken as neo-romanticism but he had the desire to free the thought of his generation from the

vestiges of materialism and acute pragmatism bordering on the frontiers of solipsism and atheism. His part of the world had already seen the shock of a World War and the Communist revolution and the growing frenzy of the rise of the nation states as well as growing gulf between the people of the world on the basis of creed and technology was taking place.

In 1919 the world war ended leaving some ten million dead and the same year first artificial nuclear reaction took place. In 1915, Kafka published *Metamorphosis* in which a man wakes up one morning to find that he has been turned into a valueless bug. As a reaction to what he saw in the form of the ravage of War, he inter-mixed fantastical and nightmarish elements in the description of reality where despairing and lonely characters are enmeshed in inescapable situations.

1916 saw the advent of the General Theory of Relativity which created havoc both in the world of science and philosophy. By denying the possibility of any particular object to have the position of an ultimate frame of reference, the description of the basic concepts like space, time and mass were challenged.

The physicists had to learn that when they deal with very small objects, the very act of observation makes changes in the system that they are studying. This also became the basic of the quantum theory. The most fundamental result of these ideas was the realization that human understanding of the universe was limited by our ability to make measurement on it (Lehrman 1969: 182).

Huston Smith challenges the ‘billions of dollars and millions of papers’ that the big economies have spent on scientific details and exotica like particles and strings on the basis that they bear no relevance to human life and its problems (Smith 2002 b: 15). It calls for the need of more useful, functional and effective knowledge that should answer the problems of human life.

In 1921, William Butler Yeats also expressed a like dissatisfaction with the state of affairs in the Western world and he turned to the lost biblical story of The Second Coming of Christ in his poem of the same title and declared that the center (of the life and the faith) could no longer hold the affairs of the world, things had fallen apart and that ‘mere anarchy is loosed upon the world’ (Yeats 1993: 211). He lamented ‘the twenty centuries of stony sleep’ and complained that the evil had triumphed at the cost of innocence whose ‘ceremony’ had been ‘drowned’.

The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.
Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the second coming is at hand.

The very next year saw the appearance of T. S. Eliot’s poem *The Waste Land* in which he complained of the barrenness of modern life (Eliot 1980: 51). He considers life of his time to be like a patient etherized upon a table ready to receive surgery (Eliot 2003: 11). He challenged the tangibility of the meaning of life loudly when he said,

Son of man,
You cannot say, or guess for you know only
A heap of broken images...

Unreal City,
Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,
A crowd flowed over London bridge, so many,
I had not thought death had undone so many.

Sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled,
And each man fixed his eyes before his feet.

Ironically the same year the tomb of Tutankhamun (1343-132 BC) was discovered by Howard Carter and it became the center of international attention. Eliot's prediction that the dead bodies would grow like the seeds do in this poem seemed to have been coming true. Eliot ended his rambling thoughts on words that have Western imagery but Eastern meanings, and of course Universal undertones and possibilities:

Datta, Dayadhvam. Damyata

Shantih shantih Shantih

Which means, "Give, Sympathise, Control, Peace, Peace, Peace". It has been taken from Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. Shantih is the ideal state of mind which means 'the peace which passeth understanding' (Eliot 2003: 74).

Siddhartha was published the same year as was '*The Waste Land*' by T.S. Eliot. Where *The Waste Land* is unified by its theme of despair that suggests ultimate futility of human life and all its endeavours, *Siddhartha* focuses on the gradual unfolding of greater possibilities of life and its links to what is possible beyond the phenomenal world, that is, a world which is perceptible only through the

senses. *The Waste Land* represents the baffled and never-ending search for spiritual peace but *Siddhartha* is a definitive search for a possibility which has already become a tangible reality in the protagonist's conviction and is gradually materializing into a perceptible objectivity.

The narrative framework of both these representational literary expressions of the post-war world is the same, that is, quest for serenity and equanimity at a time when the turbulence of the world war was just over and the thinking minds were suffering an unprecedented disquietude. Anarchy was still rampant in an era of social and political chaos.

T. S. Eliot staggered in his convictions pertaining to the possibility of a universal panacea but Hesse stood poised and advanced along the mystical lines till he had an answer. The threesome slogan of 'Shantih' at the end of '*The Waste Land*' seems a far cry in the world of Eliot but it is an affirmative conviction in Hesse's treatise.

Both these contemporary pieces of literature need to be seen in the framework of the mythological story of the Holy Grail, the sacred cup from which Jesus Christ drank at the Last Supper. Eliot believes that his contemporary European society is culturally barren and both the land as well as the guardian of the Holy Grail, the Fisher King needs a miraculous revival. So although the secret potion is there, yet there is no way to find it.

On the other hand, Hesse's *Siddhartha* looks all around for an answer to the

enigma of being, fails a few times but does not let go of the endeavour till he finds out that the greatest of the discoveries is the recognition of the internal potential that cures withal and which only the metaphysics has identified.

Turning to the arena of science, we see that in 1923 Particle-Wave theory was presented by French physicist Louis Broglie who suggested that the waves can behave as particles and the subatomic particles can behave like waves. This was touching the boundaries of metaphysics although only the physical aspect of the electromagnetic radiation was understood.

By 1924 Andre Breton of France had founded the literary and artistic movement of surrealism under the influence of Freudian psychology. Under this philosophy, the role of unconscious in releasing the creative power of imagination was taken into account. They sought to express the irrational state of consciousness produced by dreams.

To top it all, Carl Jung (1875-1961) referred to the idea of Collective Unconscious as a layer of the psyche that the entire humanity shares. He believed that just as dreams display irrational images that reveal the psychology of the dreamer, myths revealed the psychology of all humanities (Coleman 2003: 144).

In this context Hesse's use of the myth of Buddha becomes very significant. And the proof of this significance comes through the record breaking sale of the book in a very short period of time. Since Freud had avowed that the Western materialistic sensibility was robbing mankind of its mythical heritage by

unreasonable stress on pragmatism and matter-of-factness, its importance to non-Western cultures was asserted. It was probably because these cultures are closely linked with nature and its fundamental mystical forces. So now we know why Siddhartha became Hesse's choice for the expression of his innermost forces that could not find a suitable parallel in the Western world.

In his book *Fundamental Symbols* sub-titled as *The Universal Language of Sacred Science*, Rene Guenon says that there has to be a measurable and dependable *centre* that we can refer to for our understanding of the universe and its phenomena. This central structure, the archetypal standard need to be continuously transcendent and yet evolving. It does not have to be just a vague concept, but a true structure through which all other things can be measured and understood. This central point needs must be the point of departure for everything as well as the terminal point forming a permanent bond undergoing both centripetal and centrifugal movements.

