

Chapter 1

Introduction

Herman Hesse's protagonist in *Siddhartha*, Siddhartha, is a spiritual seeker, who later attains Nirvana. He thinks that the life in material quest is a waste and believes that the higher goal of human being is to discover who he/she is. Thus, he sets out on his spiritual journey to discover the secret of the Self and, ultimately, realizes it. In the beginning, Siddhartha follows the Hindu philosophy practicing it. The Hindu doctrines preach that the individuals are part of God and are potent to realize this truth. They attain the state of immortality in a communion with that Supreme Soul. A person successful in realizing the Self is considered immortal-one who has reached beyond the state of death and time. After many years of philosophical experimentation, Siddhartha abandons the idea of eternity and embraces the radical path of Buddhism, which negates the idea of eternity of the Self. Buddhism teaches the concept of momentariness of the Self constructed by desires, actions, and experiences. In this transformation, his former notion of eternity of the Self clashes with his new realization. Finally, he realizes that there is no eternal Self, but the Self that is momentary and that is constructed by desires, actions, and experiences. But before the discussion of these ideas in text, I will discuss some aspects of writer and the critical reception of the text.

I. Herman Hesse

Herman Hesse, the German-Swiss poet and novelist, is relatively little known in his country, although a big deal of publicity has given him since he was awarded the Nobel prize for literature in 1946. This unpopularity of Hesse is only due to the fact that he writes in a foreign tongue. Therefore his books are little in demand outside of

university circles. That means that Hesse has not caught the fancy of the American public, that he has so far no large popular following. The main reason for this is that his novels do not have a strong plot around which the action revolves and therefore lack suspense or excitement. His characters are self-centered and drive readers into the metaphysical realm of mind from the outer world. They are largely autobiographical and deal with questions of a philosophy of life. The plot is used by Hesse to drape his thoughts and the struggle for an understanding of the great problems of life. Hesse is, and always has been a god seeker, he has a message for his fellow-men, but one must "study" him, read and re-read his works carefully if one wants to get the full benefit of their message. His works are not so much for entertainment but rather want to give food for thought; they have therefore a very strong appeal for the serious minded reader but not for the masses that crave excitement and entertainment instead of beauty and depth. Mainly here, I will focus my attention in *Siddhartha*.

II. *Siddhartha* (1994)

Hesse's novel *Siddhartha* is just such a work of literature, and it is of special interest to the student of literature, and of Hesse in particular, because it marks an important step in the development of Hesse and is considered unique in German literature in its presentation of Eastern Philosophy.

Johannes Malthaner comments about *Siddhartha*:

The novel is largely auto-biographical and has a long and interesting history. It is no doubt true of all great works of art that they do not just happen, that they are not products of chance. Great works of literature have their roots way back in the life of their writers, they have grown out

of life and are part of the life of their creators; great works of literature are not factory products but grow and boom to full bloom. This is especially true of *Siddhartha*. (103)

We can agree with the claim of Johannes Malthaner. *Siddhartha* is a recollection Hesse's lifelong spiritual quest and uninterrupted eternal journey.

Siddhartha was published in 1922 but has its roots in the earliest childhood of Hesse. His parents had been missionaries to India, his mother having been born in India of missionary parents; but on account of the poor health of Hesse's father the family had to return to Europe and came to Claw, a small Black Forest town, to help the maternal grandfather of Hesse, Dr. Gundert, the director of their mission and a famous Indian scholar and linguist. Indian songs and books, frequent discussions about India with visiting missionaries and scholars, a large library of Indian and Chinese writings, also many objects of eastern arts created great interest and left a deep impression on Hesse ever since his childhood.

Hesse's books are confessions, and the story of *Siddhartha* is his own story describing his own doubts and struggle. He, too, had rebelled: against the pietistic orthodoxy of his parents and the strict school system in Germany that destroyed any attempt of independence in its pupils. So he ran away to shape his own life. Self education is the main theme of most of the novels of Hesse, especially of the books of his youth. Self education has been for centuries a very favorite theme in German literature and men like Luther, Goethe, Kant and many other leading German writers and philosophers were the inspirers of German youth in their longing for independence.

Further, Johannes Malthaner tries to trace the psychological route of Hesse in *Siddhartha* this way:

It is significant that Hesse gave to a collection of four stories published in 1931, in which he included *Siddhartha*, the title of, Road to Within. Indeed, *Siddhartha* turns away from the outside observance of religious rituals and ordinances to a life of contemplation. So also does Hesse himself after the outbreak of World War I. Up to the war, Hesse had lived a rather quiet and Self-satisfied life. (105)

Siddhartha seems as if Hesse's own confession describing his own doubts and struggle. He, too, had rebelled: against the pietistic orthodoxy of his parents and the strict school system in Germany that destroyed any attempt of independence in its people. So, he ran away to shape his own life which are portrayed in his works. Multhaner further notes:

After years of hard struggle to win recognition as a poet, he had found first success which brought him not only social recognition and financially security but also many friends and a home. But the war brought him a rather rude awakening out of his idyllic life on the shore of Lake Constance where he had lived a rather happy and retired life. His apparently so secure and well ordered world came crashing down over his head. (105)

It is apparent that the war scene has destroyed the Hesse's world view and peace of mind again and again. His personal success is not helpful to organize the worldly people in peaceful order. But he faces criticisms; and one after another obstacle because of his peace loving attitude and anti-war stand. Again Multhaner writes:

The vicious attacks by German press and by many of his former friends for his stand against his war psychosis- Hesse was living at that time in Switzerland although he was still a German citizen- forced him to re-examine the fundamental truths on which he had build his life. He had become distrustful of religion as he saw it practiced, and of education which had not prevented the western world of being plunged into a murderous war. Where was the truth? On what foundation could a man build his life? All had been found wanting. (105)

Now, we can claim that *Siddhartha* is Hesse's attempt to restore his faith in mankind, to regain his lost peace of mind, and to find again a harmonious relationship with his world. A new more spiritual orientation takes place. He does no longer believe in the natural goodness of man, he is thrown back unto himself and comes to a new concept of God: No longer does he seek God in nature but, in the words of the Bible, he believed that "the kingdom of God's is within you".

Hesse confesses that he had been pious only up to his thirteenth year but then had become a skeptic. Now he becomes a believer again, to be sure it is not a return to the orthodox belief of his parents, he wants to include in his new concept of religion not only the teaching of Jesus but also those of Buddha and of the holy scriptures of India as well.

