

**Interrogating Life: A Study of Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha* and Yann
Martel's *Life of Pi***

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English and Foreign Languages

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Master of Philosophy



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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation titled “**Interrogating Life: A Study of Hermann Hesse’s *Siddhartha* and Yann Martel’s *Life of Pi***” is based on the bona fide research carried out by **Ms. Ruchi Rani**, Department of English and Foreign Languages, Central University of Haryana, under my supervision and submitted to the Central University of Haryana in partial fulfilment for the award of *Master of Philosophy* in English.

Place:

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the research work incorporated to this dissertation entitled **Interrogating Life: A Study of Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha* and Yann Martel's *Life Of Pi*** is the result of investigations carried out by me under the supervision of Dr. Manoj K. Vidyalankar, Assistant Professor, Central University of Haryana, Mahendergarh, Haryana, India. This work is original and has not been submitted in part or full for any degree or diploma to this or any other University.

Place – Mahendergarh

Date –

Ms. Ruchi Rani

Preface

The present research endeavor focuses on the various aspects of life and deals with the perpetual question of every individual that what is the goal of life. Every individual searches the true knowledge which is beyond this physical world. True knowledge of soul, however, is not a matter of superficial importance nor is it to be left to some philosophers or religious scholars to discuss. Since each and every one of us is a conscientious being, it concerns us all individually and severally. To deny ourselves the true knowledge of consciousness is to deny ourselves the right and the duty of living a meaningful life.

The research is based on two novels - Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha* and Yann Martel's *Life of Pi* which are written by the novelists from different countries and came in different time period. Both of these novels are written by German and Canadian writers respectively but the background of both the novels is India. Each of the texts deals with an individual's spiritual journey that's aim to attain the true knowledge of life.

From the discussions in this dissertation, I believe that it is possible for every human being to get the real knowledge of life.

(Ruchi Rani)

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(Ruchi Rani)

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Chapter – I

Introduction

Man's life travels mainly through three episodes which are definite truths- birth, living period and, yes of course, the inevitable death. The mysterious phase of the life is the living period which needs to be solved by every human being. Is his life only to get birth, live, act and die or there is something more to be gained? Before man, the universal problem, which needs to be investigated, is the goal and purpose of his life. Man always seeks answer for the questions like what he lives for and what his purpose in this life is, and these questions haunt man beyond his routine life. Persistently, man makes every effort to attain the purpose and goal of his existence by the means of multiple experiences of his life's voyage. However, "it is not a question of embodied life, but it the nature of the soul to be always active. Without the presence of the spirit soul, the material body cannot move. The body is only a dead vehicle to be worked by the spirit soul, which is active and cannot stop for a moment" (Prabhupada 205). Hence, it is not about this visible and fleshly body but about the immortal and perpetual rider which is called Truth, the ultimate Reality, and Atman, Soul or Self. According to Dr. Radhakrishnan, "the unreal is the body and the real is the soul" (Bhagavad-Gita 119). In the Bhagavad-Gita, Lord Krishna says to Aurjuna about the undying nature of Atman or Soul, "He is never born, nor does he die at any time, nor having (once) come to be will he again cease to be. He is unborn, eternal, permanent and primeval. He is not slain when the body is slain" (Radhakrishnan, Bhagavad-Gita 121). Hence the knowledge of the self or soul or atman is considered as the highest kind of knowledge.

“The *Upanisads* asks us to know the self: *atmanam viddhi*. *The Bhagavadgita* says that of all types of knowledge the knowledge of the self is most important. We must achieve a profound understanding of what is meant to be a human” (Radhakrishnan, Religion 90). Yognanda in his book *Journey to Self- realization* defines Self- Realization as, “the knowing- in body, mind and soul- that we are one with the omnipresence of God; that we do not have to pray that it comes to us, that we are not merely near it at all times, but that God’s omnipresence is our omnipresence; that we are just as much a part of Him now as we ever will be. All we have to do is improve our knowing” (Yognanda, Wikipedia).

Radhakrishnan remarks that Atman or Self is “uncleavable, he cannot be burnt, he can neither wetted nor dried; he is eternal, all pervading, unchanging, immovable; he is the same forever” (Radhakrishnan, Religion 101). The body and the mind are not the true identification of Self. For when any part of body gets injured, the Self remains as it was, unharmed. Thus, the explorers of Truth avoid the sensible and visible fugitive body as an illusion. Man makes immense efforts for his bodily comfort and the more importance is given to sensory instinct instead of Self. That’s why, when a man experiences hardship or joyousness he either grumbles that his body parts are in pain or charged with happiness but not his Soul or Self. Consequently, the body and the Self are considered two different units. Since, the Self is dressed up into the body, it stays uninfluenced. A huge part of manpower is used to get worldly pleasures and man runs after materialistic things to gratify his senses. But as it is said that no one can get gratification forever, man’s quest for constant happiness always left unfulfilled. Radhakrishnan comments,

