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POLAR OPPOSITES IN
HERMANN HESSE'S NOVELS

BY

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B. A. in English, Eastern Illinois University, 1978
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ABSTRACT OF A THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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The object of this thesis is to show how Hermann Hesse utilizes polar opposites and to show how the integration of conflicting forces works in the lives of the fictional characters in Demian, Steppenwolf, Narcissus and Goldmund, and The Glass Bead Game. These four novels not only are representative of the progression of the individual, but together, they are a consecutive representation of the artist's own search for a unified self. Influenced by psychologist Carl Jung's theories regarding the process of development, Hesse portrays the protagonists in constant search of the self. Some of the characters attain a state of perfection and oneness while some fail in their attempt; however, all of the characters are made aware of the conflicts within their own individual personalities, and characters in the last of the series, The Glass Bead Game, are made aware that the individual conflicts are carried over into conflicting problems of society. The most profound conflicts in the novels are conflicts between the spiritual world and the physical world, conflicts between fantasy and reality, and the conflicts between art and life. In the first novel of the series, Demian,
the personality of the main character is split into separate selves as the search for self begins. The protagonist, Emil Sinclair, begins his search in a state of innocence, experiences the birth of adulthood through rejection of his father's world and total commitment to the mother world (the world of the physical). Through his battle with death, the conflicts take on universal significance; all dualism is resolved, and his personality becomes integrated. Steppenwolf, on the other hand, begins with the main character, Harry Haller, already aware of the conflicts between his spirit and nature which he calls man and wolf. At the outset, Harry Haller has already been awakened to his sexuality; he only remembers his state of innocence. Throughout this novel, he is constantly aware of his potentiality for a unified personality. In Narcissus and Goldmund, the selves are still divided; one self (Goldmund), recognizes the importance of integration, while the other (Narcissus), does not. The final novel in the series, The Glass Bead Game, shows that the spiritual self, too, recognizes and accepts integration of all aspects of life. The protagonist, Joseph Knecht, depicts, not only the integrated individual, but also the ultimately developed collective man,
and he represents the potentiality for a new humanity. Using polar opposites, spirit and nature, intellect and the senses, fantasy and reality, and art and life, Hermann Hesse explores the three separate levels of existence: innocence, knowledge of good and evil, and the highest state of all, the unity of being, wherein there exists a perfect oneness between a specific life and all other life. This thesis traces the process of the search for self as it is artistically represented in Demian, Steppenwolf, Narcissus and Goldmund, and The Glass Bead Game.
The object of this thesis is to show how Hermann Hesse utilizes polar opposites and to show how the integration of conflicting forces works in the lives of the fictional characters in *Demian*, *Steppenwolf*, *Narcissus and Goldmund*, and *The Glass Bead Game*. These four novels not only are representative of the progression of the individual, but together, they are a consecutive representation of the artist's own search for a unified self. Hermann Hesse had undergone extensive counselling sessions that involved Jungian theories of personality development prior to his writing these four novels. While attempting to understand conflicting elements within his own personality, Hesse created the first novel of the series. The first of the novels, *Demian*, reveals, through the protagonist, the innocence of man and his gradual awakening to the inner self--its desires and conflicts. Hesse follows this novel with a startling account of the individual who is divided, not between two conflicting selves, but between many selves. In this work, we see clearly that if there is to be development, it must come through the world of art, but in *Steppenwolf*, the protagonist fails in his
effort to find unity. In the third novel of the sequence, *Narcissus and Goldmund*, Hesse has collected the thousand selves shown in the previous work, and has drawn them together into two contrasting characters. If we view these two characters as the two sides of one individual, we see that through a blend of nature and spirit, a unified personality is forced to emerge. *Magister Ludi* is presented as the ultimate personality—the ideal self—the archetypal character who represents the wise old man.

Hesse explored the process of individuation time and time again, weaving back and forth between characters who recognize their conflicts and those who don't, and those characters who seek and find perfection, and ones who seek but never find. Because these writings are based on autobiographical content, it is safe to assume that the individuation process followed a similar pattern in the life of the artist. Each work in succession shows a definite growth of personality, character, and individualism. It is very probable that Hesse attained for himself the status of the wise old man, as did many of the characters he created. Repeatedly, we see the emergence of the ideal self, and when there is failure, accompanying that failure is the hope and determination of future success. Influenced by psychologist
Carl Jung's theories regarding the process of development, Hesse portrays the protagonists in constant search of the self. Some of the characters attain a state of perfection and oneness while some fail in their attempt; however, all of the characters are made aware of the conflicts within their own individual personalities, and characters in the last of the series, The Glass Bead Game, are made aware that the individual conflicts are carried over into conflicting problems of society. The most profound conflicts in the novels are conflicts between the spiritual world and the physical world, conflicts between fantasy and reality, and the conflicts between art and life. In the first novel of the series, Demian, the personality of the main character is split into separate selves as the search for self begins. The protagonist, Emil Sinclair, begins his search in a state of innocence, experiences the birth of adulthood through rejection of his father's world and total commitment to the mother world (the world of the physical). Through his battle with death, the conflicts take on universal significance; all dualism is resolved, and his personality becomes integrated. Steppenwolf, on
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Using polar opposites, spirit and nature, intellect and the senses, fantasy and reality, and art and life, Hermann Hesse explores the three separate levels of existence: innocence, knowledge of good and evil, and the highest state of all, the unity of being, wherein there exists a perfect oneness between a specific life and all
other life. This thesis traces the process of the search for self as it is artistically represented in Demian, Steppenwolf, Narcissus and Goldmund, and The Glass Bead Game.