Returning to our story, we find that Siddhartha also as a Samana has not come nearer his goal of happiness and peace. It seems to him that his religious fervor had been nothing but Self-deception, that all the time he had been in flight from himself. The hardship which he had endured as a Samana had not brought him nearer to God.

Through *Siddhartha* Hesse attempts to redefine the meaning of enlightenment challenging the conventional and Self-deceptive attitude of religions.

I will divide this research paper in four parts. In the next chapter I will discuss the perception of “Self” in Buddhism and Hinduism. Hindu’s holy book *The Gita* and Buddhist’s *The Dhammapada* will be taken as major books to be discussed in this paper and other references also will be consulted for support.

In the third chapter, I will endeavor to analyze *Siddhartha* on textual basis.

Finally, I will give conclusion of this study in the last chapter.

Chapter 2

Idea of the Self in Buddhism and Hinduism

In this chapter, I will discuss the philosophical understanding of "Self" as advocated in Hinduism and Buddhism. *The Gita*, Hindu holy book, and *The Dhammapada*, Buddhist holy book, will be discussed here in particular and other relative references will be taken in general.

The entire philosophy of Hinduism strongly advocates the thesis of "Atma" or "Soul" as its true foundation of religious teaching. If we drop the concept of the Soul from the Hindu religious notion, then the whole teaching of Hinduism remains incomplete. In Hinduism, the "Self" or "Soul" stands at the center as indestructible, immutable and eternal. The goal of Hindus as set by religious scriptures is to discover this mysterious "Self" within human body and reside upon its divine qualities. Hindu's scriptures define "Self" by other names like Brahaman, Soul.

In Hindu's great holy book *The Bhagavad Gita* Krishna, thus, describes the nature of soul to Arjun:

Unborn, immutable, eternal, ageless,

The soul is not slain when the body's slain.

Who knows this Soul as indestructible,

Immutable, eternal and increate

How can he slay or cause It to be slain? (22)

This description of the Self or Soul poses a complex challenges for scholar, thinkers, critics of all age to rightly perceive the meaning of Self. Hindus always look at the Self as mystery. Only the blessing and mercy of god can help person to become a realized ones.

Sri Aurobindo writes in detail about the nature of the "Self" or "Soul" in his famous book "Essays on the *Gita*":

There is no such thing as death, for it is the body that dies and the body is not the man. That which really is, cannot go out of existence, though it may change the forms through which it appears, just as that which is non-existent cannot come into being. The soul is and cannot cease to be. This opposition of is and is not, this balance of being and becoming which is the mind's view of existence, finds its end in the realization of the soul as the one imperishable Self by whom all this universe has been extended.

(62)

Aurobindo also asserts that the death is ignorance. Human body dies but the body is not inner personality of man. The inner personality or the Self can never go out of existence until it reaches in the highest form of salvation. Aurobindo writes further:

Finite bodies have an end, but that which possesses and uses the body, is infinite, illimitable, eternal, indestructible. It casts away old and takes up new bodies as a man changes worn-out raiment for new; and what is there in this to grieve at and recoil and shrink? This is not born, nor does it die, nor is it a thing that comes into being once and passing away will never come into being again. It is unborn, ancient, eternal; it is not slain with the slaying of the body. (62)

Hinduism lightly takes death as physical phenomena. Only the finite bodies have an end but the infinite Self is beyond the concept of death and time. Nothing can touch it. It is

unborn and never dies. Aurobindo raises the question about the immortality of the Self, the Soul, or spirit:

Who can slay the immortal spirit? Weapons cannot cleave it, nor the fire burn, nor do the waters drench it, nor the wind dry. Eternally stable, immobile, all pervading, it is for ever and for ever. Not manifested like the body, but greater than all manifestation, not be analysed by the thought, but greater than all mind, not capable of change and modification like the life and its organs and their objects, but beyond the changes of mind and life and body, it is yet the Reality which all these strive to figure. (63)

The *Bhagavad Gita* takes the "Self" as a higher truth of this universal existence. All are that the Self, That One, That Divine whom we look on and speak and hear of as the wonderful beyond our comprehension, for after all our seeking and declaring of knowledge and learning from those who have knowledge no human mind has ever known this absolute. It is this which is here veiled by the world, the master of the body; all life is only its shadow; the coming of the soul into physical manifestation and our passing out of it by death is only one of its minor movements.

To the analytic identity of the Self and Consciousness, Advaita philosophy also adds strong thesis that the Self is never an object of consciousness. Of course, the particular states of consciousness can perfectly well become objects of their states as, too, their contents. But the Self is always the fact of consciousness, and no matter how focused the point of consciousness, what is objective is a particular contentful state, never the conscious entity itself, namely the Self. So, in the most rigorous and abstract way,

there is no Self knowledge in Advaita, if by that is meant knowledge of the Self; what is possible is knowledge only of the state of consciousness of which the Self is a subject.

The Advaitins have a threefold classification of the Self, and it depends on three explanation of consciousness. The Self is individuated and has its own parameters of reflexive occurrence, given by the body and its apparatus; it is then called the *jiva*. The Self is also auto-reflexivity as type of occurent; it is then called *atman*. Then there is general consciousness, which is typically reflexive and the singular, irreducible, universal entity; it is then called *brahaman*. A proper articulation of the Advaitic position must go from highly individualized- personal and subjective- states of awareness to general features across subjects to the universal consciousness.

Based on the teaching of the *Vedas*, which are generally regarded as the foundational scripture of Hinduism, Swami Vivekananda talks about the nature of the Self:

The will, the consciousness, the senses, desire, the passions, all these combined make what we call the "soul".

There is first, the apparent Self (body); second, the mental Self which mistakes the body for himself (the absolute bound by Maya); third, the Atman, the ever pure, the ever free. Seen partially, It is nature; seen wholly, all nature goes, even the memory of it is lost. There is the changeable (mortal), the eternally changeable (nature), and the unchangeable (Atman). (81)

It is clearly seen that there might be different interpretation of human personality but there is no debate on the existence of Soul or Self as the highest, infinite, and indestructible form of existence among Hindus.