The individual is, in a sense, created by God after his own image and in His own likeness, but he has his creaturely form, we do not know our own possibilities. The individual ego

is subject to *avidya* or ignorance when it believes itself to be separate and different from all other egos. The result of this separatist ego- sense, *ahamkara*, is failure to enter into harmony and unity with the universe. This failure expresses itself in physical suffering and mental discord. Selfish desire is the badge of subjection or bondage. When the individual shakes of this *avidya*, he becomes free from all selfishness, possesses all, and enjoys all (Radhakrishnan, Basic 151).

Everyman carries the eternal bliss or happiness within him, but he remains unaware of this very truth. But when a man is in deep sleep, neither is he dreaming nor he is conscious about his body, then he is in relationship with infinite state. As mentioned in Wordsworth's poem

Tintern Abbey,

. . ., that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affection gently leads us on, -
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul (42-47)

In this state of meditation, man enjoys the ultimate peace and when man realizes the peace, he secures immortal happiness.

The individual's mind is like the storm in the thoughtful ocean which restrains him from realizing his true self. But when the storm sets down and the water is still, it displays the heavenly stars of one's self. According to Aurobindo, "Man is a mind imprisoned, obscured and circumscribed in a precarious and imperfect living but imperfectly conscious body" (Aurobindo, Hour 81). "He has a body and a mind which belongs to him, but his self is not derived from any

of these, though it is at the root of them all” (Radhakrishnan, Basic 149). Aurobindo also precisely remarks,

The self that thou hast to become, is the self that thou are within behind the veil of mind and life and matter. It is to be the spiritual, the divine, the supreme, the real *Purusha*. For that which is above the mental being is superman. It is to be the master of thy mind, thy life and thy body; it is to be a king over Nature of whom thou art now the tool, lifted above her who now has thee under her feet. It is to be free and not a slave, to be one and not divided, to be immortal and not obscured by death, to be full of light and not darkened, to be full of bliss and not the sport of grief and suffering, to be uplifted into power and not cast down into weakness. It is to live in the Infinite and possess the finite” (Aurobindo, Hour 7).

Aurobindo also explains the seven suns of supermind/ superman which leads man towards his true self. The greatest satisfaction of man’s life lies in knowing the purpose of his life and fulfilling it. Worldly knowledge and True knowledge- are the two types of knowledge in front of man and knowing about the right one is the first step towards the satisfaction. Worldly knowledge is all about the corporal and temporal knowledge, but the science behind True knowledge is to recognize the spiritual reality. True knowledge is to know about one’s own self or spirit. To realize the goal of his life man must maintain the distance from this materialistic world. “Man is turned outward by his senses and so loses contact with his own deepest self. His soul has become immersed in outer things in power and possessions. It must turn round to find its right direction and to find the meanings and realities it has missed. To hear the melodies of spirit we must shut off the noise of the world” (Radhakrishnan, Religion 24-25).

As it has been already mentioned that the frequent question of man is: what should be perceived as man's ultimate goal? "Heidegger asks us to pass from unauthentic existence to authentic existence, from *samsara* to *moksha* or *nirvana*. For Marcel the goal is self-knowledge. It is not a problem to be solved but a mystery to be entered upon reverently" (Radhakrishnan, Religion 41). Vedanta also asserts that Self- Realization is the supreme goal of human's life and the one who perceives this goal he need not to know or achieve anything else. According to Hinduism, there are four major goals of human's life- Kama, Artha, Dharma and Moksha. Kama is simply considered as pleasure. Kama is man's urge for passion, especially bodily, and emotions. It leads man to the next goal which is Artha. Artha is about money and power, according to Hinduism. Artha allows man to have wealth for the fulfillment of one's destiny. The third goal is Dharma which is commonly taken as duty. Man is meant to follow the righteous path and he must have sound moral and ethical values. As it is presented in *Bhagavad-Gita*, man should do his dharma without expecting the result. The fourth and the ultimate goal of Hindu's life is Moksha or liberation which can be defined in many ways- freedom from birth cycle, self-realization, illumination, spiritual knowledge etc. and it is considered as the highest goal of a Hindu's life. The whole game of life is played for Moksha.

Buddhism, a religion which took its earlier form in the shadow of Hindu religion, shares many basic principles with Hinduism. The final goal of man's life is to get enlightenment, according to Buddhism. But,

The means of attaining the goal participates in the nature of the goal itself. The ethical means and spiritual end cannot be separated. The end of enlightenment enters into the means. It is possible for the people who despise the world to produce the art and culture

which enrich our world. Buddhism does not cause men to turn from the pursuits and endeavours of human life” (Radhakrishnan, Religion 31).