In Demian, the search for self is evident, and Hesse portrays the conflict between nature and spirit within the soul of a single individual. Emil Sinclair searches desperately for personal values, his own identity, and for agreement of the conflicts that haunt his existence. His friend Demian says, "You are only afraid if you are not in harmony with yourself. People are afraid because they have never owned up to themselves." 1

In the beginning, Sinclair is the essence of innocence. His life, so far, has been "a realm of brilliance, clarity and cleanliness, gentle conversations, washed hands, clean clothes, and good manners." (p. 5) This sheltered, innocent world changes after Sinclair meets Franz Kromer and lies when he tells him he has committed a robbery. Sinclair says, "It was the fear of the moment that made me seek refuge in this story--inventing and telling stories came naturally to me." (p. 9) This incident is proof of the boy's wish to establish a new identity for himself.
Up to this point, he had been Emil Sinclair, associated with the world of light: "mother and father, love and strictness, model behavior, and school." (p. 5) Sinclair remembers that "Unquestionably I belonged to the realm of light and righteousness; I was my parents' child. But in whichever direction I turned I perceived the other world, and I lived within that other world as well, though often a stranger to it, and suffering from panic and a bad conscience." He admits that sometimes he "actually preferred living in the forbidden realm." (p. 7)

The incident with Kromer symbolizes Sinclair's death as a child, the birth of his adulthood, and the maturation process that takes place in the life of the protagonist. Remembering the evening he became involved with Kromer, Sinclair recalls, "On that fatal evening when my misery had begun, there had been that matter with my father. There for a moment, I had seen through him and his world of light and wisdom and had felt nothing but contempt for it." Rejecting his father's spiritual world, the world that is ruled by conscience, Sinclair became a slave to Kromer. Sinclair's wish for a new identity developed into
a wish for his father's death. He says, "Yet when this someone approached and Kromer pinched my arm to let me know that this was the person I was to stab--it was my father." Ziolkowski says,

Sinclair is at the beginning a 'guileless fool,' who forsakes the innocence of his childhood for adventures in the seductive world of good and evil from which his mother has tried to shield him. In his thinking, the image of the mother primarily represents the innocence of his sheltered home.  

Ridden with guilt, Sinclair felt like "hands were reaching out for me." Sinclair realizes the importance of this alienation from his parents. Earlier, he told us regarding his relationship with his father, "This moment was the most significant and lasting of the whole experience. It was the first rent in the holy image of my father, it was the first fissure in the columns that had upheld my childhood, which every individual must destroy before he can become himself. The inner, the essential line of our fate consists of such invisible experiences. Such fissures and rents grow together again, heal and are forgotten, but in the most secret recesses they continue to live and bleed." (p. 15) Oskar Seidlin calls this the "process of awakening."
suggesting that all of Hesse's characters are constantly "haunted by the consciousness of "original sin." At this time Demian, the direct opposite of Sinclair, came into his life. Sinclair said, "In contrast to us, he seemed strange and mature, like a man, or rather like a gentleman." (p. 22)

After Sinclair has experienced this "awakening," he is aware of the polar forces at work inside his psyche. Through his experience with a girl named Beatrice, Emil Sinclair develops the idea that his outer experiences are merely reflections of his inner state. At first, he believes that he is in love with Beatrice; after painting her portrait, he sees a definite likeness in the face to that of Demian's. After studying the image for some time, he begins to see an extension of himself. Werner Bruecher cites this episode as one that brings Sinclair to the "realization that the actual girl is of consequence only as a mirror in which he perceives a new attractive aspect of himself rising from his unconscious." Sinclair says,

I began to sense that this was neither Beatrice nor Demian but myself. Not that the picture resembled me--I did not feel that it should--but it was what determined my life, it was my inner self, my fate or my daemon. That's what my friend would look like if I were to find one ever again. That's what the woman I would love would look like if ever I were to love one. That's what my life and death would be like, this was the tone and rhythm of my fate. (p. 70)
Ziolkowski says, "The ideal of Beatrice, which—as Sinclair soon realizes—is more of a synthesis of the two poles than a symbol of the 'light' world as he had initially assumed, carries him along for a certain time." 5

Only after this integration of the opposites is Sinclair capable of recognizing Demian and beginning his search for the passion for life that is represented by Demian's mother, Frau Eva; thus, he enters into his highest state: the unity of being. Theodore Ziolkowski explains that unity of being as the "ultimate resolution of the conflict between Nature and Spirit, Reality and Ideal, and other polarities." He tells us later that, "The archetypal mother represents not only love and life: 'one could also call her a grave and decay...She was the source of bliss and the source of death...in her, love and cruelty were one.'" 6 The mother-element symbolizes the whole passion for life to Emil Sinclair; she is the "embodiment of all sensuous, vital, and elemental principles." 7 Mrs. Eve, the mother image in Demian, becomes "the source of all life." 8 After the awakening, the mother and father elements "emerge as archetypes as the embodiments of the spiritual and vital energies fighting in and for man." In Demian, "the mother plays a decisive role in the development of the hero. Yet,
her very name, Mrs. Eve, identifies her as the mythical All-mother, the great womb in which life rests." She represents for Sinclair "a descent into the dark mysteries of the 'essence,' into the procreativeness of motherly life." In Hero With a Thousand Faces, Joseph Campbell explains that

The mythological figure of the Universal Mother imputes to the cosmos the feminine attributes of the first, nourishing and protecting presence... She is also the death of everything that dies. The whole round of existence is accomplished within her sway, from birth, through adolescence, maturity, and senescence, to the grave. She is the womb and the tomb: the sow that eats her farrow. Thus she unites the 'good' and the 'bad', exhibiting the two modes of the remembered mother, not as personal only, but as universal.

Frau Eva, according to Ralph Freedman, is the "final image of salvation. A symbol for the union of opposites, she includes the male and the female, light and dark. On a primary level, she is an allegorical figure representing salvation, the eternally feminine, the origin of all men." Because of Sinclair's conflict between nature and spirit, he experiences the maturation process; his rejection of the comfortable spiritual realm of existence, his experience
with the physical world, and finally his blend of spirit and nature bring him the highest level of existence: the unity of being wherein his experience leaves the strictly personal and becomes universal. Using war to represent the inner conflict on a universal scale, Hesse relates his ideas through Sinclair:

The only remarkable thing was that I was to share the very personal matter of my fate with so many others, with the whole world in fact...At one time I had given much thought to why men were so very rarely capable of living for an ideal. Now I saw that many, no, all men were capable of dying for one. Yet it could not be a personal, a freely chosen ideal; it had to be one mutually accepted. (pp. 137 & 138)

The death Sinclair speaks of at the end of the novel is not physical death; rather it is the death of the old spirit—the integration of opposites. He says,

The most primitive, even the wildest feelings were not directed at the enemy; their bloody task was merely an irradiation of the soul, of the soul divided within itself, which filled them with lust to rage and kill, annihilate and die so that they might be born anew. (p. 138)

The old spirit, full of conflict, dies, and birth is given to a new spirit, in which all dualism is resolved; there is "reconciliation and harmony, of the cosmic order in which
all deviations are balanced and all conflicts subordinated to a superior unity. It is the archetype par excellence of the implicit, polar unity of opposites."