The Hindu doctrines refer to this as the act of inhalation and exhalation but the modern example of the physiological function of the heart is more apt. The tendency to return to the centre has symbolic representation in all ritualistic orientations for example, in Islam this orientation is materialized as *qiblah* and the *niyyah* that all the energy must be directed towards the divine principle within and without to be reached and reflected endlessly. The Hindu monosyllable 'Om' and the Christian esoteric sign of monocentric swastika also refer to this central principle (Guenon 2001: 53).

Hesse's Siddhartha as well as his historical counterpart also start their journey from that central point in their individual psyches towards the same point in the cosmos or beyond. They travel without to complete the journey within. They are not the first ones to undertake this journey and they are not the ones who culminate the quest.

On the authority of David Grubin's PBS Documentary (Grubin: 2010), we can say that to Saddhodhanna and Maya, his royal parents, 'a' Buddha was to be born. It was not the 'the only' Buddha for 'the Buddha' might already have had countless lives in countless realms of the past and the future. According to Buddhism, he is born within every entity that breathes whether they gain consciousness of its presence or not.

Why does Hesse split the mythical hero down into two constituent characters instead of the one when the quest is in the pursuit of oneness? One answer is that among the mystics there are varying tendencies as far as the principles of action and inaction are concerned. It seems that Hesse split the historical sage into these two points of reference despite the fact that these are two different representative modes of understanding reality.

Thus Buddha in the novel is a parallel to the approach that believes in spiritual stasis and concentration and Siddhartha is the principle of movement, eternally expanding and mobile. For example, the French philosopher Henri Bergson (1859-1941) and Allama Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938) both conceive of Reality in dynamic terms (Ma'ruf 2000: 153) although their approaches in their subtlety

are slightly different.

But the vedantist tendencies show that Brahman is known as 'it is in itself' and all else becomes shadowy and unreal in comparison (Eaton 2004: 43). This 'stagnant' view of personal reality '*nothing is real beyond the absolute*' is pronounced in *Appearance and Reality* by F.H. Bradley who had influenced the thought of T.S. Eliot, '... my experience falls within my own circle, a circle closed on the outside; and, with all its elements alike, every sphere is opaque to the others which surround it ... in brief, regarded as an existence which appears in a soul, the whole world for each is peculiar and private to that soul' (Eliot 2003: 73).

This takes us to the domain of the psychological condition known as Multiple Personality Syndrome also known as Dissociative Identity. According to R. Noll, when the cohesion of consciousness is shattered, the dissociative splits between autonomous forces in the psyche become more extreme. This increases the autonomy of these 'splinter psyches' from ego-consciousness and reveals their archetypal core. They then develop into the phenomenon of 'alternate personalities' in multiple personality (Noll 1989: 321).

At every crisis of life, an *alter* is created and the reassociation of the alters is reached at quite a late age as it happens in the case of Siddhartha. Like all great works of fiction and psychology, this novel also helps in understanding the social, the scientific, the philosophic and the mystical dimensions of human life.

It provides to the European society the concept of the Perfect Man or the Universal Man (*insaan-i-kamil*) that had long been with the Muslim philosophers and mystics (like Abd al Karim Al Jili) but the religious bias stopped the European colonial overlords to pronounce it more widely except in the narrow academic circles. However due to the absence of any historical antagonism, the Buddhist ideal of Mahaprusha or *Universal Man* could be presented and that is what Hesse did. In Buddhist iconography, the footprints, the throne and the parasol with which Buddha is symbolically embellished correspond to the earth, the intermediary space and the heaven (Guenon 2001:181).

In psychoanalysis, when there is a coexistence within the ego of two different attitudes towards external reality, that function side by side without influencing each other, one accepting the reality and the other disowning it. But the Buddha-Siddhartha split that Hesse has created is more in line with the object-relations theory which takes it as a normal mode of psychological functioning. This concept is based on the work of Melanie Klein (1882-1960) and it deals with the emotional bonds that people form with instinctual objects. In other words, it is the capacity to form loving relationships with other people (Coleman 2003: 502).

The split may also have been caused due to the principle of expediency as clear historical records of Buddha's life are not available and the great mind which Hesse had come to perceive, could not be presented to the European audience because of the contrariness that is understandable in the mystical realms but which causes great intellectual tension because the logic cannot assimilate

paradox.

We see a kind of apparent instability of attitude in Hesse's Siddhartha's as he does not stay in one mood or with one particular mode of life long enough to be taken as commitment. Apparently his preferences are changing and from a life of luxury and finesse, he shifts to that of hunger and asceticism only to fall into a world of sin and physical pleasure squandering money and forgetting his original commitments but at the same time, within the hearts of his heart, a process of purification remains alive.

It is the aggregate of the total events and happenings in a person's life that constitute *experience*. And experience cannot be complete unless one gets into it and out of it completely. Thus his experience of *samsara* is what makes him *Siddha* (accomplished/fulfilled) and *Artha* (aim and wealth) i.e. *Siddhartha* (the wealth of a fulfilled aim).

Siddhartha reveals this to Govinda (Hesse2007: 79):

I have had to experience so much stupidity, so many vices, so much error, so much nausea, disillusionment and sorrow, just in order to become a child again and begin anew.

He says that he went to the world to lose himself to live and die different kinds of life and the requisite desires so that the new Siddhartha could be born. The ordinary people however, never get out of this trap of desires ending up in more desires till the end comes without any liberation. About such wandering souls, Kahlil Gibran (Gibran 1972: 29) writes in his book *Between Night and Morn*:

The people are the slaves of Life, and it is slavery which fills their days with misery and distress, and floods their nights with tears and anguish ... Seven thousand years have passed since the day of my first birth, and since that day I have been witnessing the slaves of Life, dragging their heavy shackles.

And those who begin to get out of this perpetual bondage have to listen very carefully to their inner signals till they respond to them. There is a desire deep within the soul, Gibran tells us, which drives man from the seen to the unseen, to philosophy and to the divine (Gibran 1965: 49). Gibran gives us the example of Al Ghazali who similarly gave up the life of comfort and high status to follow a life of asceticism and mysticism. In his quest he reached the frontier where the science touches the religion. 'He searched for that hidden chalice in which the intelligence and experience of man is blended with his aspirations and his dreams.'