Christianity, a western religion, which is based on Jesus Christ life journey, considers the glorification of God as the purpose of a Christian’s life. Man must glorify God through prayers, studying holy books, family, sacrifices, loving other people.

But now what the questions arise here are- Is it possible for a human being to awaken his soul or true self? And if it is possible then how to attain this goal of Self- Realization? Yogananda seems to give answers of these questions when he says that,

The inner fulfillment we seek does exist and can be attained. In truth, all the knowledge, creativity, love, joy and peace we are looking for are right within us, the very essence of our beings. To fully realize this- not just as an intellectual philosophy but as an actual experience that brings strength and understanding into every area of our daily lives- is what Self- realization is all about (Yogananda , Undreamed 3).

Man thinks rationally. He is probably the only creature who is attributed with the logical thinking through his intellect. His mental capacity and brainpower puts him above all in the hierarchy. Radhakrishnan illustrates that, “The hierarchy of existence and value correspond. The order of phenomena which has the largest degree of reality in the essential scale has the lowest degree of value in the ethical or spiritual scale. The human individual is higher than the animal, plant, or mineral” (Radhakrishnan, Basic 150). R.W. Emerson also advocates the same notion in his essay *Self- Reliance* when he comments, “This is the ultimate fact which we so quickly reach on this, as an every topic, the resolution of all into the ever blessed ONE. Self- existence is the attribute of the Supreme Cause, and it constitutes the measure of good by the degree in which it

enters into all lower forms” (18). Hence, man achieves Self- Realization faster than any other species.

Man’s life is mixture of pleasures and pains; these are the part and parcel of his life. But man confronts with these pleasures and pains as a result of his former activities. This is the law of Karma which engages him in the cycle of birth, death and rebirth in conformity with his earlier deeds. “Every action has its equal and opposite reaction” as per Newton third Law of Motion, in the same way man’s every deed leaps reverse on him in an equal and opposite amount. Each and every motion in the cosmic is pre- determined. “The law of *karma* is not external to the individual. The judge is not without but within. The law by which virtue brings its triumph and ill- doing its retribution is the unfolding of the law of our being. . . . The working of *karma* is wholly dispassionate, just, neither cruel nor merciful” (Radhakrishnan, Basic 169). “As you sow, so shall you reap” is the basic principle of this. So, if a person wants love, peace, happiness and healthy relationships than he himself must love, peaceful, happy and good by nature.

The supreme composer or the creator survives in the every single bit of this universe. The Absolute does exist in every human and non- human, every earthly and non- earthly being. Therefore, He is considered as Omnipresent. As Radhakrishnan confirms, “The Supreme is the Personal Lord who controls the many- sided action of nature and dwells in the heart of every creature” (Bhagavad-Gita 310). “The Supreme is at once transcendental, the cosmic and the individual reality. In its transcendental aspect, it is the pure self unaffected by any action or experience, detached, unconcerned. In its dynamic cosmic aspect, It not only supports but governs the whole cosmic action and this very Self which is one in all and above all is present in

the individual” (Bhagavad-Gita 18). Hence, Brahma is the Supreme Self that is homogenous.

Brahma, a poem by R.W. Emerson, presents the idea

that, The Strong Gods pine for my abode

And pine in vain the sacred seven

But thou, meek lover of the good!

Find me, the turn thy back on heaven (13- 16)

This poem has universal themes of- Brahma, Atman and Maya. According to Emerson, the one who wants to achieve salvation or *Moksha* must control his desires (Maya) and merged himself with Brahma. The seeker of Truth who does this surely perceives Self- Realization and is blessed with heavenly bliss.

The individual Soul or Self is considered as ‘Atman’. God resides in every atom, in every individual’s body. “The individual self is the portion of the Lord, a real, not an imaginary form of the Supreme, a limited manifestation of the God” (Bhagavad-Gita 44). But man’s ignorance keeps him unaware of this very truth and consequently is always away from the universal truth.

When man starts interrogating his life and seeks answers for his quest, he is introduced to two kind of realizations- Self- Realization and God- Realization. Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary gives the definition of Self- Realization as “the fact of using your skills and abilities and achieving as much as you can possibly achieve” (1378) for the growth of Self. The last longing joy which we hunt for is nowhere but right within us. Therefore, Emerson begins his essay *Self- Reliance* quoting the words of Persius, “Ne te quaesiveris extra” that means do not look outward of you. And as Radhakrishnan also quotes the words of a Sufi mystic Ayn at- qudat al Hamadhni, “He who is born from the womb sees only this world, only he who is born out of himself sees the other world” (Religion 53).