But the teaching of the Buddha is primarily practical in aim. Its goal is to enable people to overcome suffering on the basis of the Four Noble Truths. But this practice rests squarely on the theoretical understanding of human nature. Both the not-Self doctrine and the ideas of *kamma* and rebirth are central to the Buddha's message.

The *Dhammapada*, the body of the Buddhist scripture, means something like "the path of dharma"- of truth, of righteousness, of the central law that all of life is one.

Commenting on Buddha's teaching of the Self, Stephen Ruppenthal writes:

Several times in the scriptures the Buddha says that the human being is *anatta*, "without a Self", thus apparently contradicting a principle that is the very basis of the Hindu faith: that at the core of every creature is a divine Self (Atman) which is not different from the transcendent reality (Brahman) and therefore utterly beyond the world of change and death.

(118)

Buddha clearly rejects the notion of the divine Self. His concern is with the existing reality, therefore, he concentrates his investigation towards the practical aspects of life.

Ruppenthal comments further:

Rather than indulging into the metaphysical debate of Self, Buddha's concern was relentlessly practical: life is full of suffering, the cause of that suffering is selfishness, and the selfishness can be removed by practicing the Eightfold Path. Anything else is a distraction. On what lay beyond the

impermanent world of ego and change, his attitude was simply, "First go there; then you will see for yourself. (118)

Scholars and Orthodox Buddhists alike have cited such instances as proof that the Buddha denied the existence of the permanent Self, beyond all changes and unaffected by death. Others cite more affirmative statements to assert that the Buddha did believe in such Self. Addressing to such problems on Buddha's not-Self doctrine, Christopher W. Gowans has said:

A problem of interpretation arises because the Buddha speaks a great deal about the absence of any Self and yet sometimes seems to prefer to or presuppose Self. In my view, the resolution of this problem- the best overall interpretation of his teaching- is that he believed that substance-selves have no reality and that process-selves have no independent reality but do have a form of dependent reality. (72)

Herein, Buddhists put the idea of river or fire. The water in the river always flows. It seems there is flow of same water in the river but in reality, the water is different each moment. It is often argued that the water in the river is same and different by the same time. Gowans further writes:

There are not substance-selves because reality does not consist of substances. When the Buddha speaks of the absence of any Self he should be understood as meaning (in part) the absence of any substance-Self. On the other hand, when he appears to presuppose selves in the doctrines of kamma and rebirth, and more generally when he seems to refer to selves, he should be understood as referring to the dependent reality of the

process-selves. However, process-selves have no independent reality.

Hence, in independent reality, there are no selves at all. This is Buddha's not-Self doctrine. (72)

The paragraph clearly indicates that Buddhists deny the concept of the Self. Neither there is substance nor independent Self. What we call the Self is the result of our Karma (action). If there is no action, there is no Self. We can avoid the action by avoiding desires.

Hence, it is important to remember that the not-Self doctrine is only part of the Buddha's teaching about the nature of human persons. His full teaching may be summarized as follows.

1. Human beings are not substance-selves in any sense.
2. Human beings are process-selves in a dependent sense and hence have better or worse, but always unsatisfactory, rebirths in accord with the morality of our actions.
3. Human beings are that which has the opportunity to escape the cycle of rebirth and attain *Nibbana*.

The above three points reflect the essence of Buddhism. They talk about the formation of the Self and its subsequent process till a person gets Nirvana. Denying the existence of god and the Self, it emphasizes on the strength of human morality and building strong character.

To the question of what constitutes a human person, the Spiritualist's answer was almost always "There exists a spiritual Self, permanent and eternal, which is distinct from the psychological personality." The Buddha, therefore, concentrated on the analysis of

the so-called psychic personality in order to discover such a Self. Every time, he did so, he stumbled on one or the other of the different aspects of experience, such as feeling (vedana), perception (sanna), disposition (sankhara), or consciousness (vinnana). If anything other than these psychic elements constituted the human personality, it was the body (rupa). Yet none of these factors could be considered permanent and eternal; all are liable to change, transformation, and destruction- in brief, they are impermanent (anicca). Arguing from the impermanence and unsatisfactoriness of the five aggregates, the Buddha involved himself in a discussion of the problem of "no-Self" (anatta). The Buddha's assertion regarding "no-Self" is presented in three separate sentences. Referring to each one of the aggregates, he says, "It is not mine. He is not mine. He is not my Self."

The Buddha had a difficult task before him, especially when he realized that the negation of a subjective spiritual entity "Self" would produce great anxiety in ordinary human beings. To avoid people's frustration, he adopted the analytical teaching methods while dealing with the Spiritualist as well as the Materialist views. His teachings therefore came to be popularly known as a "philosophy of analysis" (vibhajjavada). A truly analytical philosophy is generally believed to advocate no theories. Analysis is intended as a method of clarifying the meaning of terms and concepts without attempting to formulate alternative theories, even if such theories were meaningful.

According to the analysis of David J. Kalupahana referring to Buddha's statement of the negation of the Self:

This accounts for the constant use of the term "Self" (atta) in a positive sense in the discourse, along with its negation, "no-Self" (anatta). It seems appropriate to say that there are two different meanings or uses of the

terms "I" and "Self", one metaphysical and the other empirical. The metaphysical meaning cannot be accounted for by any of the aggregates, and this is the thrust of his argument in the above context. (70)

Buddha concludes that the existence of metaphysical Self is untraceable. What we can know is the process Self which has no independent reality. Kalupahana further clarifies:

If a metaphysical Self cannot be explained in terms of the aggregates, can a non-metaphysical or empirical Self be accounted for by them? The general tendency among Buddhist scholars is to assume that the aggregates serve only the negative function of denying a metaphysical Self. However, a careful reading of the early discourses reveals that these five aggregates also perform the positive function of clarifying what an empirical Self is. (70)

Buddha's Noble Silence is famous for containing his real answer to all metaphysical speculation. Therefore, Buddha maintained no intellectual positions whatever. They would be counter productive to his only purpose, which was to inspire greater effort in spiritual practice. How can intellectual opinions about the unity of life help a person as long as he believes he is a separate ego? What difference does his opinion about eternity make as long as he is still caught up in time? By offering no metaphysical supports, the Buddha prompts us to plunge deep in meditation and see for ourselves what we discover.