He relates with it the philosophy of St. Augustine who used the outward appearances as a ladder that lifts one up to the inner realities of things. St. Augustine is taken to be the beginning point of modern European Philosophy and his treatise, *The Confessions* asserts: 'That same voice speaks indeed to all men, but only they understand it who join that voice, heard from outside, to the truth that is within them' (Gloriana 2011). He further says:

Late have I loved Thee, O Beauty so ancient and so new!
Thou wert inside me and I outside, and I sought for Thee
there, and in all my unsightliness I flung myself on those
beautiful things which Thou hast made... Thou didst flash and
shine on me and put my blindness to flight. Thou didst blow
fragrance upon me and I drew breath, and now I pant after
Thee. I tasted of Thee and now I hunger and thirst for Thee.
Thou didst touch me and I am aflame for Thy peace....

We can compare the same with Hesse's Siddhartha looking at the same scenes but with a different level of comprehension and esoteric zeal:

I will remain by this river, thought Siddhartha. It is the same river that I crossed on my way to the town. A friendly ferryman took me across. I will go to him. My path once led from his hut to a new life which is now old and dead. May my present path, my new life start from here. (Hesse 2007:76)

Iqbal also voices the same when he says that the great divine existence that he had been looking for in all the planets and the sky, was discovered within the shut doors of his own heart (Iqbal 1986: 103).

Siddhartha had started his journey with the conviction of a scientist. He had a proposition whose validity was somehow in his vision but it was then an unformed ideal. Hesse makes him appear full of empirical approach which was, at the turn of the twentieth century, a dominant preoccupation of the scientists. It was the time when the age old theses were put to the most ruthless tests and the few meta-narratives that still lingered were later challenged when the world experienced the two great wars, one after another.

Hesse's was a time when the spiritual and the physical, both worlds were put to question and the only refuge available for the Western mind was to roll back to the Self, a phenomenon that Martin Lings calls *A Return to the Spirit* (Lings 2005).

Now, the Self in Sanskrit is Atman. Hesse's Siddhartha believed that he should experience Atman. It could not be done like opening a book and reading it. It was

like experiencing existence and to be able to have a holistic view, he had to undergo the diversity of circumstances to be able to reach the unity. Since 'not to be' is a characteristic of being, Siddhartha would have to experience the nonexistence as well.

Siddhartha did it the way Socrates and Confucius, his contemporaries did it, by questioning the depths of soul. At every step they took, they went by the path of agnostics. 'One thing only I know, and that is that I know nothing.' So the quest would be never ending. It is said that philosophy begins when one learns to doubt. And the fit targets of the doubt are usually the cherished beliefs and axioms and platitudes. Socrates famously said: *gnothi seauton*: Know thyself (Durant 1985: 5).

Earlier philosophers like Thales and Heraclitus, Zeno, Pythagoras and Empedocles etc. who sought for the *physis* or nature of external things, the laws of the material and measureable world. Socrates appreciated all this just like Buddha appreciated Ananda's verisimilitude and Siddhartha applauded Govinda's selfless service and prayers and self-abnegation.

But Socrates was of the view that there is a subject greater than the birds and trees and stars, and that is man's mind. The study of what man is and what can he become. So he set himself up in exploring the human soul and tried to question the assumptions and certainties (Durant 1985: 5).

According to Mathew Dillon,

We might point out the inspiring qualities shared by Socrates and the Buddha: their openness, their equanimity, their supreme confidence in their beliefs, and their insistence that their followers pursue like-minded paths with their own two feet. For both, the truth meant freedom from delusion and fear toward a state of pure goodness.

Their teaching had a concrete, practical purpose, meant to change lives. It is more important to learn from them than about them, and any reader of the dialogues or suttas who is moved to make radical changes in thought and behavior, far from being naive, has got the message more clearly than the merely erudite. (Dillon 2000: 548)

According to Dillon, the presence of comparable thought between Socrates and Buddha is in fact the thought process that existed simultaneously in India and Greece during the Axial Age and that we should study history synchronically and this may reveal that the Axial Age was an Age of Enlightenment in more or less the same way as its modern European parallel.

He suggests that a comparative research into the parallel personalities as well as philosophical thoughts of these two centers of civilization is possible as well as desirable. It was a time when the human thought was most threateningly open and ready to challenge the historical ritualistic and formal modes of education and beliefs. This freedom of deliberation that the two sages introduced together formed the basis of the later schools of philosophical thought that in turn proved to be the harbingers of the modern philosophical schools (Dillon 2000: 545).

All these great scholars believed in the direct exposure to knowledge through dialogue and concentration. At the time of Buddha's entry into *pari nirvana* or biological death leading to the final nirvana, he had said to Ananda:

Therefore, *Ananda*, be ye islands unto yourselves. Be ye a refuge to yourselves. Seek no external refuge. Live with the Dhamma as your island, the Dhamma as your refuge. Betake to no external refuge. Herein, *Ananda*, a Bhikkhu lives strenuous, reflective, watchful, abandoning covetousness in this world, constantly developing mindfulness with respect to body, feelings, consciousness, and Dhamma. (Mahthera 1980: 181-182)

Orientalism and Religion offers us a timely discussion of the implications of contemporary post-colonial theory for the study of religion. Drawing on a variety of post-structuralist and post-colonial thinkers, including Foucault, Gadamer, Said, and Spivak, Richard King examines the way in which notions such as mysticism, religion, Hinduism and Buddhism are taken for granted, and shows us how religion needs to be re-described along the lines of cultural studies.

Siddhartha's journey seems to be a cyclic one. He is going round and round, making discoveries and then entering into the wider orbits to live through more intensely. Like all the wayfarers of the mystical and philosophical nature, he seems also to be looking for something that is eternally good. He seems to defy and ultimately break down the principles of rest and motion.

We see that Hesse has portrayed Siddhartha as a great intellectual. He never says that he has some doubts about the religion. There is no skepticism. He is just looking for something that is intellectually and spiritually and even bodily liberating. The narrow latitude that the prescribed religion allowed him was not enough for his radiating mind that had to expand and to explore the limits of this expansion. Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), one of the greatest modern philosophers of the West underwent the same logical trauma when he said:

After experience had taught me that all things that frequently take place in ordinary life are vain and futile, and when I saw that all things that I feared, and which feared me, had nothing good or bad in them save in so far that the mind was affected by them; I determined at last to inquire whether there was anything which might be affected to the exclusion of all other things; I determined, I say, to inquire whether I might discover and attain the faculty of enjoying throughout eternity continual supreme happiness... (Durant 1985: 126)

On the one hand it accounts for Hesse's Siddhartha to separate himself from the Buddha and look for his own salvation and on the other hand it determines that destiny is a personal affair and has nothing to do with the outside influences. This idea is against the creation theory of the revealed religions and is closer to the pantheistic theory which is based on the idea that the world is not a different substance from God but the same substance in another form. How one, then become the many?