God- Realization is yet another kind of realization that man aims for. In fact, Self- Realization itself is authentic God- Realization or vice- versa. It is like “beauty is truth, truth is beauty”. Self is Atman, Atman is Brahma or God. Hence, God is the ultimate reality. Thus, the primary goal of man is to know this ultimate reality.

Knowing that creation is an accident and that it has a deeper meaning than is apparent to the eye, the seers of all ages have time and again drawn the attention of the world to the fact that, although for a certain period of his life on this planet man may identify himself exclusively with the life of the senses, his transcendental destiny is God- Realization” (Maher, God 41).

The two novels which I have chosen for study are- Hermann Hesse’s *Siddhartha* and Yann Martel’s *Life of Pi*. Hermann Hesse was a German born Swiss novelist, poet and painter. He was born on 2nd July 1877 in Calw at Wuttenberg, Germany in a missionary family. His father Johannes Hesse, a doctor’s son, served as Baltic missionary to India. His mother Marie Hesse, also a Baltic missionary and born in India, was a daughter of Hermann Gundert who was famously known as “Indian Expert”. From his early childhood, Hesse was very aggressive and had a rebellion kind of nature, so he was hard to handle for his family as well as for outsiders. He studied in Calw from 1880-1891. Hesse had a great influence of his maternal grandfather who was a speaker of several languages and a doctor of philosophy. He started to work in his publishing house and he got the access of his grandfather’s library where he read widely. In the early day of his career he was very much passionate about music and poetry but he decided to be a writer. In 1895, Hesse started to work in a bookshop where he read many philosophical and theological books including the writers Goethe, Schiller, Nietzsche etc. and various works of German mythology and German Romantics. In 1896, his first poem *Madonna* was published in a

local periodical and in 1898, came his first poetry collection. His first novel *Schweinigel* came in 1899 which was written in German. He was noticed by publishers through his articles and reviews and also gained popularity outside Germany. During this period he moved to Switzerland. In 1901, he got published *Posthumous Writings and Poems of Hermann Lausche*. His mother died in 1902 and he got engaged with Maria Bernouill in the same year.

Hesse came up with his first of English *Peter Camenzind* which was pre- published in 1903 and the final publication came in 1904. It is a story of a young boy who leaves his village to fulfill his intellectual curiosities and to find a better future for himself as a poet. Hesse has presented various powerful themes like man and nature, search for identity, self- knowledge, individuals and society. This novel was an instant success and he was awarded by Bavernfeld Pricze for this.

With this literary success he married Maria Bernouill in 1904 and shifted in Gaienhofen on the Lake Constance with her. Here, in 1906, he published his second novel *Beneath the Wheel* that deals with the tragic story of an intellectual boy Hans Giebenrath. Hans was a topper student of his school until he met with Hermann Heilner who was a rebellious romantic. In this novel, Hesse attacks on present education system which was more focused on student's academic performance than on all- around development. During 1906- 07, he composed pems and short stories. *Gertrude*, his next novel, was published in 1910, the story revolves around Kuhn, a renowned music composer and Gertrude, an opera singer and Kuhn's friend Heinrich Mnoth, also an opera singer. Kuhn loves Gertrude but she is in love with Heinrich and marries him. But this marriage was proved unsuccessful and ruins their life. But this tragic incident motivates him to compose his career's best opera music.

As the differences were increased between Hesse and Maria, he took a long trip to East countries. This journey proved an inspiration for his upcoming literary pieces but could not get stability in his marital life. In 1914, he wrote *Rosshalde*. This novel has some autobiographical patches in it. The protagonist Johann Veraguth is a successful artist who is unhappy with his marriage or his wife Rosshalde and wants to leave his home for spiritual fulfillment. Finally, he overcomes his fear and quit the family and fly towards India to explore his true identity. During the First World War in 1914, Hesse joined Imperial Army as a volunteer. He wrote essays and edited newspapers for war prisoners. Due to his aggressive and radical writings he had to face political disputes also. Hesse was still entangled in the controversies when he lost his father, his son sickens and his wife was diagnosed with schizophrenia. Because of his wife's disease, he came into contacts with psychoanalysis and started reading Carl Jung theories which effect can be seen in his latter works. In 1919, he moved to Montagnola where his next novel, *Demian*, appeared. He wrote this novel under the pseudonym Emil Sinclair who is also the protagonist of this novel. It narrates the story of a young boy Sinclair who is on the journey of self- realization. Except novels, his short stories and essays were published. In 1919, his essay Zarathustra's Return was published and in 1920, a series of stories came including- *Klingsor's Last Summer*, *A Child's Heart* and *Klein and Wager*.