In Buddhism, "The Examination of Self-nature" is one of the most important concepts. Buddha's famous disciple Nagarjuna also argues in the following way:

A conception of Self-nature or substance cannot be reconciled with the doctrine of "dependent arising" (*pratityasamutpada*) or the theory, as

developed in the Abhidhamma, that things, events, or phenomena are dependent on causes (*hetu*) or conditions (*pratyaya*). If substance were to arise as a result of causes and conditions, it has to be made (*krtaka*). If it is not made (*a-krtaka*), then it is unique and has no relationship to or is not dependent on another. (Kalupahana165)

At this point, Nagarjuna makes a further claim that if Self-nature or substance does not exist, one can not speak of other-nature or a different substance, “for Self-nature of other-nature is called Self-nature.” If existence (*bhava*), in this sense, is meaningless, non-existence (*abhava*) is also not available. Yet it is the change of existence that people normally call non-existence. It is the cycle of cause and reaction. When Nagarjuna abandoned the conceptions of Self-nature and other nature, he was simply following the Buddha, who rejected the notions of eternalism. The level to abandon the conceptions of Self-nature and other nature is considered the salvation, which is the goal of Buddhism.

Nagarjuna’s middle path advises the following significant concepts: For Nagarjuna, conception (*prajnapti*) becomes the key to every mystery in the world: it is dependent arising, it is emptiness, and it is the middle path. There is no ultimate or absolute reality that transcends conceptual thinking(169).

Like Buddha’s middle path, Nagarjuna also concludes that there is no existence of ultimate reality to change our thinking beyond our Self-reach. Nagarjuna appeals to the empirical analysis of the human person provided by the Buddha. He says:

The five constituents of the human person, a transmigrating personality was not discoverable. The problem of moral responsibility (i.e., action and its fruits) is then taken up, and he carefully distinguishes the sense in

which the Buddha explained them (i.e., in terms of dependent arising) from that of the metaphysician who relies on the conception of substance. Explaining moral responsibility in terms of dependence required not only abandoning the notion of a permanent Self (*atma*) but also renunciation of the metaphysical views pertaining to time (*kala*), harmony of causes and conditions (*samagri*), and the processes of occurrence and dissolution (*sambhava-vibhava*). (167)

After dealing with the metaphysical issues relating to the human person, bondage and moral responsibility, Nagarjun proceeds to examine similar metaphysical interpretations of the person who has “walked the way” (tathagata), that is attained freedom.

The Buddhist ‘philosophy of the middle way’ then involves the acceptance of the idea of a cycle of rebirths, but a rejection of the idea that there is an underlying identity or essential Self (atman) passing from one life time to another. All that, there is the process of rebirth itself, perpetuated by cravings, ignorance and coming to the fruition of the results of past actions (*karma*). For instance, the cycle of river is a flowing river. The Buddhist view is that there is no ‘river’ over and above the flowing river itself. There is a process of rebirth, but no substances or unchanging entities undergoing this process.

Richard King elucidates the Buddhist doctrine of no-abiding-Self this way:

The Buddhist doctrine of no-abiding-Self provided a stark philosophical contrast to brahmanical notions of a substantial Self (*atman*). According to the Buddha, a succession of rebirths does indeed occur but there is no substantial or essential Self which persists or ‘passes through’ this series. This is explained by the Buddha in terms of the doctrine of inter-

dependent-origination (*pratityasamutpada*). This is a scheme which explain the dynamics of existence from life to life and moment to moment without the necessary of positing a persisting agent or “processor” of experience. (78)

To be philosophically accurate, Buddhist philosophy does not accept reincarnation (the re-embodiment of an abiding-Self) of the eternal Soul though it does postulate a continuous series of rebirths (and re-deaths) so long as ignorance and selfish desires perpetuate the cycle. King further writes:

There are three way in which the notion of no-abiding Self (*anatman*) has been utilized in the early Buddhist literature. Clearly, the concept represents a doctrine about the nature of reality (the right view of non-abiding-Self). On this philosophical level, *anatman* is seen by the Buddhist as an accurate description of reality- the way things really are (*yathabhuta*). Emphasis has also been placed, however, on the teaching as a moral instrument in the quest for liberation, inculcating a life of selfish altruism, that is as an aid to the purification of mind, speech and action. A third dimension of the *anatman* teaching, and one that has often been overlooked, is the sociological significance of the no-abiding-Self as a cultural symbol in ancient India. (79)

The *anatman* teaching has spawned a range of processual metaphors within Buddhist culture reflecting the emphasis placed upon change and impermanence. This world view has implications for one’s conception of the cycle of rebirths. Buddhists believe in re-

birth but do not accept that there is any substantial entity of the Self (*atman*) being reborn in this process – there is simply the process itself.

The Buddha believed every human being could achieve enlightenment. To escape the painful cycle of birth and death, it is necessary to attain enlightenment. According to Buddha, knowledge of the order of the universe is the key to enlightenment. For the Buddha, the moral order of the universe is contained first and foremost in the doctrines of *kamma* and rebirth. The doctrine of *kamma* is a simple idea: each action is good or bad, primarily on account of the moral quality of the intention it expresses; and, sooner or later, a good action brings well-being to the person who performs it, while a bad action brings the opposite. Put in these terms, the idea is one form of a commonly accepted belief in cosmic justice, and as such it is compatible with many religious traditions.

Chapter 3

The Self in *Siddhartha*

The main crust of Herman Hesse's novel, *Siddhartha*, is the hero's distrust of teachings and learning and his little faith in the words that come from teachers, which stimulates his journey of the Self discovery. According to Siddhartha, "nobody finds salvation through teachings" (28); therefore, he has no "desire to have teachers or to listen to their teachings" (29).

In chapter one, rather than imposing his will and way of life on his son, Siddhartha's father gently touches his shoulder and gives him permission to go into the forest to become a Samana. He is a very proud man but he does not permit his pride to interfere. His decision requires him to swallow some pride. As a renowned Brahmin teacher, he is a great learned man, but he also possesses a certain degree of intellectual humility when he tells his son: "If you find bliss in the forest, come back and teach it to me" (10). This is the gentle permission of father to his son for spiritual journey. By the same time, father shows willingness to learn from his son if luckily his son finds knowledge.