For this answer we look to Plotinus (205 BC-170 AD). About the time Hesse wrote *Siddhartha*, Plotinus was commonly read in post-war Europe with zeal owing to the fact that the intellectuals were looking for an esoteric explanation of life. According to Plotinus, the cosmos arises out of the One by a series of emanations, or descending steps. Each step in the emanation series is a step downward in point of value till passing through the sphere of Intelligence and World Soul we enter the world of matter below which there is pure Non-being (Stace 1960: 112-113).

"But how shall we find the way? What method can we devise? How can one see the inconceivable Beauty which stays within...", Plotinus asks. "Where then is

our way of escape? How shall we put out to sea? ... How shall we travel to it?

Where is our way of escape?" And then he himself suggests an answer:

We must not be surprised that that which excites the keenest of longings is without any form, even spiritual form, since the soul itself, when inflamed with love for it, puts off all the form which it had, even that which belongs to the spiritual world. For it is not possible to see it, or to be in harmony with it, while one is occupied with anything else. (Stace1960: 114)

These words of Plotinus bear remarkable similarity with Siddhartha's words when he answers to Govinda's question about the *real thing* and the *intrinsic thing*, 'If they are illusion, then I also am illusion, and so they are always the same nature as myself. It is that which makes them so lovable and venerable' (Hesse 2007:117).

The impact of the Flemish Christian Mystics like Jan van Ruysbroeck cannot be overlooked in this connection. In his book *The Adornment of the Spiritual Marriage*, he writes that in order to comprehend God above all semblance, such as he is in Himself, is to be God with god, without intermediary, and in order to understand this, one must die to himself and live in God, and must turn his gaze to the eternal light where the hidden truth reveals itself without means (Ruysbroeck 1916: 185-186).

But what happens when this union takes place? Can we continue with the physiology and psychology that we have or that an extraordinary energy needs must be restored to us, something transcendental? According to Guy Eaton, we need to know that some of the human problems are not actually there to be solved but to live through and to live them out until the problem itself is shattered and

falls away. He quotes the example of C.G. Jung who declared that in most cases the neurosis cannot be cured; it can only be transcended (Eaton 2004: 115).

In *Siddhartha*, Buddha has experienced it, Siddhartha has experienced it, Govinda has experienced it through him, and so has Kamala and Vasudeva, but the words fail to describe it and only a smile, an affirming confident and resolute smile does the job. Only images can substitute it when Hesse provides us with the kaleidoscopic vision through the eyes of Govinda: 'He no longer saw the face of his friend Siddhartha. Instead he saw other faces, many faces, a long series, a continuous stream of faces – hundreds, thousands, which all came and disappeared and yet all seemed to be there at the same time, which all continually changed and renewed themselves and which were yet all Siddhartha' (Hesse 2007: 119-120).

A relative being in contradistinction with an absolute being is subject to incessant cycle of annihilation and renewal. It is not the alleged transmigration of the soul but the projection of the archetype that reflects in everything (Burckhardt 2005: 77).

Scientists have also formulated their theories about this although the terminology is different. Stephen Hawking a great master of theoretical Physics asserts:

If an astronaut falls into a black hole, its mass will increase. Eventually, the energy equivalent of that extra mass will be returned to the universe in the form of radiation. Thus in a sense the astronaut will be recycled. It would be a poor sort of

immortality, however, because any personal concept of time for the astronaut would almost certainly come to an end as he was crushed out of existence inside the black hole (Waley 1993: 22-23).

We can compare this with the cosmology propounded by Bertrand Russell in his essay: *The Ultimate Constituents of Matter* from his book: *Mysticism and Logic*. The book was published in 1918 (four years before the publication of *Siddhartha*) and due to the thrill that it had created, there is a probability that Hesse would also have had a look on it.

Russell conceives the world as consisting of a multitude of entities arranged in a certain pattern. The entities that are arranged are particulars and the pattern results from the relations of these particulars. According to him the series of such particulars that have the analogy of the notes in a symphony would make some wholes that he likes to call as logical constructions or symbolic fictions.

According to Russell the analogues of the successive particulars would be regarded as specific states of one 'thing'. What he is trying to resolve is whether the object of sense is mental or physical and believes that a true theory of matter requires a division of things into time-corpuscles as well as into space-corpuscles (Russell 1986: 125).

Russell further develops these particulars into perspectives and judges these with reference to time, '*The one all-embracing time*' as he calls it. What Russell is trying to do is the same what Hesse is attempting in his fiction and what Buddha

actually experienced and that is to develop a frame of mind that can take in the entire experience of life and synthesize it into one whole. The limited human mental perspective and the ontological necessity are two banks of the river and the experience of oneness is the flowing water that joins the two.

The guiding principle of Quantum Mechanics suggests that we have to leave behind the idea of certain, fixed and determinate results of the classical physics particularly when we are dealing with sub-atomic particles. We have to take into account the Uncertainty Principle or Indeterminism.

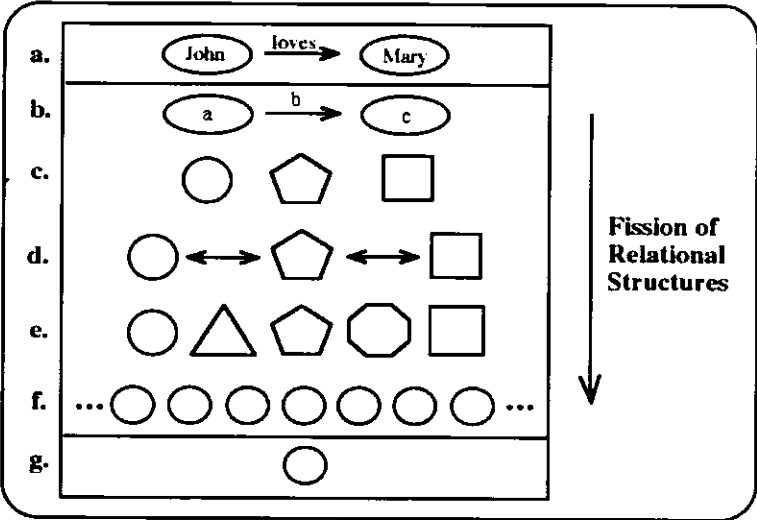
For example, we cannot determine exactly the energy of a particle like Photon. For this purpose we shall have to know its frequency and the time taken to complete a single wavelength and we shall spoil the result because what we shall calculate will be the frequency of the last moment of our calculation (Haque1991:175). We cannot hold it with pincers and make it go at our will. Indeterminacy is in the nature of things.