In 1922, his novella *Siddhartha* published, which was influenced with Indian culture and philosophy. It tells the life journey of a young Brahmin boy named Siddhartha who is in search of ultimate truth and finally attains it. In 1923, Hesse was given Swiss citizenship. By this time he has divorced with his wife Maria and married with Ruth Wengen in 1924. But this marriage also proved a failure and ended up in 1927. His next major novel was appeared in 1927, *Steppenwolf*. This novel brought him worldwide acknowledgement. It shows the inner conflict of

a man's divided selves. Hesse friend Hugo Ball wrote his biography on his 50th birthday in 1929. In 1930, he married Ninon Doblin who was an art historian. They shifted to their new house in Montagnola. *Journey to the East* was published in 1932. And his last and one of the finest work *The Glass Bead Game* came in 1943. It shows a unique blend of Eastern and Western philosophy.

Throughout his literary career, Hesse was awarded by several awards but the most precious was Nobel Prize which he got in 1946. In the same year he got Goethe Prize was Germany's important literary prize. He died on August 9, 1962.

Yann Martel is a Spain born Canadian writer. He was born in Salamanca, Spain on June 25, 1963 to French- Canadian parents Emile and Nicole Martel. Though, Martel was born in Spain but he grew up travelling in different countries all around the world including France, Spain, Costa Rica, Mexico, Iran, India, Turkey and United States. Currently he is settled in Montreal, Canada. He completed his high school education from Ontario and studied philosophy at Trent University from 1981- 1984 and at Concordia University from 1984-85. During his graduation, he did several menial jobs including dishwashing, security guard and tree planting. By the time he was 27, he started making income from his writing only.

Martel's first book appeared in 1993 that was a short story collection entitled *The Facts Behind the Helsinki Roccamation* and this very first book brought him the Journey Prize. The stories in this collection have autobiographical notes in which Martel has described his existential crisis during his studies in universities. In the same year an another book *Seven Stories* published but it could not get much attention. In 1996, Martel came with his debut novel *Self*. This novel was published internationally. It is a book which takes the theme of identity on another level. It is a fictional autobiography. It tells the story of a young writer who finds himself

as a woman on one morning. Love, sex and gender enigma are its main themes. Martel's aim of this novel is to put several questions before man: who are you really? What is your true identity? Does your gender make much difference? Although this book got people's attention only after the publication of *Life of Pi* but it was shortlisted for the Governor General's Award for Best First Novel in Canada.

Martel did an immense research for his next novel *Life of Pi*. He visited India and lived here for thirteen months and visited many religious places and zoo. This book brought him international recognition when it was published in 2001. It was a great success and won Britain's most prestigious Man's Booker Prize. It was published in about 50 countries and sold about 12 million copies worldwide. It held the record of Best-selling book for more than one year. Later in 2011, it was adapted into movie and there too it won four Oscar Prizes. It narrates the story of an Indian boy Pi Patel who lives in dilemma regarding his religious faith and jump from one religion to another. It deals with the issues of identity and spirituality. It is an unbelievable journey of Pi in ocean for 227 days which make its reader believe in God. Except Man's Booker Prize, in 2001, this novel won Canada's Hugh MacLennan Prize for fiction.

After the success of his novel *Life of Pi* he started teaching in Berlin Free University. In 2004, he published his next story collection *We Ate the Children Last: Stories. Betrice and Virgil*, next novel, was appeared in 2010. It tells the story of two central characters after whom the book is entitled. Mixing too many genres into one makes this novel complex. From 2007 to 2011, Martel worked on a project where he sent a book in every two weeks to the P.M. of Canada Stephen Harper including various genres' books. Each book was tagged along with a letter describing the value of the book. Martel's fourth and latest novel *The High Mountains of*

Portugal recently published on 2nd February, 2016. And within one month it came in the list of Best- seller.

The reason behind selecting these two novels- Hesse's *Siddhartha* and Martel's *Life of Pi*-is that both the novels share the themes of identity, spirituality and self- realization and their own attitude towards life. *Siddhartha* is an autobiographical novel whereas *Life of Pi* is a biographical novel. Both the novels are about different personalities who are eager to explore the same truth. Finding their own identity and inner peace are the goal of both Siddhartha and Pi. *Siddhartha* emphasizes on the journey of a man towards Self- Realization. Siddhartha has strong desire for true knowledge from his childhood which leads him to various paths of life. But it is only after his realization of his vices he attains the ultimate goal which he received from Vasudeva. *Life of Pi* deals with the story of Piscine Moliter Patel whose childhood is spent in India. While shifting to Canada with his family and animal , their ship wrecked in the Pacific Ocean and sinks. He is left on a life boat with a Bangli tiger, Richard Parker. He achieves emotional and spiritual growth in the adverse circumstances.