Siddhartha starts his spiritual journey with his friend Govinda. Since the early childhood days, Govinda has been an obedient follower of Siddhartha. He is highly impressed from the words and deeds of Siddhartha. Until they do not meet illustrious Gautam Buddha, they practice traditional Samanism in jungle. The meeting of Buddha changes their journey. Govinda decides to follow illustrious one as spiritual teacher but Siddhartha decides to struggle alone in the spiritual path for Self perfection. Though he has already passed many years with his friend Govinda in strict religious order, he is not

satisfied with himself. He has not come nearer his goal of happiness and peace. It seems to him that his religious fervor had been nothing but Self-deception, that all the time he had been in flight from Self and reality. The hardship which he endured as a Samana has not brought him nearer to God. The very frustration of deception and dis-satisfaction leads him towards the sensual life again. This is the startling new discovery Siddhartha makes and decides to abandon the wilderness. He comes to the big city where he sees at the gate beautiful Kamala, the courtesan. He finds her favour and she teaches him the ways of the world. He discards his beggar's clothes and becomes in short time a very successful merchant. But his heart is neither in his love nor in his business – all the pleasures of the world can not still satisfy the hunger of his soul. Again, he cuts himself loose from all that he had acquired, leaves once again everything behind him, and goes back to the river which he had crossed when he gave up his life as a Samana.

Until Siddhartha comes in this stage, there are fascinating swinging in his external and internal journey. The focused journey of Siddhartha is internal. However, external journey also goes hand in hand with the internal journey. His rebellion attitude and undying passion for knowledge has forced to make his own independent search for enlightenment. His inner experience and outer environment deeply influenced his journey of perfection. The meeting with Buddha, Kamala, Basudev are the most remarkable turning points of his life. Each has added distinctive value in his life.

While Siddhartha begins his journey he was highly influenced by the Hindu's doctrine. He imagined himself as a "Soul" or "Self" - undying and indestructible - different from the physical body. The concept of "Self" was perfect filled with divine qualities. According to Hindu doctrine, the ultimate goal of human is to realize the Soul

residing into body but independent from physical form. Soul is a stream of knowledge. To know the Soul is to know everything. Siddhartha was impatient to realize the source of this universal knowledge. Therefore, he left all material opportunities behind him to seek knowledge and become an enlightened person. Siddhartha devoted some of his first initial years in quest of “Self”. Along with his friend Govinda, he practiced meditation and learned a great deal from Samanas. He learned many ways of losing the Self. Such were his fascinating experience of meditation: “He traveled along the path of Self-denial through pain, through voluntary suffering and conquering of pain, through hunger, thirst and fatigue. He traveled the way of Self-denial through meditation, through the emptying of the mind of all images” (13). Although Siddhartha used to flee from the Self a thousand times, dwelt in nothing, dwelt in animal and stone, the return was inevitable. In fact, he was not satisfied from this practice. Siddhartha said softly, as if speaking to himself: “What is meditation? What is abandonment of the body? What is fasting? What is holding of breath? It is a flight from the Self, it is a temporary escape from the torment of Self. The driver of oxen makes this same flight, takes this temporary drug when he drinks a few bowls of rice or wine or coconut milk in the inn” (14). He observes the life of fellow Samanas who are fifty, sixty years and spending the routine life without any progressive result. It frustrates Siddhartha and he shares his doubts of Samana life with Govinda: “I have become distrustful of teachings and learning and that I have little faith in words that come to us from our teachers” (19). It reveals Siddhartha’s willingness to alter the spiritual path.

Siddhartha becomes disillusioned with his preoccupation of the Soul or Self. He starts to look skeptically at the teaching of Hindu doctrine. His idea of eternal soul cracks

down. By the same time, Siddhartha and his friend Govinda hear about illustrious Gautam Buddha. In one evening, they listen to Buddha's sermon. Buddha talked, "about suffering, the origin of suffering, the way to release from suffering, but the path to the release from suffering had been found. There was salvation for those who went the way of the Buddha" (24). Siddhartha is highly impressed from the teaching of Buddha but does not like to follow the doctrine of Buddha. He prefers his own way of salvation. He responds to Buddha this way:

Not for one moment did I doubt that you were the Buddha, that you have reached the highest goal which so many thousands of Brahmins and Brahmin's sons are striving to search. You have done so by your own seeking in your own way, through thought, through meditation, through knowledge, through enlightenment. You have learned nothing through teachings, and so I think, O illustrious one, that nobody finds salvation through teachings. (28)

Therefore, Siddhartha decides to go in his own way rather than seeking another and better doctrine. He leaves all doctrines and all teachers to reach his goal alone – or die.

After departing from Buddha, he turns into sensual life. He becomes a lover of Kamala and starts business. Though his life is filled with material possessions and sensual love, Siddhartha still feels empty. His heart never stops search for perfection, unity, and salvation. Finally, Siddhartha abandons his material life and returns to jungle. Siddhartha reaches the long river in the jungle, the same river across which a ferryman, Basudev, had once taken him when he was still a young man and had come from Gotama's town. He is not aware where he is going? He is not aware what is the purpose

of his life? A chilly emptiness reflects in his soul. In this situation, Siddhartha reviews the way of his life. He thinks that “all these transitory things have slipped away from me again, I stand once more beneath the sun, as I once stood as a small child. Nothing is mine, I know nothing, I possess nothing, I have learned nothing. How strange it is! Now, when I am no longer young, when my hair is fast turning grey, when strength begins to diminish, now I am beginning again like a child” (75-76). He understands that Siddhartha has died many times and a new Siddhartha has awakened each time. Siddhartha is transitory, all forms are transitory. He realizes that the inward voices have been right in each moment that no teacher can teach him as he can learn from his inward voice. That is why he has to go into the world, to lose himself in power, women, and money; that is why he has to undergo those horrible years, suffer nausea, learn the lesson of the madness of an empty, futile life till the end; that is why he has sought salvation to get rid from all those worldly troubles. His meeting with ferryman, Basudeva, has helped him to reach his goal. He discovers the secret of life and attains the lasting peace and happiness called “Nirvana”.

Siddhartha can be looked dividing it into three part structure: four chapters before Siddhartha crosses the river, four chapters after he crosses the river, and four on the river, which can be structured on the Buddhist doctrines of the four noble truths and eight-fold path. The concepts of the totality and simultaneity of all things and love towards all beings are the underlying ideas behind most of the Mahayanas forms of Buddhism. Ideologically, the four noble truths and eight-fold path are the initial concepts one learn when introduced to Buddhism. These teaching encompass the Buddha’s early sermons on the four noble truths and eight-fold path. The world is viewed as divided into samsara and

nirvana, and the goal of the Buddhist practitioner is to permanently escape samsara through following the regimented eight-fold path. Samsara refers to the cycle of existence into which all sentient beings are repeatedly reborn, which Nirvana suggests a complete extinguishing of the cycle and is characterized by permanent bliss.