Like Demian, Steppenwolf portrays the conflict between nature and spirit within the soul of a single individual. Theodore Ziolkowski says that it is a "novel of intellect in despair" in which the "hero is an intellectual who loses faith in the ideals of the spirit and regains it, ironically, by learning to affirm the senses and the world of trivial everyday that he feared and rejected." Harry Haller remembers that in his initial state of innocence, "he was in reality not a man, but a wolf of the Steppes." The "Treatise on the Steppenwolf" tells us that "the Steppenwolf had two natures, a human and a wolfish one." (p. 47) Conflict between the two was evident because "In him the man and the wolf did not go the same way together, but were in continual and deadly enmity." (p. 48) Within Harry Haller, there are two distinct and conflicting personalities; when one emerges, the other becomes suppressed. The personality that emerges as master does so because of the specific environment Harry finds himself
exposed to, the set of values he has adopted for himself, and his own self-conception. When Steppenwolf acted like a wolf, "the man in him lay in ambush, ever on the watch to interfere and condemn, while at those times that he was a man the wolf did just the same." (p. 48) Oskar Siedlin believes that.

the two elements clash most violently: man, the detached and cool evaluator of values, the rational and demanding law-giver and judge locked in deadly battle with the animal, whose ambition it is to break all 'civilized' fetters by the assault of his vital instincts, sneering triumphantly at the hopeless attempt to keep the mother-world, the drives and desires of the amoral natural forces of life, in chains.15

In Harry Haller's search for self, he works to achieve an integration of his nature and spirit and finds what Seidlin calls "freedom from himself, the complete destruction of the bond which holds the particles of the Ego together and establishes the unity of the person."16 In his search for "ideal harmony," Steppenwolf would like to "overcome the wolf and become wholly man or to renounce mankind and at last to live wholly a wolf's life." (p. 72) Because he longs for innocence, Steppenwolf must plunge "ever further into sin, ever deeper into human life." (p. 73) The narrator tells us that "All births mean separation from the
All, the confinement within limitation, the separation from God, the pangs of being born ever anew. The return into the All, the dissolution of painful individuation, the reunion with God means the expansion of the soul until it is able once more to embrace the All." (p. 73)

Only remembering his life of innocence, Haller has experienced the "awakening of his long suppressed sexuality, this ability to be both child and beast in the innocence of sex... is equivalent to a rebirth; it literally restores his interest in life." Following his first sexual encounter with Maria, Haller says, "Maria taught me much. She taught me the charming play and delights of the senses..."

(p. 158) Ralph Freedman points out that Maria embodies pure, physical love; to her everything is 'plastic material of love and of magic.' Supple, non-boyish, all woman and lover, she counteracts analytic reflection. Her sensuality continues to attract Haller, even though she refuses, by definition, to present the slightest intellectual challenge. Her mission is to infuse Haller's sensually impoverished personality with the awareness of nature and soul.

Haller recognizes that he has potential for a unified personality. Through the looking-glass of the Magic Theater, Harry sees his inner-self. Freedman tells us that Haller's confrontation with a mirror, which recurs periodically,
always depicts his divided self in which the "wolf" gradually predominates. The narrator tells us, however, that "Harry consists of a hundred or a thousand selves, not of two. His life oscillates, as everyone's does, not merely between two poles, such as the body and the spirit, the saint and the sinner, but between thousands and thousands." (p. 66) Steppenwolf does not recognize this "rich and complex organism of his life"; therefore, he reduces his self-conception to a formula that is "simple, rudimentary, and primitive." (p. 66) Harry's life is totally immersed in the conflict between Harry, the conscious, and the wolf, the unconscious personified. Harry strives for a balance between his soul, guided by his anima, Hermine, who possesses sensual, sensitive, intuitive, emotional and irrational qualities. He is, at the same time, pulled by the "self," his guide in the "process of individuation and self-realization. The narrator tells us that many artists are like Harry; "These persons all have two souls, two beings within them. There is God and the devil in them; the mother's blood and the father's; the capacity for happiness and the capacity for suffering; and in just such a state of enmity and entanglement towards and within each other as were the wolf and man in Harry." (p. 51)
Both Harry and Hermine seek death—a death of separate male and female selves and a birth of a unified sexual being. Their desire is for an alternation of death and rebirth until the unified Self emerges; immortal status will then be achieved. Hesse uses the Fancy Dress Ball and the Magic Theater to relate the importance of joy and rapture in one's life and demonstrates how these qualities release a person from his inner self. Harry says, "The life of the senses and of sex had nearly always had for me the bitter accompaniment of guilt, the sweet but dread taste of forbidden fruit that puts a spiritual man on his guard." (p. 180) At the ball, Harry and Hermine perform the nuptial dance which signifies the fusion of the physical and spiritual being. It is at this point that they are united beyond sex; they are human. Theodore Ziolkowski explains it as a "symbolic wedding dance which Haller performs with Hermine and which represents the imminent marriage of the two poles of existence in his soul: the intellectual or spiritual with the sensual or natural." Unity is achieved because the "magic theater is the vehicle through which he is to be introduced symbolically to the full extent of his personality in all its manifestations, and the consummation
of his symbolic marriage to Hermine is to represent the complete welding of all aspects of his nature." 21 Ziolkowski says that "everything Haller is to see in the magic theater is a reflection of his own inner life and a product of eidetic vision under the influence of narcotics." 22 Harry Haller reaches the highest state--the unity of being, when he learns from the Immortals that all life exists in unity and that all appearances are essentially illusions. At the end of the novel, Harry realizes that even unrelated characters like Mozart and Pablo are unified, and he begins to see himself and his surroundings in a humorous way. Through humor, he is able to reconcile the conflicts within himself. Werner Breucher says that "Haller's plan for salvation would require initially a cheerful affirmation of his role as an outsider and thereafter the courage to ignore and treat as faulty all moral precepts taught to him by his culture which posit the antagonism and irreconcilability between body and soul." 23 Ralph Freedman explains that "The human personality is nothing but a narrow bridge between nature and spirit... By accepting and transcending the divisions of his own nature and in the world at large, Steppenwolf reaches a higher identity: not that of a single self but of man as a whole on his way to God." 24
In *Narcissus and Goldmund*, the dual roles are assigned to two representative heroes: Narcissus represents the spiritual world, living in a world where time and order are important elements; Goldmund lives in a temporal world, the important elements of which are found in the world of nature and the physical world of the senses. In *Narcissus and Goldmund*, the universe is shown to be "dual—male and female." \(^{25}\) Edwin F. Casebeer tells us,