Statistical predictions and/or theoretical approaches alone try to solve the subatomic positions where direct empirical methods cannot reach. And of course this is true for the impenetrable esoteric world of spirit and mysticism. The 'things' can be internally experienced and only a fraction of that may be conveyed of which a small proportion is usually understandable unless one is initiated on the path.

The following relational diagram (Randall 1997) is one way in which the oneness

or the mystical unicity (or unity) may be understood. The two persons or entities (yin and yang or man or god) may have a virtual bond of relationship. The force that exists between them may take up different forms and different amount of time but if the functional relationship of the variables is established, all contrariness gives way to smooth synthesis till the ultimate fusion takes place.

Fig.2



As we move from position a. to g. the relational structures keep losing their boundaries. The sharp contours of diversity give way to an evenness that conforms to the one dimensional circles that are all the same. These in time superimpose and the various identities turn into a single entity which is many and yet one, one and at the same time many. As Iqbal has said that the universal self makes its abode in the heart just like the sky can be located in the tiny lens of an eye (Iqbal 1986: 128).

The tremendous amount of European philosophical work has been devoted in deciphering this hazardous relationship between the external and the internal discrepancy of eternal truth. Could it be rationalized? Could the relativity and the quantum mechanics ever juxtapose and give an answer? Could the feeling and the expression ever be the same?

John Locke (1632-1704) realized that it was impossible to prove the existence of the sacred, but he was sure beyond the shadow of doubt that God was there and that humanity had entered a positive era. He marks the beginning of the great Western transformation but by the time it was supposed to ripe into an all answering philosophy, the war ravished Europe and the creative roots could not go down the 'stony rubbish', as Eliot tags modernity, and all that the West was left to celebrate was blind following without conviction that comes from personal exploration and endeavour.

Karen Armstrong is of the view that in post war modern Europe, and America, it has been writers and artists rather than religious leaders who have filled in the blankness of the modern chaos by re-invoking the muse of the past, the necessity of a super human agency, the myth, the past heroes, 'a rallying cry against the inhumanity of our brave new world' (Armstrong 2005: 139).

There is very little continuity of ritualistic tradition even among the cultures of Europe as Sir James Frazer has pointed out in his *Golden Bough* especially among the Northern and Southern cultures. While the Celts and Norse would be harvesting and celebrating death and rebirth, the Greeks would be planting and

having fertility festivals. This north-south duality strikes deep at the heart of pagan lore and calls for alternatives which in the European context may be found in revealed religions.

But Hesse's Siddhartha, in line with the historical sage Buddha, has done away with gods as external manifestations. Prior to his search, the Hindu pantheon with its elaborate range of gods, avatars, demons, heroes and villains had enthralled millions who were flabbergasted rather than impressed by the fertility festivals and divinations.

Both, the historical Buddha and the fictional Siddhartha believe that if religion is dependent on our cyclical obligations with reference to the points that we are at in the present, in the eternal circle of the wheel *chakra*, then if different gods make very different demands on us, our practices, however hard we may try, would seldom ensure the harmony without which there can be no peace, and without peace there would be no religion and therefore the philosophy of the religion in Buddhism is not the servitude to gods but Dharma, one of the three *Refuges*.

The 'refuges' are, Buddha, Dharma and Samgha which means that each individual puts his faith in Buddha as a man who accomplished what is ascribed to him in the tradition: that he put an end to suffering by uprooting its cause, becoming fully awakened in the process. It means that each individual puts his faith in the dharma as reflective of those doctrines deemed by Buddha to be essential for practice leading to the eradication of suffering and the end of rebirth. It means that each individual puts his faith in the *samgha*, the community of the

noble persons (*arya pudaglas*) who have attained at least the first stage on the path (Dumoulin 1994: 31).

Throughout the novel, there is no noise about God. Whenever a character, including Siddhartha and Gautama Buddha reach the verge of divine light, they go silent and a smile is spread about their lips. Is it a mark of atheism or pantheism, a cold rationalism or a very special case of divine transcendence?

According to Peter Harvey, the spiritual quest in Buddha's day was largely the identification and liberation of a person's true self i.e. Atman and this was postulated as a person's permanent inner nature, the source of true happiness and the autonomous inner controller of action. In Jainism this was known as *jiva* or 'life principle'. But Buddha went beyond this idea. According to him anything subject to change, anything not autonomous and totally controllable by its own wishes, anything subject to the disharmony of suffering, could not be such a perfect *true self* (Dumoulin 1994: 31).

Heinrich Dumoulin has found that the theme of transcendence emerges more richly in Buddhism than what can be easily comprehended. A characteristic of the tradition is to use *negation* as a cipher of the transcendent. Dumoulin calls it negative theology.

The silence of the historical Buddha can be seen as the first expression of negative theology in Buddhism. This silence is a prominent mark of the Buddha's career, continuing through the entire forty five years of his teachings, and becoming an

explicit theme whenever metaphysical questions are put to him and he answers by remaining silent. Such questions are: 'Is the world eternal or not? Has the world an end or not? Is soul the same as the body or different? Does the *Tatthagata*, the Perfected One exist after his death or not?'

It is reported that one of Buddha's disciples, Vacchagotta got frustrated by the unfathomable mystery of this negativity or emptiness and to him Buddha remarked 'You ought to be at a loss Vaccha, you ought to be bewildered'.... 'That fire that was in front of you and that has been quenched, to which direction has that fire gone from here? What would you reply?' This is an intertextual parallel to what Henry Miller (1891-1980) has said, "In expanding the field of knowledge, we but increase the horizon of ignorance."

Buddhist way of answering this enigma is to perceive first the most readily available phenomenon and then through it, reach out to the grand universe. Listening silently to the river is not just an allusion to ordinary contemplation. The river is fluid in both shape and existence. The philosophers and scientists have long thought about the structure of the Universe and they have thought about the great dance of spheres as well as a fluidity that is flat like a river. Watching the river for so many long hours was for Siddhartha, imbibing the spirit of evenness, oneness, simultaneity and resolve that is the essence of creation.

Encyclopedia Britannica tells us about this unitary aspect of the structure of the universe by admitting that the remarkably smooth nature of the universe observed today is difficult to explain with the standard big bang model. Early in that model,

parts of the universe widely separated from each other would not have had time to have been in contact with each other via the fastest signal known: light.