The thesis is divided into four chapters. The first chapter is an introduction which deals with the different aspects of life and its goal through self- realization and God- realization. It follows the growth of man's emotional and spiritual self. The second chapter "Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha*" deals with the novel *Siddhartha*. It describes Siddhartha's thirst for knowledge, inner voice, and journey of life and role of karma in human life. The third chapter "Yann Martel's *Life of Pi*" discusses the novel *Life of Pi*, which shows man's faith in God. It also deals with man's positive outlook toward life, identity, spirituality, man and nature relationship, man and animal relationship. The last and fourth chapter is "Conclusion" which depicts the similar and dissimilar finding of both the novels on the aspect of life. Thus both the novels interpret the

life journey of human to perceive the ultimate truth of life. The research methodology which is traced in the 7th edition of *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* has been followed.

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Chapter – II

Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha*

Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha* portrays the journey of an individual who is in search of his real self, meaning of his life and his attaining of self- realization. As S.B.Bhamber says, "Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha* depicts the individual's search outside the restrictions of the society" (141). The central character Siddhartha is on spiritual journey that's goal is to explore the essence of Self which is called Brahman or Atman, according to Hinduism. "It is a story of a young Indian Brahmin's pursuit of enlightenment" (Joshi, 2011). His target is to conquer the self which he feels is universal and so omnipresent. Hesse also makes this point clear when he talks about the worth of this novel that he is not going to describe something which is outward but only within oneself and he is not going to present any picture gallery but one's own soul.

Desire is one of the most significant and inspirational force as it determines man's action. Even at very young age a child longs for appropriate understanding of things when he asks "why is that?" and with getting the answer his desire is more extended to know the reality. The true sense of achievement comes only with the complete and exact knowledge. But when a man finds himself unfit to realize his desire he becomes restless. Human desire can commonly be categorized into three spheres- physical, mental and spiritual. People make immense efforts to achieve their physical and mental desires but these desires go unnoticeable and man is intuitively aware that there is more to be gained then he leads towards spiritual quest. This quest becomes uppermost for some people and Siddhartha is one of them. In the novel Hesse has presented Siddhartha as ten year old boy when he is fed up with the worldly pursuits and reaches into the

position of restlessness. Now he is in a situation where “Dream and restlessness of the soul came to him, arising from the smoke of the sacrifices, emanating from the verses of the Rig- Veda, trickling through from the teaching of the old Brahmins. ... Siddhartha had begun to feel the seeds of discontent within him. ... His intellect was not satisfied, his soul was not at peace, his heart was not still” (Hesse, Siddhartha 4). Siddhartha’s real quest begins when he starts questioning his existence and tries to find out the meaning of his life. His confusion about the Self or Atman leads him towards spiritual journey. His strong urge to realize the true Self compels him to think, “Where was Atman to be found, where did He dwell, where did His eternal heart beat, if not within the Self, in the innermost, in the eternal which each person carried within him? But where was this Self, this innermost?” (Hesse, Siddhartha 5).

Phenomenologically, Siddhartha demonstrates that physically or materialistically and mentally or rationally shaped being are not ultimate; but there is more beyond these positions where man can find his true Self. He says, “One must find the source within one’s own Self, one must possess it. Everything else was seeking- a detour, error” (Hesse, Siddhartha 6). The novel is divided into two parts which narrates the story of Siddhartha from impatient and curious (for true knowledge) young boy to old man.

The inner evolution of Siddhartha into a final and complete man in a spiritual sense can be analyzed through three phases of his life. The first phase is his years of preparation for his life with Vedantic scholarliness and his assiduous mastery over the tedious arts as a Samana, the follower of Jainism. The second phase is the period where he develops his aesthetic sense and skillfully masters the art of business and love, eventually leading the life of a Sansari. The third phase of his life is the years of mellow fruitfulness, where he

gains maturity physically, mentally and spiritually, when he was given salvation by Vasudeva. Each phase consist of twenty years” (Priya 24).