Goldmund chooses to live in the world of the mother, in the temporal world which is connected to all realms of experience. He involves himself in nature, physical pleasures, and a world of art and creativity... The 'world of the mother' not only refers to the many women and sexual relationships prominent in this novel but to all that we mean when we use the term 'Nature.' It encompasses the instinctive and the primitive, the unconscious and its dreams and fantasies, the whole material world and its transient cycles of birth and death. \(^{26}\)

Casebeer explains that

Everything that might be conventionally associated with nature or the natural belongs to the mother-world: the cycles of birth, maturity, decay and death of all living things; the associated functions of fertility, fruition, vitality, deterioration; the primitive man or the child living close to the unconscious, the instinctive and the basic drives; the intuitive and the impulsive and the imaginative; all that gives birth to the mysterious world that thrives without control; it is best lived in by being passively responsive to its laws. \(^{27}\)
Casebeer points out that there are many contrasts between the world of the mother and the world of the father; "hers is the world of matter and nature, his the disembodied spirit joining God; hers transient, his the permanent; hers the unconscious, his the conscious intellect; hers the primitive, his the civilized." Ziolkowski emphasizes that Narcissus has been alienated from those things that give life its meaning. Goldmund has exhausted himself by his physical nature, but he has achieved a contentedness denied to his friend. According to Goldmund, one cannot find true meaning in life exclusively through the spiritual Father-image of the monastary, but rather, he must search for it in the elusive figure of the mother that Goldmund himself pursues—a symbol reminiscent of Mother Eve in Demian. Goldmund realizes that this archetypal Mother represents not only love and life: "one could also call her a grave and decay...She was the source of bliss and the source of death...in her, love and cruelty were one."

Pursuing the meaning of life, Goldmund eventually realizes that this ultimate symbol encompasses all reality—a knowledge that is denied Narcissus because of his total absorption with the paternal spirit. After Narcissus
tells Goldmund, "You take your being from your mothers," the Abbot finds Goldmund in a faint. Narcissus says, "I have often told him that he was asleep, that he was not really awake. Now he has been awakened. I have no doubt about that." Goldmund’s process of awakening involves his search for a total quality of life, a life that intermingles the spiritual and the earthly. In order to find totality, Narcissus and Goldmund must recognize the necessity of both halves of the personality. Each must recognize and accept the desire for his opposite. Narcissus says, "We are sun and moon, dear friend, we are sea and land. It is not our purpose to become each other; it is to recognize each other, to learn to see the other and honor him for what he is: each the other's opposite and complement." (p. 43) Goldmund realizes the importance of blending the opposites to find totality in his life, but Narcissus fails to blend the spiritual with experiences in nature. Goldmund challenges Narcissus to explore these possibilities, and we are left with the hope that Narcissus will eventually attain these goals for himself. Goldmund asks Narcissus, "But how will you die when your time comes, Narcissus, since you have no mother? Without a mother, one cannot love. Without a mother, one cannot die... ." Goldmund’s last words burned like fire in his heart. (p. 315)
Casebeer tells us that Abbot Daniel is a character who transcends the worlds of Narcissus and Goldmund. "He is the man of wisdom, rather than knowledge; he is simple, childlike, humble, gentle, patient; he has the saving grace of the Immortal--humor." Abbot Daniel represents a blend between the physical world and the spiritual world; he is a man in harmony with the universe rather than with only one of its two spheres. Like Goldmund, Abbot Daniel dies gently because his personality is integrated, encompassing spirit and nature.31 Casebeer says,

The mother-world of life, love, ecstasy, horror, hunger, and the instinct nurtured and trained the vitality in Goldmund's body and spirit, so it has eased and then exhausted them so that he dies within nature as gently as did Abbot Daniel. Through art, he has risen as high in the realm of the spirit as has Narcissus. Through his death, he has surpassed him.32

Joseph Knecht, the protagonist in The Glass Bead Game, also experienced conflicts within his personality. On one hand, he was a master, and on the other, his life was spent in "obedient, renunciative service."33 Knecht alternated between an active and passive personality. This novel displays a search for the perfect personality through a blend of the two. Inge D. Halpert says that Joseph's character must be analyzed on two separate levels. Halpert
emphasizes the fact that Knecht lives two different lives and each of the two sides of his character emerges at different times. His personality drives him toward loyal selfless service to Geist (Spirit) within Castalia, while he experiences an unquenchable thirst for a full life, for Nature as well as Spirit. Halpert contends that, unlike the conflicts in Hesse's other novels, these two tendencies within Knecht's nature exist in a bond of friendship, each joining together with its opposite to form a vitally interdependent, complementary relationship. Knecht refuses to reject either of these impulses, so he decides to embrace them both as his fate. As Tito's tutor, Knecht plans to "inspire his ward Tito with the ideals of love, truth, tolerance, and intellectual responsibility." He hopes that Tito "will strive for the inner nature between Geist and Natur, for a full moral consciousness of his role in the universe."  