For example, the temperature of the cosmic background radiation in different far-flung regions of the universe is very nearly the same. How did this occur without these regions ever communicating? Without such communication to provide the uniformity in a natural way, the early expansion of the universe would have to have been extremely well "choreographed." While one can simply suppose that the conditions were just right, a more natural explanation would be very desirable (Britannica 2007).

It is a point where physics stops being the science of matter alone and becomes concerned with life itself. Hesse wanted to tell the world that science and technology alone cannot supply satisfactory answers to the riddle of existence. There are rebuttals available, like U.S. journalist and critic H. L. Mencken (1880 - 1956) who writes in his *Notebook*, "Minority Report" that the modern religion has the approach of only an enlightened mind of thirteenth century for although it no longer agrees that the earth is flat but it still believes that the prayer can cure a disease (Encarta 1997). Where this idea of Mencken stands exposed to the postmodern challenge, the physicists Robert L. Lehrman and Clifford Swartz do admit in the concluding essay 'The Unknown' of their book *Foundations of Physics* that the modern physics has failed to understand why certain of the elementary particles exist and have the characteristics that they do. They believe that such questions relate to the bigger questions of the origin and nature of the

universe as for every answer that the modern physics devices, ten new mysteries appear (Lehrman 1969: 727).

Stephen Hawking is of the view that the Uncertainty Principle of Quantum Mechanics implies that certain pairs of quantities, such as the position and velocity of a particle, cannot both be predicted with complete accuracy. Quantum Mechanics deals with this situation via a class of quantum theories in which particles do not have well defined positions and velocities but are represented by a wave.

These quantum theories are deterministic in the sense that they give laws for the evolution of the wave with time. Thus if we know the wave at one time, we can calculate it at any other time. Moving in the direction of spiritual realm, which in fact is not a detached position, a condition may be cited that Henry James (1843-1916) gives under the heading of *Transiency*.

He says that mystical states cannot be sustained for long. Except in rare instances, half an hour, or at the most an hour or two, seems to be the limit beyond which they fade into the light of common day. Often, when faded, their quality can but imperfectly be reproduced in memory; but when they recur it is recognized; and from one recurrence to another it is susceptible of continuous development in what is felt as inner richness and importance (James 1996: 276).

The unpredictable, random element comes in only when we try to interpret the wave in terms of the positions and velocities of particles. But maybe that is our

mistake: maybe there are no particle positions and velocities, but only waves. It is just that we try to fit the waves to our preconceived ideas of positions and velocities. The resulting mismatch is the cause of the apparent unpredictability (Hawking 2005: 140).

It is a point where physics stops being the science of matter alone and becomes concerned with life itself. According to Hawking, if we do discover a complete theory, it should in time be understandable in broad principle by everyone, not just a few scientists. If we are able to find through the *anthropic principle*, why we and the universe exist then it would be the ultimate triumph of human reason—for then we would know the mind of God (Ibid).

Hawking asserts that in nineteenth and twentieth century the science became too technical and mathematical for the philosophers, or anyone else except a few specialists. Philosophers reduced the scope of their inquiries so much that Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951), the famous philosopher said, “The sole remaining task for philosophy is the analysis of language” (Hawking 2005: 142).

The latest triumph in this concern has been *the string theory*. The Super-String Theory or Theory of Everything (TOE) is based on the contention that we live in a ten-dimensional universe—nine dimensions of space and one of time—though we can perceive only four dimensions. At the moment of the Big Bang all nine spatial dimensions are believed to have been somehow equal. Then as the universe expanded, only three spatial dimensions expanded with it. Superstring theory also proposes that everything in the universe is made of strings so small

that if 1 billion trillion trillion of them were laid end to end they would be only 0.4 inch (1 centimeter) long (Britannica 2007). It remains for science to find out whether these strings are sounds or not.

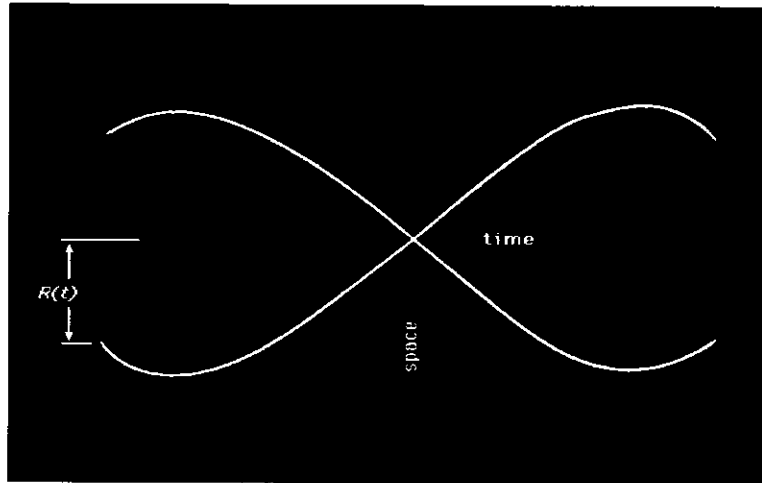
The river in *Siddhartha* is also made up of the sounds. All living creatures are its voice. If its ten thousand voices are successfully heard at the same time, a word is pronounced and the word is *Om*. Siddhartha and Vasudeva are reported to be listening to this voice of life, the voice of Being, of perpetual Becoming ... 'both happy at the same answer to the same question' (Hesse 2007: 89). This apparent conundrum brings us to the philosophical principle of dependence on contextually variable factors and as such, it may also refer to the differing cosmological views of the philosopher-scientists, particularly those working in the domain of theory of relativity.

Albert Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity challenged all conventional ideas about time. One of the cornerstones of this theory is that the speed of light is the same for all observers. A consequence of this rule is that time is not constant: clocks run at different rates for different observers depending on the relative motion of the clocks and observers. This effect is called time dilation.

Einstein's General Theory of Relativity predicted that clocks run slower in the presence of a gravitational field. Thus a clock in space runs faster than an identical clock on Earth, where gravity is stronger. Both of Einstein's predictions concerning time dilation have been experimentally confirmed. Today scientists no longer consider time as an independent, constant entity but as one aspect of an

interdependent space-time continuum. They know that the time measured by a clock depends on where the clock is and how fast it is moving in relation to the observer.