It is fascinating that Siddhartha's spiritual progression parallels the historic development of Buddhism. By examining Mahayana Buddhism we may uncover some clues as to why *Siddhartha* was so popular in the east. The motivating concept that engenders the bodhisattva vow to save all sentient beings from samsara, as well as being the ideological backbone of the Mahayana is the concept of emptiness. The greatest formalizer of the emptiness doctrine was Nagarjuna, a 2nd century Buddhist philosopher. In his *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way*, Nagarjuna painstakingly examines the nature of all phenomena to illustrate that they are empty. That is to say that all phenomena are empty of an inherent existence and are invariably dependent upon causes and conditions. Nagarjuna's dialectic negation follows that you can not say anything exists, does not exist, both exists and does not exist, and neither exists nor does not exist. He refers to this as the emptiness of views. Nagarjuna's examination of emptiness does not stop with the Buddhist teachings of the Buddha himself, for it is the very point of the Mahayana that the Buddhist teachings themselves are empty. For example, Samsara is empty of inherent existence; it is dependent upon the concept of Nirvana. Therefore, in Mahayana terminology, samsara is Nirvana. This idea extends to any duality conceivable, male is female, impurity is purity, life is death.

The most illuminating connection to Mahayana ideology is played out in the novel's final chapter when Siddhartha meets Govinda and tries to explain his revelatory vision. Siddhartha explains:

There is one thought I have had, Govinda, which you will again think is a jest or folly: that is, in every truth the opposite is equally true. For example, a truth can only be expressed and enveloped in words if it is one-sided. Everything that is thought and expressed in words is one-sided, only the half truth; it all lacks totality, completeness unity. When the illustrious Buddha taught about the world, he had to divide it into Samsara and Nirvana, into illusion and truth, into suffering and salvation. One can not do otherwise, there is no other method for those who teach. But the world itself, being in and around us, is never one sided. Never is a man or a deed wholly Samsara or wholly Nirvana; never is a man wholly a saint or a sinner. This only seems so because we suffer the illusion that time is something real. Time is not real, Govinda. I have realized this repeatedly. And if time is not real, then the diving line that seems to lie between this world and eternity, between suffering and bliss, between good and evil, is also an illusion.(112)

In this passage, Hesse reveals the right concept of emptiness and non-duality right on the head. This is almost the exact conclusion that Nagarjuna almost 2000 years ago. By using the same tools Hesse tries to prove that everything is empty of inherent existence from words to views to the four noble truths to emptiness itself. Time is empty; it does not inherently exist. The present and future are dependent upon the past just as Nirvana is

dependent upon Samsara, suffering upon bliss, and good upon evil. To wit, the nature of the world is illusionary. The connection between emptiness and illusioariness is widely prevalent in the Mahayana. Beyond overt connections of emptiness, non-duality, unreality of time, and illusoriness, is the notion of the truth of the Buddha's teachings. Ultimately, anything the Buddha tries to express with words will be dualistic. That is why all the Buddhist teachings are considered empty and are merely expedient devices according to Mahayana ideology. As the soliloquy progresses, connections between Mahayana philosophy and Siddhartha's revelation grow increasingly similar. Siddhartha continues:

Listen, my friend! I am a sinner and you are a sinner, but someday that sinner will be Brahma again, will someday attain Nirvana, will someday become a Buddha. Now this 'someday' is illusion; it is only a comparasion. The sinner is not on the way to a Buddha-like state; he is not evolving, although our thinking can not coceive of this otherwise. No. the potential Buddha already exists in the sinner; his future is already there. The potential hidden Buddha must be recognized in him, in you, in everyday. The world, Govinda, is not imperfect or slowly evolving along a path to perfection. No, it is perfect at every moment; every sin already carries grace within it, all small children are potential of old men, all sucklings have death within them, all dying people – eternal life....During deep meditation it is possible to dispel time, to see simultaneously all the past, present, and future, and then everything is good, everything is perfect, everything is Brahman. Therefore it seems to me that everything

that exists is good – death as well as life, sin as well as holiness, wisdom as well as folly. (112-113)

In this paragraph, Hesse outlines the philosophy of the Third Turning of the Wheel of Dharma, the Buddha nature. Again, this concept states that all beings possess the Buddha nature, hence, all beings are potential Buddhas.

Later in the novel, Siddhartha learns the ill effects of imposition. When his son comes to live with him, he tries to impose his way of life on little Siddhartha, but tactics makes his son unfriendly, sulky, arrogant, and defiant (96), and the boy finally runs away full of hatred and contempt (101). Earlier, Siddhartha's father did not impose his will, and he parted on friendly terms with his son with a reciprocal understanding. On the other hand, Siddhartha imposes his will and must part with his son on sad, estranged terms with no reciprocal understanding. Thus, we see that imposition can result in alienation, forced separation, and lack of communication- situations father must avoid to be effective.

Although letting a person or spiritual seeker discover something for himself may also result in separation in that the person might have to reject the teacher's ideas and thoughts and go his own way, it can be friendly separation, not a hostile one, a separation of love and understanding, not one of hate and contempt. Therefore, in our normal life also, to minimize the possibility of contempt, unfriendliness arrogance, defiance, and sulkiness, we should not impose our opinion and ideas, but should help people discover for themselves what they need to know.

Closely associated with the imposing attitude is the doctrinaire attitude. We must dispel the pretentious feeling that we alone can be saviors who can lead person to

salvation, that we alone have the correct answers and formulas for the good life. The preaching teacher not only alienates but also bores.

In addition to imposition and preaching, the novel also seems to argue against spoon-feeding or protecting students. According to Vasudeva, who counsels Siddhartha not to protect his son (98), protects only delays the inevitable and makes the ultimate confrontation with life's unpleasantness, pain, sin, contradiction, uncertainties, and disillusionment only more shocking or difficult. Also if one is protected, he can not truly discover the truth about himself and life. Siddhartha had to actually experience the pains and vices of life to find personal peace and contentment, to know happiness and grace within himself (78, 116). Thus protecting seekers would tend to slow or possibly destroy this process of Self awareness.