Theodore Ziolkowski does not see The Glass Bead Game as being polar--Nature and Spirit--but, instead, he sees it as being divided into three powers--Church, State, and Culture. The earlier Castalia, exclusively dedicated to the development of the spirit, shows that it has profited tremendously from Knecht's criticism and Knecht's example;
the later Castalia exhibits more than pure aestheticism; it exists in a realm of Culture that shows interaction with State and Religion. Martin Buber agrees that the conflict of the spirit is seemingly no longer present. He says,

Here the spirit is not fighting for the rights of life nor does it oppose an all-affirming love to the analytical power of cognition. Nor, incarnated in two persons, does the adventuresome and creative spirit stand opposed to the spirit that is self-contained. Yet the great peace that prevails in The Glass Bead Game would surely not have been reached other than by walking through the fire of opposites.

In The Glass Bead Game, there prevails a great peace between spirit and nature. Knecht "works for the spirit; he succeeds in bringing the educational function of the Order to even greater perfection. But at the same time he realizes with increasing clarity and inexorability that, for all this, the spirit has neglected rather than carried out its responsibility for the world of living and suffering humanity that has been entrusted to it."

According to Theodore Ziolkowski, The Glass Bead Game "is an act of mental synthesis through which the spiritual values of all ages are perceived as simultaneously present and vitally alive." The Game is purely "a symbol of the human imagination and emphatically not a patentable 'monopoly' of the mind." Joseph Knecht is exemplified as a character
who lives in total immersion of the spirit. He is symbolic of the inner meaning of Castalia, the human embodiment of the Glass Bead Game. His success and failure depend totally upon the success and failure of the Game. When he attempts to include Nature, he dies. Hesse used the novel to expose the conflict among the state, or political affairs of the world, personified in Plinio Designori, and religion, as seen within the realm of the Church and religious authority, personified in Pater Jacobus, and culture, embodied by Castalia. "The contrast of world and Mind, or of Plinio and Joseph, had before my eyes been transfigured from the conflict of two irreconcilable principles into a double concerto." The continued existence of Castalia proves the good relations which existed between Castalia and the state. The intellect and spirit interact fruitfully with the realms of state and religion. The "spirit must be given meaning by religion; and it must be given direction by the state."

The narrator in Magister Ludi tells us that "we regard his life, insofar as it is known, as built up in a clear succession of stages;" (p. 38)...Within the world in which we live...Joseph Knecht reached the summit and achieved the maximum. Although we don't see him in
his state of innocence in the novel, we are told that he was called by the "realm of the mind, the voice of his vocation." (p. 38) Later, we find out, "he himself was conscious of his call almost entirely as a process within himself." (p. 46) After his call is accepted, Knecht begins life on a different plane; he begins a period of struggle, development, and complex difficulties. The Master tells him, "What you call passion is not spiritual force, but friction between the soul and the outside world. Where passion dominates, that does not signify the presence of greater desire and ambition, but rather the misdirection of these qualities toward an isolated and false goal, with a consequent tension of sultriness in the atmosphere." (p. 69) Knecht believes that "Everything is tangential; there are no certainties anywhere. Everything can be interpreted one way and then again interpreted in the opposite sense." (p. 69) Magister Ludi's final state is described by the narrator in this way:

As Magister Ludi he became the leader and prototype of all those who strive toward and cultivate the things of the mind. He administered and increased the cultural heritage that had been handed down to him, for he was high priest of a temple that is sacred to each and every one of us. But he did more than attain the realm of a Master, did more than fill the office at the very summit of our hierarchy. He moved on beyond it. (p. 38)
Edwin Casebeer points out that Castalia is in mountain country, the land of the father. The lake symbolizes the mother-element; it embodies the very opposite of the mountain—the water is the element between earth and air, life and death, the element of transition. Knecht doesn't simply die—he transcends.  

Some critics place the greatest importance of the novel not on Knecht's death as a representation of the death of the spirit but rather on the influence his life had on the powers of state, religion, and culture. Knecht's death is "a moving symbol of his commitment to life and fellow-men, of his rejection of Castalian aestheticism and abstraction," but his death is also an individual act not of concern to politics, church or culture. Ziolkowski points out that Joseph Knecht's influence upon the development of Castalia and its relation with the other two powers is clarified within the work. He is given the responsibility which began as "benevolent neutrality and occasional scholarly exchange and has developed with each subsequent contact into true collaboration and confederation." Knecht was an influential force in the initial interaction among the state, religion, and culture but beyond this, he is a free individual. When his influence is completed, his representative life is over.
He is now free to live or to die as an individual. As a free individual, he attempts to involve himself in nature—nature overpowers his spirit and brings death. It is at this point that the challenge of Goldmund to Narcissus becomes significant and meaningful. Goldmund says, "But how will you die when your time comes, Narcissus, since you have no mother? Without a mother, one cannot love. Without a mother, one cannot die." (p. 315) Goldmund was capable of dying because he had recognized the importance of integrating spirit and nature. Having lived most of his life in the mother-world, he actually looked forward to experiencing death as a part of life. Knecht has lived all of his life in service to the spirit. In giving his life for humanity, he integrates spirit and nature, achieving unity between himself and all other life. Through his death, Knecht reaches the highest state of all, the unity of being wherein there exists a perfect oneness between his life and all other life.

Hesse uses the polarity between fantasy and reality in *Demian* and *Steppenwolf* to represent the necessity of an integration between these two aspects in the fulfillment of the unified personality. For each character, dream not only becomes a method of escape from the reality of
present existence, but when it is interwoven with reality, the character finds a perfect balance, and is put in touch with his inner self. In each of the levels of existence, a blend of fantasy and reality is essential before the character can experience the next level. Through recognition and acceptance of the dream world, a character moves from a state of innocence to a state of experience, and then on to a state of unity. We see this attempt in each individual novel, but if we look at the novels in sequence, we find a consecutive movement from the innocence of Demian, through the experience of Steppenwolf, with fantasy acting as an important element in fulfilling the psychological need of the characters. In the later novels, Narcissus and Goldmund and Magister Ludi, fantasy seems to be less important than in the first two. We see very little evidence of the characters in these novels escaping the realities of life through the world of fantasy. These characters are more integrated at the outset, and are searching for a deep meaning of life, far below the surface level resorting to fantasy could possibly offer.