Fig.3



The illustration (Britannica 2004) shows Curved space-time in a matter-dominated, closed universe during the middle half of its expansion-compression phases. At each instant of time t , the space axis forms a closed loop with radius $R(t)$, the so-called radius of the universe, in an unobservable fourth dimension (Shu 1982). We understand the states of motion and rest with reference to certain of our perspectives. The light emitting from a source and falling upon a body are apparently both a simultaneous phenomenon and if both the source and the object are stationary from our point of view the impact of the light beam and the glow that it produces would also be fixed and stationary.

We know from our common sense that if the light has travelled a certain distance, it cannot be stationary but if we measure the photon velocity at any given instant,

the smaller the unit of time we take, the smaller would be the speed. Till at the smallest of all units of time, the particle would be at rest but we know that the great speed of the photon evades all such measurement and a distance of say, a meter is covered in no time. This simultaneity is what we understand as wholeness and oneness just like a room illuminated with electric light is bright in all the corners but any erect object can produce a shadow whose direction would determine the angle at which the light is travelling. But this is the enigma of the physical world. In the realm of spiritual existence, such formulae hold but little importance. Rest and movement are all relative in the physical world.

Hesse had always been impressed by Nietzsche's thought particularly his concept of the *Übermensch* or *the over-man* which was a kind of logical reaction to the ordinariness of human life and which aimed at bringing about a change albeit a permanent and positive change in the history of the world. Nietzsche believed that if and when mankind succeeds in attaining to this ideal, this *Übermensch* would then keep reentering the world and keep affecting the great cause of human reformation (Stanford 2010).

Iqbal takes this theme up further in his multidimensional concept of Khudi when he says in his *Note on Nietzsche*:

The slender 'I' which appears to be capable of dissolution by the smallest of shocks appears to have a future and can achieve permanence as an element in the constitution of the universe provided it adopts a certain mode of life...It has the power to expand by absorbing the elements of the universe of which it appears to be an insignificant part, it also has the power of absorbing the attributes of God and thus attains to the vicegerency of God on earth. (Siddiqui, 2008: 78)

This comes in line per se with the Buddhist belief that the Buddha is consistently being born and will be doing so ever and ever. The model personality suggested both by the *Übermensch* and Siddhartha are supposed to change the values of the time that they traverse on the earth and both have to reach a disposition when they should be able to look back on their contribution with satisfaction, a symbol of which is evident in the smile that plays on the lips of the Buddha and Hesse's Siddhartha. The presence of the Present and the Past in the Future and therefore the incidence of the Future being determined within the realm of the Past makes the existence of Time an eternal and ever present phenomenon (Eliot 1935).

In the kaleidoscopic backdrop of this scientific, philosophic and mystical enigma, Hesse's view of theology in the form of a fictional narrative while depending on the simple stylistic description to unravel the great mystery of the matter, mind and God is quite commendable and reinvigorating as far as the great quest for knowledge is concerned. '...and when the river told them something good at the same moment, they looked at each other, both thinking the same thought, both happy at the same answer to the same question...' (Hesse 2007: 89). This is the simultaneity that the quantum physics aims at. This is what Hesse's Siddhartha has long looked for and ultimately found. And this is what the sages of all ages have been trying to understand, adopt and experience.

CONCLUSION

The mystics and the philosophers use a meta-language full of paradoxes and contradiction in terms of the observable and commonly perceivable facts and realities. But the interesting thing is that despite their own confession of indescribability, in most of the cases, they choose to communicate it through the written words. The texts thus produced are so intricate and mind boggling that only a few can fully comprehend them. For example, the earliest Vedic and Buddhist literature as well as the relatively modern writings of Heidegger and Derrida, to quote but a few, are the examples of this perplexing and abstruse linguistic experiment. Derek Jhonston quotes the example of Heidegger and says that it is almost impossible to read a single page of this philosopher and suggests that perhaps he was being obscure to keep his thought safe among the privileged few who are initiated into its mysteries (Jhonston 2008:164).

But the problem seems to have been partially solved when we analyze the material of thought that he was using. Before him everybody in the philosophical world would like to answer questions about *Being*. Heidegger rejected the question itself on the grounds that we do not even know the meaning of the question, 'what is *being*?' There is a huge difference between the expected reply to the question of a being and not-being. The chain of implications follows endlessly.

While Heidegger was musing about *Being and Time* in early twenties, Hesse had been writing *Siddhartha* to unravel the same kind of mysteries. But Hesse was clever in presaging that the unraveling of the most basic doctrines common to all philosophy and mysticism should involve an actual being who has firsthand experience of this knowledge and who should be charismatic and romantic enough to capture the attention of the post World War European audience. Buddha was the right choice and Hesse propounded his personal philosophical conclusions through the narrative of this great man.

Post World War European society was the most suitable audience for such a story as it had seen a great deal of wasted generation, incurable suffering and countless funeral processions. The mythical demon *Mara* seemed to have returned to the world and was ready for an all-out assault on anyone who would think in terms of reform and positive radical transformation.

The Siddharthas and Yashodhras of the modern world, those thinking young men and women, who believed that there is always light at the end of the tunnel, were looking for a model that could promise reform and a return to the youthful ideals of commitment and concerted constructive actions. People in the post war Europe, including Hesse himself, needed a role model. The intensity of the quest can be measured by noticing that he braved the challenging journey of that time to the East and collected direct knowledge about Eastern mystical beliefs.

Hesse took his audience on a joyride through the *bildungsroman* of *Siddhartha* and showed them a possibility of spiritual maturation in which a young man

compromises an easeful life in the quest of knowledge. He listens to the available didacticism and dogmatism but always chooses to go on and during the process he undergoes the life both of a prince and the pauper and experiences the emptying (*anicatta*) of the bowls of the desires (*tarsna*) of sensual pleasure, becoming and unbecoming (*maya, bhava and vibhava*) .

He gave a similar ideal personification in his earlier work titled *Knulp* (1915) in which he showed a bohemian rebel fighting his way through the traditions of his time and the general ordeals of life. Hesse believed that the young minds of his own generation as well as the coming ones needed to be liberated from the power-oriented, materialistic ideologies. Hesse therefore took cues from the available transcontinental inspiration and added to these the necessary wisdom and insight.

Both his *Siddhartha* (the Eastern model) and his *Knulp* (the Western model) live comfortably among other men and women but they have an awakened individuality that forces them not to be identified not as dwellers of the townships but as the travelers along a path whose dimensions unveil gradually. Same is the case with *Demian* (1919) in which Sinclair who is guided by Demian to grow up into the world around and at the same time to grow out of it till an intellectual liberation should become possible. All this indicates Hesse's quest to break the bonds of time and space to be eternally liberated.