If a teacher is to have any success helping students arrive at Self-awareness, he must have an appreciation for all students, he must believe that each one has the potential for some kind of improvement; he must display an interest in the slow as well as the fast learner. We must posit and accept, as did Siddhartha, that "the potential Buddha already exists in the sinner," that "the potential hidden Buddha must be recognized in him....in everybody" (116).

One of the best methods for helping a person discover himself is that of good listening. No one was better at this art than Basudeva:

He knew how to listen. Without saying a word, the speaker felt that Vasudeva took in every word, quietly, expectantly, that he missed nothing. He did not wait anything with impatience and gave neither praise nor blame- he only listened. Siddhartha felt that how wonderful it was to have

such a listener who could be absorbed in another person's life, his strivings, his sorrows. (85)

Good listening compels the other person to think, reflect, analyze, synthesize, and solve for himself, but more importantly, it gives him the feeling that someone really cares, that someone really understands, that someone really knows how it feels to be lonely, afraid, insecure, and confused. Good listening demands compassion and understanding, the absorption of one's Self into another person's life. Much frustration, anger and tension could be avoided if we would simply recognize person by listening to their problems. This listening would also give us a better knowledge of the problems of other, and this knowledge could lead to a better understanding and acceptance of other's perspective and experience of life for what they are.

But good listening can not always be successful for a teacher. A good listener must also know when to speak. Vasudeva breaks his silence when he sees that Siddhartha is harming himself and his son by over protection and confinement to an alien environment. His way of breaking his silence and speaking critically is a model for spiritual teachers. When he does speak, he offers criticism, direction, and guidance without controlling or tyrannizing. He speaks as a friend in a gentle and firm manner (96-99).

Another important lesson to be abstracted from the novel is more emphasis on the concrete and less reliance on words and long abstract lectures. Siddhartha rejects words because, "one cannot love words," one cannot "see" words. He finds value and meaning in things- things that he can see, feel, touch, experience (117). Teaching that have "no hardness, no softness, no corners, no smell, no taste" (117-118) are worthless to him. Its

implications in life are obvious: learning must become more experimental; abstract principles should be given a concrete basis in reality; and teachers should assault the senses of the seekers with relevant, familiar media and examples. In brief, we should relay more on showing than on telling. Furthermore, we should recognize that seekers can learn not only from the cognitive realm but also from the effective realm. We should learn, as did Siddhartha, that "both thought and senses were fine things; it was worthwhile listening to them both, to play with both, neither to despise nor overrate either of them, to listen intently to both voices"(39). Thus we should attempt to stimulate both the mind and the senses of our students to help them learn not only with their intellect but also from their eyes, heart, and stomach- their whole being (80).

To respect and understand seekers for what they are and to accept their flaws and peculiarities reveal humanity in the teacher. Siddhartha respects and recognizes Gotama as "a great teacher" not because of his words, talk, or opinions, but because of his deeds and life, because he "has recognized all humanities vanity and transitoriness, yet loves humanity so much that he has devoted a long life solely to help and teach people" (116). Indeed one of the novel's most important, and possibly disconcerting, messages from the reader's point of view is Siddhartha's conclusion that "love is the most important thing in the world", nor facts, figures, theories, words, opinions, or knowledge: It may be important to great thinkers to examine the world, to explain and despise it. But I think it is only important to love the world, not to despise it, not for us to hate each other, but to be able to regard the world and ourselves and all beings with love, admiration, respect .

If it be true that all men, like Siddhartha, desperately seek to learn to love the world, themselves and others; if it be true that peace, contentment, and perfection (AUM)

can be derived from this love; if it be true that this love can cure man's restlessness and stop his conflict with Self and others; if it be true that man can find salvation and harmony through love, then formal education today needs reorganization. Its priorities need to be changed. If we do not learn to emphasize the effective realm more, we will continue to produce well informed, fact laden minds paralyzed and ineffective because of their insecurity and confusion about the world, themselves, and their relationship to others. What good is the mastery of knowledge in textbooks if our students lose or fail to find an awareness or knowledge of Self, if they do not learn to be human, if they do not learn to love?

Regarding *Siddhartha* as written in foreign tongue to western readers, scholars have made their own comments of praise and doubt on *Siddhartha* whether it has any useful role to play in their class room and outside in the normal life.

Robert Mossman summarizes the impression of *Siddhartha* this way:

Obviously, too, there is a conscious attempt to echo the life of the Buddha; indeed, many students assume Siddhartha is like his name sake, Siddhartha Gautam Sakyamuni, really the Buddha, until their famous meeting a few chapters later. And just like the Buddha, Siddhartha is unhappy. He has it all- he is on the verge of *moksha*, the ultimate goal of all Hindus, which means that he will be out of the samsaric cycle of reincarnated lives- yet he seems peculiarly unsatisfied and disconcerted.

(3)

Naturally, Siddhartha confuses readers whether he is really Sakyamuni Buddha or what. His rebellion nature, quest of truth, and dedication reflects the nature as parallel to

Buddha. Many people assume spiritual journey as romantic and free journey but only few people can imagine the material hopelessness, frustration, craving of knowledge, loneliness, chaos of the spiritual mind while marching the solitary journey. Mossman further writes:

The parallels to my students are obvious. While many come from the normal families, their personal sense of angst is real. The beauty of reading this novel is in the students' instinctive identification with this mysterious despair which Siddhartha is experiencing. It may seem distracted and diffuse, both to my students and to Siddhartha, but that does not minimize its reality. Pedagogically, it is often more effective for students to identify intuitively with a protagonist without too much overt teacher invitation or intervention. Many students do identify with Siddhartha quickly because they sense what he is experiencing, even if they can not name it. A student once plaintively remarked me, "Everyone says these are supposed to be the happiest days of our lives, but they sure aren't for me."(3)

Siddhartha easily stimulates reader's imagination as if the journey of Siddhartha is reader's own journey. Most of the readers and students observers romantically the life of Siddhartha. They often make imaginary journey with Siddhartha but in reality they fail to follow him. Again Mossman writes:

In illustrating the two traditions of these Asian religions, no section is more important than Siddhartha's meeting with the Buddha. After several years with the Samanas, Hindu ascetics, during which Siddhartha

undergoes extreme physical deprivation, he is still not satisfied. So he and his faithful friend Govinda go in search of the famous teacher of whom they have heard so much. (3)

In this chapter, readers can observe the hopelessness and frustration of hero's life. It marks the another transitory step of Siddhartha. The following is the final note of Mossman:

The chapter "Gautama" is central in teaching Buddhism. In several places the "Illustrious One" enunciates the major components of what is now known as Buddhism. The descriptions of the Buddha in this chapter are especially illuminating. They present Buddha as a man, a special man to be sure, but nonetheless a man who has struggled and found, just like most human beings. Students are quick to assume that the Buddha is some kind of deity, but the passages of description emphasize his humanity, his peacefulness, his reality. (3)

It is helpful for students to understand the nature of illustrious Buddha. Generally, people assume Buddha as a reincarnation, but in reality the Buddha is a human figure, a moral and perfect man. Likewise, Catherine Benton, also notes the following differences from Siddhartha comparatively to western context:

While there is a certain appeal to the notion that fundamentally, all differences among various religious traditions are insignificant or even illusory, a problem inevitably arises when we try to sort out the reasons for the "apparent differences". Indeed, the Buddhist teachings of No Self, Impermanence, and Emptiness communicate a very difference world view

from that shaped by the Christian belief in One God and the permanence of the individual soul. Hesse's approach is to pretend that no differences exist. (8)

In fact, the world view of Siddhartha has left confused to many western readers and critics. Buddhist teachings of no-Self, Impermanence and Emptiness contradict the Christian beliefs. The following passage can be taken as personal notes of Benton:

As a historian of religion, however, I must examine the figure of Siddhartha in the light of such fundamental Buddhist teachings as the doctrine of No Self and the practice of taking refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha – a practice understood by the tradition to encapsulate the fundamental guiding principles of the tradition. From the perspective of these teachings, Hesse's Siddhartha does not embody the Buddhist ideal, rejecting as he does both the three refuges and the understanding of No Self which are of core significance for any Buddhist. While Hesse's protagonist reaches out for knowledge of his "Self", the Buddhist monk or nun strives to see the inherent emptiness of the "Self". (8)

Often the Buddhist concept of emptiness of "Self" is horrible to the believer of permanence of individual soul. In the next context, Professor Benton has noticed the following oddities and complexities of her students while teaching *Siddhartha* in the classroom:

Ultimately, the packaging of Asian perspectives in American and European patterns and values undermines methods of teaching that

respectfully but firmly acknowledge cultural and religious differences. I often find that American students have numerous preconceptions about Asian traditions that run the gamut from "brainwashing cults" to "founts of mystical powers." When these preconceptions are combined with reading works like *Siddhartha*, students have difficult time accepting images of Buddhist practice described by the Indian Buddhists themselves or by western scholars and practitioners immersed in the tradition. (9)

It is really perplexing to the western readers and students to judge eastern world view only based on their preoccupations. It is often too mystical and often too practical. The cultural images and symbols that are used to justify the enlightenment of Siddhartha are often unbelieving to the western eyes.

In reading these texts, students find themselves pushed to let go of images and concepts that they have found quite appealing. Particularly for those students who have taken earlier courses in which texts like *Siddhartha* were held up as authoritative and who feel confident in their group of Buddhist thinking, it becomes difficult to read primary text sources which describe a tradition very different from that portrayed in *Siddhartha*. These students find their confidence replaced by confusion and a vague sense of betrayal. (9)

It looks like betrayal to the people who come from the alien cultural background. The cultural orientation of east and west is far contradictory. Spiritualism lies as an essence of eastern culture. But the westerners are materialists. They run after material quest and

prosperity. They generally do not understand the core spirit of spiritualism which the easterners find in the sacrifice of material possessions and the practice of altruism.

Finally, Siddhartha reveals the power of Nirvana to Govinda. Nirvana is considered as the highest form of spiritual practice which leads person beyond the state of death and rebirth. Therefore, it is parallel of immortality. At the end of the novel, Siddhartha tells to Govinda to kiss on his forehead. While kissing Govinda does such wonderful experience:

As he did this, something wonderful happened to him. While he is still dwelling on Siddhartha's strange words, while he strove in vain to dispel the conception of time, to imagine Nirvana and Sansara as one, while even a certain contempt for his friend's words conflicted with a tremendous love and esteem for him, this happened to him. (17)

Siddhartha makes Govinda to realize Nirvana as the state of being beyond the time and matter.

Thus, in Siddhartha, Self has been portrayed not as an eternal, unchangeable, and beyond time and space. But it is changeable, constructed by human desire and action. The nature of Self is momentary and transitory. Its experience alters from one moment to another differently. The love and practice of altruism help human to realize Nirvana and makes immortal. All greatest Soul of the world are remembered because of their unconditional love towards creatures but not because they are different than other people or creature by birth. Nirvana is possible through the right practice of spiritualism.

Chapter 4

Conclusion

Siddhartha's initial quest for understanding Self clashes with his experience and destroys the idea of eternity of the Self. In his quest for the Self, Siddhartha negates its eternity to establish the idea of momentariness of the Self constructed by his desires, actions, and experiences. Siddhartha rejects the notion of divine, immortal Soul. His concern is with the existing reality, therefore he concentrates his investigation towards the practical aspects of life. By putting forward the idea of river, Siddhartha tries to justify the impermanence of life and the Self. As life is impermanent, the permanent Self cannot exist in human body. There is neither substance nor independent Self. What we call the Self is the result of our Karma (action). If there is no action, there is no Self. One can avoid action by avoiding desires. The chain of karma, action, and desire form the perception of the Self. If one becomes able to come out from this chain, then the idea of permanent Self disappears. Therefore, Siddhartha concentrated his life on the experiment to know whether the Self exists or not. Every time, he stumbles on one or the other of the different aspects of experience, such feeling (vedana), perception (sanna), disposition (sankhara), or consciousness (vinnana). If anything other than these psychic elements constituted the human personality, it was the body (rupa). Yet none of these factors could be considered permanent and eternal; all are liable to change, transformation, and destruction – in brief they are impermanent and transitory. There is no permanent the Self to represent the cycle of rebirth. Siddhartha realizes that everything culminates in nothingness and the Self is just an impression constructed by different aspects of experiences and desires.

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