In Demian, Sinclair escaped the reality of Kromer's pressure by reverting back to a childish world of play.
He says, "Frequently I would go into our small flower garden
of which I was so fond on these mild, colorful autumn
afternoons, and an odd urge prompted me to play once more
the childish games of my earlier years: I was playing,
so to speak, the part of someone younger than myself,
someone still good and free, innocent and safe." (pp. 19
& 20) Sinclair has two personalities: one seen by society,
and the other, the one that exists for his own enjoyment.
When the one society sees, the pretender, is attacked,
Sinclair immerses himself into his real personality.
Sinclair's rebellion causes him to live in the world of
fantasy periodically. His identity can only be established
in terms of its opposite. It is only after Sinclair
realizes his own identity that he can achieve a unified
existence. Watts calls this duality "the world inside the
skin and the world outside." He says that, "things are
joined together by the boundaries we ordinarily take to
separate them, and are, indeed, definable as themselves
only in terms of other things that differ from them." 47
Sinclair realizes that he has two selves: an older self
that is expected to perform certain acts, and the self
that he longs to be--a young free and innocent being. As
a young college student, he escapes himself in a different way. After throwing himself into a crowd of ruffians, he says, "I had become the ringleader and star, a notorious and daring bar crawler." (p. 62) Even during this time, he was emotionally alone. He says, "I really don't know any longer whether boozing and swaggering actually ever gave me any pleasure... It was all as if I were somehow under a compulsion to do these things. I simply did what I had to do, because I had no idea what to do with myself otherwise. I was afraid of being alone for long, was afraid of the many tender and chaste moods that would overcome me, was afraid of the thoughts of love surging up in me." (p. 63) Sinclair saw this time in his life as a "bad dream" (p. 64) which God used to make him feel lonely and lead him back to himself.

Later, Sinclair talks about a significant dream involving the heraldic bird above the entrance of his father's house. In his dream, Sinclair watches Demian swallow the bird of prey which he then perceives as growing within himself. Werner Breucher explains this dream as Emil's fight for "psychological growth and independence." 48 Breucher points out that "according to Demian, this act signifies that
Sinclair too must fight his way out of the egg— the world of his childhood— before he can develop further, for... 'who would be born must first destroy a world.'

In the novel, the dream is treated as a conscious effort by Sinclair to achieve a concentrated image of himself. Ralph Freedman points out that

At last in the ultimate vision which occurs when Sinclair receives his final wound, all past pictures and images are contracted into one. Frau Eva had taught him that the inner evolution of the most sublime 'dream' is equivalent to a final realization of the self both as a unique being (the pure self) and as a universal being (the transcendent vision). Such a vision, which in romantic terms is attainable only in infinity, can be achieved in extreme mystical concentration or at the point of death.

Through Steppenwolf, Haller tries to resolve the tension within himself and that between himself and the world. The novel centers on a self-encounter, the journey inwards through hell. The self-encounter takes place in a strange twilight zone between dream, vision, and reality, a structural device that lends the encounter a particular intensity. Hesse demonstrates a reunification of nature and spirit by offering an interaction of two levels of reality— the inner world fused with the turmoil which accompanies everyday existence. According to Ralph Freedman,
"fantasy and dream are artistic devices, in Steppenwolf," these are devices in which the two are fused together so that the reader loses track of what is real and what is not real. The magic theater is the dream world which the Self invents and organizes to communicate its real nature. Theodore Ziolkowski explains that "the magic theater is the vehicle through which Haller is to be introduced symbolically to the full extent of his personality in all its manifestations, and the consummation of his symbolic marriage to Hermine is to represent the complete welding of all aspects of his nature." Ziolkowski goes on to say that through the magic theater Harry Haller is able to see himself at different stages of his psychological development. When Harry is able to accept all of these stages as important elements of his personality as a whole, he becomes actively involved in the humorous activities the magic theater offers him. One side of Haller's personality, as seen in the magic mirror, is shown to be homosexually inclined, while the other part of his nature shows his experiences with heterosexual love. The polarities are clearly and completely resolved within the magic theater. The symbolic murder of
Hermine that takes place on a dream level, is, in reality, a fusion of all polarities in Haller's personality. The symbolic murder marks the climax of the novel. Hermine represents the opposite of every pole in his personality; when she shows herself to be sensual rather than the spiritual ideal he has envisioned, he wants to destroy her image completely. After Haller has had the chance to view himself through the magic mirror, he understands his dual nature, and he is capable of accepting each aspect of his personality. Through dream and reality, he has gained the ability to fuse all of the opposite tendencies in his nature. Edwin Casebeer points out that through the horrifying experience of the Great Automobile Hunt, Harry re-experiences the process of his personality. Harry finally learns that the wolf is not the evil side of his personality but that this primitive side of nature is large, beautiful and noble. Haller says, "Today I knew that no tamer of beasts, no general, no insane person could hatch a thought or picture in his brain that I could not match myself with one every bit as savage and wicked, as crude and stupid." (p. 196)

Using the creative work *Steppenwolf*, Hesse shows that psychic torment is not resolved through scientific analysis but through the recognition that man's inner conflicts mirror
the conflicts of the outside world. True integration must take place, not only within the human psyche, but also between man and his social arena. Freedman says that the "romantic writers had believed in the transfiguration of the outsider, embodying all the contradictions of a schizophrenic civilization to become a symbolic ideal." Integration between man and his society is achieved through the interwoven patterns of fantasy and reality.