The word Siddhartha composed with two words in Sanskrit language, ‘siddha’ that means ‘achieved’ and ‘artha’ which means ‘what was searched for’, the combined meaning of both the words is ‘he who has found meaning (of existence)’ or ‘he who has attained his goals’. Justifying his name, Siddhartha ultimately attains his goal of nirvana. At the early stage of his life, apparently it can be noticed that Siddhartha hunts for the Absolute. He was born in a learned Brahmin family. Since childhood his intellectual skills were high as he “had already taken part in the learned man’s conversations, had engaged in debate with Govinda and practiced the art of contemplation and meditation with him. Already he knew how to pronounce Om silently” (Hesse, Siddhartha 3) and is loved by his parents, friends as well as the community. “There was happiness in his father’s heart because of his son who was intelligent and thirsty for knowledge; he saw him growing up to be a great learned man, a priest, a prince among Brahmins. There was pride in his mother’s breast” and “love stirred in the young Brahmins’ daughters” and his bosom friend Govinda “loved him more than anybody else. ...He loved everything that Siddhartha did and said, and above all he loved his intellect, his fine ardent thoughts, his strong will, his high vocation” (Hesse, Siddhartha 4). Although Siddhartha had already practiced various arts of contemplation and meditation and has gained the characteristics of typical Brahmin yet he shows a sense of hatred towards the sacrifices, ritual and reciting mantras and does not want to be a common and traditional Brahmin. But “Govinda knew that he would not become an ordinary Brahmin, a lazy sacrificial official, an avaricious dealer in magic sayings, a conceited worthless orator, a wicked sly priest, or just a good stupid sheep amongst a large herd” (Hesse, Siddhartha 4). He is all blessed with family love and has a great companion in the foam of Govinda.

In spite of being loved and excelled the various skills, he himself was not happy. His soul becomes restless as his thirst for true knowledge is not yet satisfied. Even his worthy father and other learned teachers have poured all their best wisdom onto him yet his vessels were empty and unsatisfied. He thinks that “no amount of second hand knowledge and learning can give you the real sense of peace and happiness unless it is enlivened by real firsthand experience” (Joshi 2011). So, he aspires to make his own path to reveal the self. Upanishads of Samveda writes, “Your soul is the whole world” (Hesse, Siddhartha 7) and Chandogya- Upanishads write, “In truth the name of Brahma is Satyam. Indeed, he who knows it enters the heavenly world each day” (Hesse, Siddhartha 6). He is surprised to see the fact that people talk about the Atman but are unable to tell the way to perceive it. His spiritual journey for realization of the Self begins with the arrival of the Samanas. The appearance of Samanas appeal him and he finds himself detached with the life he has been living and find that “around them hovered an atmosphere of still passion of devastating service, of un pitying self- denial” (Hesse, Siddhartha 7). The influence of Samanas on Siddhartha initiates the spiritual satisfaction in him and shows the possibilities for the self- realization. His desire for realizing the ultimate truth becomes strong and pushes him towards his goal.

Therefore, Siddhartha decides to leave his family and friends and is ready to move into the forest with the Samanas. He goes to his father with the strong determination to get permission. Even after the various episodes of denial he keeps standing into the room whole night. His father is angry and worried for him. He asks him,

‘Will you go on standing and waiting until it is day, noon, evening?’

‘I will stand and wait’

‘You will grow tired, Siddhartha.’

‘I will grow tired’

‘You will fall asleep Siddhartha’

‘I will not fall asleep’

‘You will die, Siddhartha.’

‘I will die’ (Hesse, Siddhartha 9)

After the argument with his father he ultimately gets his permission. His success is the result of his strong will- power and determination. He does not move from the place and standing like a rock. His father is impressed by the toughness of his goal and permitted him to join the Samanas. Hence, along with his friend Govinda, he bids farewell to all worldly attachments and personal possessions and proceeds towards the forest to live the life of a samana.

Samana (in Pali) or Sarmana (in Sanskrit) means “seeker, one who performs austerity, ascetic.” Sarmanic tradition encompasses mainly two Indian philosophies- Jainism and Buddhism. It was started as a Non- Vedic Indian religious movement which discarded the sovereignty of Vedas and the dominance of Brahmin priests. Samanas are so called Sanyasi who reject materialistic life and take the path of asceticism to achieve Moksha and liberation. The Jain philosophy believes in the supremacy of Karma. Soul and matter are considered its main components and it denies the existence of creative and omnipotent God. It emphasis on “Tiratna” or three jewels which paves the way of liberation through Right Knowledge, Right Faith and Right Conduct. The another philosophy Buddhism is based on the teachings of Gotama

Buddha. The ultimate goal according to Buddhism is to attain the state of nirvana. And it can be attained using the Noble Eightfold Path (also known as the middle way).

Siddhartha, along with his friend Govinda, starts to live the life of a Samana. He gives up his clothes and starts having fast for long periods and has one time meal in a day. Behind living this painful life and torturing himself, Siddhartha has just one goal- “to become empty, to become empty of thirst, desires, dreams, pleasure and sorrow- to let the Self die. No longer to be Self, to experience the peace of an emptied heart, to experience pure thought- that was his goal” (Hesse, Siddhartha 11). Siddhartha knows that he is looking for something which is beyond this materialistic world as he sees that people are madly engaged in worldly activities which “tasted bitter”. He is tormented and finds such kind of life very painful and shows a sound denial for sensual and temporal pleasures saying “they were all illusions of sense, happiness and beauty” (Hesse, Siddhartha 11). The downfall of these things is certain according to Siddhartha.