In his Nobel Lecture, he admits that although he had received philosophical influence from Plato, Spinoza, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche yet his real source of inspiration lay in Chinese and Buddhist Philosophy. A thread of common

observation that runs through these sources that he has mentioned is that all of them are more and more pantheistic, naturalistic and rooted in the belief that a higher plane of being is possible even within the narrow confines of existence in the human world.

Hesse's narrative power carries in it a confessional aspect and it makes every reader feel becoming a part of the story one way or the other. His biographies detail the influence that he was able to put on the post war generation when we see hundreds of letters coming his way both from young men and women who would congratulate him for writing so beautifully or seek his advice in life's little troubles and tribulations. *Siddhartha* was thus like a mirror held up that helped people recognize their latent desires and wonderment and restore psychological harmony by indicating a greater plane of intellectual existence.

Hesse rejects the idea of a world government that attempts to bring about a change by force of the military power. He rather suggests the path of the Buddha replete with compassion and love. But this would be the culmination of the path and therefore, he deftly traces the long and arduous trail that leads to the finale of enlightenment.

On the eve of Hesse's Nobel Prize Award Ceremony in 1946, Anders Osterling delivered the Presentation Speech in which he pointed out that on account of the political crises that led Europe to war and created an uncompromising nationalistic stance, Hesse believed that deliverance needed to come from beyond the accepted values, 'from the light of the East, perhaps from the core hidden in

anarchic theories of the resolution of good and evil in a higher unity' (Osterling 1946).

Secular philosophy, reasoned deliberation and formalistic elucidation of religion all carry the project of human regeneration only a few steps further. But Hesse had realized that an unbounded wisdom and compassion with a love for humanity that is free of *grasping*, the ideal of the *Bodhisattva* was the answer. Sympathetic compassion in a world marked with transience in which no one is real, neither the helper nor the helped, became more and more poignant in the wake of the destruction that the World War had brought to Europe and the Buddha like detachment from the illusion of substantiality was supposed to make people more enthusiastic in their work of compassion without the need or urge for reward.

Hesse's Siddhartha understands the secret of the permanence of transitoriness quite late than the historical Siddhartha. Perhaps that is due to the late and slow recognition of the truth in the modern life which allegorically may mean to allude to the need of an early recognition of truth because otherwise as soon as the eyes would open, the body would begin to rust.

The real objective of the whole enterprise of this tradition is carving out the *Middle Path* that stands shining between the extremes of passionate sensuality and self mortification. Hesse's Siddhartha is every man and woman of all ages and climes. It would be a sheer mistake to stick to the defined gender roles as described in the novel. An equal mistake it would be to research that the story of the novel digresses from the historical account. The good thing is to see if the

narrative is a matter of common experience or not, and whether or not men and women of the modern times find it related to their emotional life patterns.

Apart from the *directions* that the narrative moves through and the multifarious philosophies of the East and West that it imbibes, it is without an end except an impression that the time is cyclic and so is the experience of being and becoming. It has echoes from Umar Khayyam when he says, "Tell unto reasoners that for the lovers of God, intuition is guide, not discursive thought" (Nasr 2007: 175). In Eastern philosophy including the Islamic Philosophy, the knowledge attained through inner purification (*kashf*) is the most perfect and highest form of knowledge sans the ritualistic academia.

At other places, it echoes Meister Eckhart when he says, "Nothing hinders the soul's knowledge of God as much as time and space ... If the soul is to know God, it must know him above time and outside of space; for God is neither this nor that, as are these manifold things" (Stace 1960: 153).

Hussain bin Mansur al Hallaj takes the idea even further when he remarks that 'gnosis is beyond the idea of beyond, and beyond spatial time and beyond the intention, and beyond awareness and beyond received traditions, and beyond perception. Because all of these are something which was not in existence before being, and came into being in a place' (Hallaj 1978: 62).

No objective reality can contain God and therefore no objective science can help us beyond the visible and the palpable. According to the mystics, the Ultimate

Reality is not only *ultrasensual* but also *ultrarational* (Hakim 1941: 178). “All forms emerge from Him but He is formless. He is at home only in the essence of the soul of man.”

Such is the quest of Siddhartha and by implication, of all sentient beings. All the forms and events of the path including the path itself as well as the wayfarer are supererogatory. At the end of the quest lies not death but ‘the birth of a new ego’ the man becomes a calm observer of things and his mind is like a polished mirror. He sees things as they are and accepts them as they are and then sees them off. For him nothing is to be objected to and nothing to reject at all. And above all there is nothing to be willfully pursued. This leads to what Taoists call *indifferentiation* leading to Cosmic Transmutation where all sciences and their subjects and materials become one (Izutsu 2005c.: 345).

The underlying principle of Hesse’s treatise as well as the correlated philosophies and mysticism has been a self-realization as well as a pure awareness that leads to a state of immediacy and unity, a state where all chaos ends and the man attains a cosmic personality manifesting the universe. This motionless concentration and holy calm is akin to the *Gita*-like image of ‘a still flame in a windless place’ (Radhakrishna 1959: 28).

The story of the novel begins in a very serene and unflustered pastoral world and it is soon changed to the tragic notes of separation and asceticism leading to a temporary refuge at Jatavana followed by a bout of sensuality and commercial activity. Then comes a sense of futility, and the *kama* personified in Kamala is

exchanged with separation in circumstances that lack any rational explanation. His self effacing deliberation and timely rescue is followed by half a glimpse of reality and the bliss of companionship. What follows is the reunion that seems an entry into the world of *prema* but in a moment most fleeting, this shatters with a double loss, the love and the fruit of that bond. When Kamala is dead and the son is gone forever and the confidant Vasudeva also goes in retreat, then starts another path where pantheistic change is transformed into a sense of unity that holds the entire existence arrested. The cycle of *sansara* ends and *Nirvana* is felt.

The movement of the journey of the body in the physical and phenomenal world or the motionless transformation of the inner soul in the realm of the spirit is all marked with a deep realization that happens simultaneously to the entire cosmic system, from the subatomic to the heavenly sphere. The familiar principles and laws, formulae and equations do not hold. The desire changes to contentment.

The probability of spiritual attainment is the intertextual lynchpin of *Siddhartha* as well as the Eastern and Western philosophies and their corresponding mysticism. Intertextual approach has proved to be a liberating experience throughout the months of requisite study for the present research. The overall exercise is expected to have affected a holistic understanding of Hesse's worldview along with its overall mystical and philosophical channelization. I believe the domain of Comparative Literature can be made more productive with such intertextual explorations.

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