The tension between art and life is also a prominent thematic quality in *Demian, Steppenwolf, Narcissus and Goldmund*, and *Magister Ludi*. The conflict between the individual and his world is projected into an ego that is unified only through the mystical illusions induced by art. The union of opposites is represented through music and painting; music functions as a combination of elements involving the individual self and the world, and painting is the structural element through which the hero's quest is accentuated and defined; painting also becomes a symbolic representation of the inner feelings. Freedman says,

As a result, the painting is a double exposure of a limited self and an unlimited universe. It emerges as a work of imagination which expresses Hesse's view of the function of art as the heightened image of the self, in which self and world are imposed upon one another in creative illusion.
In *Demian*, Emil Sinclair withdraws from his external world into an exclusively inner world: "Images, pictures or wishes rose within me and drew me away from the external world so that I had livelier and more real intercourse with these dreams or shadows than with my actual environment." (p. 188) Freedman tells us that,

In viewing bizarre forms, Sinclair realizes how boundaries between impression and fantasy, the external and the internal, can be blurred, how the self can create forms which reflect the universal act of creation. In the final stages these visions of the universal power are identified with the hero's self-portrait, concentrated image, or symbol, of the self.²

Sinclair's ideal self-portrait is developed through several visual symbols: the yellow sparrow-hawk is symbolic of the conflict between the light and dark worlds; the picture of Beatrice is an emblem of salvation and purity to Sinclair in a time when he experienced low moral standards. He had tried earlier to draw the sparrow-hawk; these attempts changed to an effort to draw Beatrice, and finally to draw an image of Demian and himself. The third motif is Abraxas, who is shown to be a bird breaking out of the world as if it were a gigantic egg.⁵⁷ The fourth motif is Sinclair's vision of Frau Eva. For Sinclair, Frau Eva
is the universal image that encompasses the entire world, and she leads Sinclair to his self-discovery. Sinclair experiences self-discovery—the ultimate self-portrait, at the point of death. Throughout his life, he has been drawing the image of himself, and at the point of death, his drawing is complete.

*Steppenwolf* deals with the alienation of the artist within his society. Freedman says that "Der Steppenwolf views urban life as symbolic of modern man's cultural and psychological disintegration." Hesse uses the artistic qualities of music, poetry, and dance in *Steppenwolf* to create a direct correspondence between the self and the ideal. In the magic theater, Harry Haller reads the inscription: "Compendium of Art. Transformation of Time into Space By Means of Music." (p. 227) Haller believes that music is similar to time frozen to space and brings serenity to the soul. To live in a world of music is to fit the self into a timeless harmony and live in a world of humor. Hermine and Pablo's Magic Theater helps Harry to acquire a sense of humor. Hermine teaches Steppenwolf to dance, hoping he will acquire "gaiety, innocence, frivolity, and elasticity." Casebeer says that the art of dance is
an appropriate metaphor for Hesse to use because it not only applies to the spontaneity of life, a non-verbal act and communication enacted by doing rather than thinking, but it is also related to music, and thus to Mozart (to whose tunes Goethe dances), and thus to the Immortals. Casebeer says,

From Mozart and Bach the intellectual Harry first intuited the presence of the Immortals, their serene laughter, their existence in a timeless eternity, the radiant, cool, clear quality of that existence. It is to the music of Pablo (who will become Mozart in the Magic Theater) that he now dances. Pablo maintains that music, even intellectual music, begins with humans making it and humans loving it; whether high or low, eternal or transcendent, it guides, comforts, and inspires humanity.61

Using polar opposites, Hesse reveals through Narcissus and Goldmund a "contrast between creative representation of the world and the intellectual's reflective penetration of it."62 Art emerges in this novel, as the integrating force between the world of the ascetic intellectual and the world of the sensual artist. Understanding the role and function of the artist in Narcissus and Goldmund helps the reader to appreciate the meaning of the novel. An influencing element in the novel is what Alan Watts calls
the *maya*, which, he says, denotes art or skill. He explains that maya means art and magic. In Hesse's novel, the artist derives from the mother world. It is she who leads him into the life of the artist. Goldmund sees the artist as one who can "transcend the mother cycles of life and death by embodying them in a form that speaks to the eternal, static spirit of the father." Art is the "bridge between the worlds and leads most directly to the synthesized Self." (p. 311) Through art, Goldmund synthesizes the two worlds--the world of nature and the world of the spirit.

The sexual encounters Goldmund experiences symbolize Goldmund's identification with the world of the senses--a world completely separate from the spiritual world of the monastery. His goal during this period is to create a statue of the ideal woman; it will be the creation of the earth mother. The statue, however, is beyond anyone's capability of carving it; his understanding of the earth-mother is one that is finite--actual creation of the form would put limitations on the ideas. He says, "And I was also fortunate enough in my experiences to learn that sensuality can be given a soul. Of it art is born." (p. 311)
According to Ziolkowski, art acts as the "supreme mediator in the novel: the foe of death and the synthesis of the apparently irreconcilable poles of nature and spirit." Alan Watts calls this inseparable polarity, yang and yin; its significance is found in the "archetypal poles of nature--plus and minus, strong and yielding, man and woman, light and darkness, rising and falling." He continues:

In Chinese thought the essential goodness of nature and human nature is precisely their good-and-bad. The two do not cancel each other out so as to make action futile: the play eternally is a certain order, and wisdom consists in the discernment of this order and acting in harmony with it...There emerges then, a view of life which sees its worth and point not as a struggle for constant ascent but as a dance. Virtue and harmony consist, not in accentuating the positive but in maintaining a dynamic balance.

Goldmund finds completion of his journey through the selves; Narcissus has not found this completion but is challenged by Goldmund to do so in order to prepare for his death the same way he prepares himself for other human acts such as birth, love, art, and thought. Watts's explanation of the synthesis involved in completing the preparation process helps to reveal the deep implications of Goldmund's challenge to Narcissus. Watts says,
...the polarity stressed in this vision of the cosmic dance is life and death, creation and destruction. But the texts represent it in other ways as well—as the peaceful and the wrathful, the male and female, the warp and the woof—each pair a variation of the fundamental rhythm which is the very texture of life.

Goldmund says, "When, as artists, we create images, or, as thinkers seek laws and formulate thoughts we do so in order to save something from the great Dance of Death, to establish something that has a longer duration than we ourselves." (p. 162) Theodore Ziolkowski says that Narcissus thinks in conceptual terms; whereas Goldmund sees visions and images that exist outside of language. He becomes an artist; as an artist, Goldmund uses his creative imagination as a means of communication. Narcissus explains the difference between the way Goldmund communicates and the way the brothers at the monastery look at the world: "Our thinking is a constant process of converting things to abstractions, a looking away from the sensory, an attempt to construct a purely spiritual world; whereas, you take the least constant, the most mortal things to your heart, and in their very mortality show the meaning of the world." (p. 293) With regard to the use of art in Narcissus and
Goldmund, Ziolkowski says that art is the medium through which the opposites spirit and nature are reconciled. In search of deeper meaning to life than love has given to him, Goldmund turns to the study of woodcarving. Because Goldmund thinks in images rather than words, the paintings and carvings he creates represent the physical world of nature; art becomes, for him, the mediator between life and death. Goldmund says, "Perhaps that is the root of all art and possibly also of all spirit"; he believes it is "fear of death." (p. 162) Ziolkowski says that art, then,

suspends the tyranny of time and the threat of death by preserving in lasting images isolated moments of temporal life. On the other hand, art is also the force that mediates between nature and spirit, making possible an ultimate understanding between Narziss and Goldmund, who begin at such different poles. For art is a 'unification of the worlds of the Father and of the Mother, of mind and blood; it could begin in the most sensuous experience and lead to the most abstract, or it could have its origin in a pure world of ideas and end in bloodiest flesh.'

Through art, Goldmund is able to portray his inner experiences; through the creative spirit, he treats as real the ideal world of the spirit in which all opposites are reconciled. Goldmund
believes that it is his responsibility to serve the ideal by treating it as though it existed, by rendering it visible and tangible in art. However, Goldmund is unable to depict the ideal mother; he says,

For many years it has been my most cherished, my secret dream to make a statue of the mother. She was to me the most sacred of all my images; I have carried her always inside me, a figure of love and mystery. Only a short while ago it would have been unbearable to me to think that I might die without having carved her statue; my life would have seemed useless to me. And now see how strangely things have turned out; it is not my hands that shape and form her; it is her hands that shape and form me. She is closing her fingers around my heart, she is loosening it, she is emptying me; she is seducing me into dying and with me dies my dream, the beautiful statue, the image of the great mother-Eve. (p. 315)

Goldmund believes that his sculpture of Narcissus represents a "union of the father and mother worlds, of mind and blood... male--female, a merging of instinct and pure spirituality." (p. 169) Because art acts as a bridge between the physical world and the spiritual world, Goldmund uses his own creative works as a path to his synthesized Self.

The highest art of all--unity--is presented in *Magister Ludi*. Perfection is shown in life and art but the world at Castalia is deficient in contrast. Music represents the process of change that takes place; "It must constantly
surge forward bringing light to darkness, meaning to senseless matter." For Joseph Knecht, music turns the chaotic world into one of serenity. Geist (spirit) is manifest in music and is carried over into Knecht's life of serenity and service.

The guiding spirit in Knecht's life, music is the unifying element between life and the intellect. Music represents the universal Whole; it is a symbol of the spirit, the world of the father, and its sensual quality makes an impact upon the senses; therefore, music may also be a symbol of nature, the world of the mother. But most important, music can transcend this dualism and become a symbol of the Whole: "Music arises from Measure and is rooted in the great Oneness. The Great Oneness begets the two poles; the two poles beget the power of Darkness and Light." Casebeer says,

Chaos in a society reflects itself in its music; the qualities stressed are those of Nature; it is absorbed in its substance, its physical impact upon the listener through volume and beat, torturing discords, startling shifts in rhythms, key, and extraordinary juxtapositions of material. When a society is integrated, its music contains Nature in Spirit, harmonizes both and begins to represent the Whole.

The music master emphasizes meditation and service to the Whole. These elements must be accompanied by art. In
Castalia, music acts as a harmonizing element, reconciling the dissonances of life resulting in a total balance between practice and theory, the abstract and the concrete, and the spiritual and the sensual.\textsuperscript{72} Ziolkowski contends that Hesse's last novel, \textit{The Glass Bead Game}, is a "plea for human commitment and for an art nourished by life, for a life enriched by art."\textsuperscript{73}

Another art form that represents serenity in \textit{The Glass Bead Game} is the dance. Tito dances to celebrate the sunrise; his dance is a spontaneous reaction to the mountain air, the sunshine and his new-found freedom, but it also carries the significance of the unrealized Self according to Casebeer. Casebeer tells us that the relationship of Tito to the Self is symbolized by his dance, during which "his outspread arms embraced mountain, lake, and sky"—all aspects of the Whole. Tito’s dance symbolizes the process of becoming, of transformation, uniting the Whole.\textsuperscript{74}

Within each of Hesse’s novels, there is exploration of conflicting elements—nature and spirit, fantasy and reality, and art and life. In each, the state of unity or totality is the coveted goal. Recognition, acceptance, and commitment to each element brings unity and oneness, allowing the ideal personality to emerge.
FOOTNOTES


7 Seidlin, p. 58.

8 Ibid., p. 62.

9 Ibid., p. 58.


12 Campbell, p. 199.

13 Ziolkowski, Hermann Hesse, pp. 31 & 32.

15 Seidlin, p. 59.

16 Ibid., p. 66.

17 Breucher, p. 113.

18 Freedman, pp. 84 & 85.

19 Ibid., pp. 90 & 91.


21 Ibid., p. 216.

22 Ibid., p. 217.

23 Breucher, p. 122.

24 Freedman, p. 30.


26 Ibid., pp. 100 & 101.

27 Ibid., p. 111.

28 Ibid., p. 112.


31 Casebeer, pp. 118 & 119.

32 Ibid., pp. 139 & 140.

34 Ibid., pp. 16-18.
36 Ibid.
38 Ibid.
39 Ibid.
40 Ibid., p. 32.
44 Casebeer, p. 134.
46 Ibid., p. 331.
48 Breucher, p. 74.
49 Ibid.
50 Freedman, p. 71.

53 Casebeer, pp. 89 & 90.

54 Freedman, pp. 93 & 94.

55 Ibid., pp. 52-56.

56 Ibid., p. 60.

57 Ibid., p. 67.

58 Ibid., p. 67.

59 Ibid., p. 73.

60 Seidlin, p. 68.

61 Casebeer, p. 73.


63 Watts, p. 68.

64 Ziolkowski, p. 247.

65 Watts, pp. 49-54.

66 Casebeer, pp. 138-140.

67 Watts, p. 74.


69 Ibid., p. 251.

71 Casebeer, p. 152.
72 Ibid., pp. 153 & 154.
73 Ziolkowski, *Hermann Hesse*, p. 44.
74 Ibid.
Bibliography