Now Siddhartha, the Samana, has learnt several arts and conquers shinny hot sun rays, freezing cold, pain, thirst and hunger. He is motionless and stiff until there is more blood to flow from his skin. He has also learnt the skill of controlling his breathing. He is able to decrease his heartbeats until it is last. And this very position is called Self- denial and meditation according to Samanism. As per eldest Samana’s instructions, he performs these arts and he transports his soul into the body of heron and lives and dies a heron’s death. He then takes the body of dead jackal and encounters with the procedure of body turning into dust. He entangled between the problematic course of life cycle. He realizes that “Life is nothing but a series of manifestation of becomings and extinctions. It is stream of becoming. ... It is recurring rotation of birth and death” (Radhakrishnan, Indian 309). Radhakrishnan quotes in the words of Shelley,

Worlds on worlds are rolling ever,

From creation to decay,

Like the bubbles on a river,

Sparkling bursting, borne away. (Radhakrishnan, Indain 309)

Siddhartha slowly recognizes the fact that he cannot reach his goal by killing his senses, memory and transforming his self into different forms. Although his Self gets mastery in taking thousand different forms, yet the return is inevitable.

Siddhartha even after living the painful life as a Samana, is still remains restless. In the beginning, he thinks that, “when all the Self was conquered and dead, when all passions and desires were silent, then the last must awaken, the innermost of Being that is no longer Self- the great secret!” (Hesse, Siddhartha 11- 12). So, he distinguishes his Self from his body and dwells in different living and non- living creatures. He realizes it later that dwelling in non- self and escape from self is not a perpetual answer for the question about his quest. He asks Govinda whether they have come any further or not or have they reached their goal? He explains Govinda that the sixty years old and the oldest Samana have not attained nirvana yet. He too will grow old practicing Samana rules but will never attain Nirvana. He compares a Samana with some ordinary people when he says that the art of meditation, fasting, holding of breath, flight from self- these can also be learnt by an oxen driver prostitute. A drunkard can also have escape from troubled life. “Falling asleep over his bowl of rice wine, he finds what Siddhartha and Govinda find when they escape from their bodies by long exercise and dwell in non-self” (Hesse, Siddhartha 14). Siddhartha’s quest remains unfulfilled by becoming a Samana. So, he decides to leave the path of Samanas too.

In between, Siddhartha and Govinda heard the rumor that someone who has conquered himself and possess great knowledge and who has got liberation from life cycle and has attained Nirvana has appeared. His name is Gotama, the Illustrious, the Buddha. One day when Siddhartha asks for the permission to leave Samanas and Samanism too, the eldest Samana gets angry and rebukes them. Govinda takes a step back but Siddhartha hypnotizes him and defeat his mind.

He stood near the Samana, his mind intent ; he looked into the old man's eye and helped him with his look, hypnotized him, made him mute, conquered his will, commanded him silently to do as he wished. The old man became silent, his eyes glazed, his will crippled, his arms hang down, he was powerless under Siddhartha's spell. ... He had to perform what they commanded" (Hesse, Siddhartha 19).

Under Siddharth's spell, the old Samana bows several times and gives them wishes for their journey. Therefore, Siddhartha was not only the master of his own senses but others also. So now they put off the veil of Saman and march ahead to find out the Illustrious One.

They reached in the town of Savathi where Buddha resides in Jetavana grove. They easily get the way of Jetavana because many followers and monks are on the way to it. In the next morning when Buddha goes for begging with his alms- bowl, Siddhartha recognizes him immediately. He follows him and notices his body activity attentively.

The Buddha went quietly on his way, lost in thoughts. His peaceful countenance was neither happy nor sad. He seemed to be smiling gently inwardly. With a secret smile, not unlikely that of a healthy child, he walked along peacefully and quietly. He wore his gown and walked along exactly like the other monks, but his face and his step, his

peaceful downward glance, his peaceful downward hanging hand, and every finger of his hand spoke of peace, spoke of completeness, sought nothing, imitate nothing, reflected a continual quite, an unfading light, an invulnerable peace” (Hesse, Siddhartha 23).

Siddhartha is not as excited for his teachings as he is amazed to look his appearance. He finds his real power in his manners and gestures, not in his preaching as he already knows that he is not going to learn something new from his preaching. According to Siddhartha, Samanas have not implemented their own philosophy into their life. Whereas Buddha’s teachings of tranquility and virtuousness are quite visible through his physical representation. They both hear Buddha’s preaching in which he talk about the sufferings, its origin and the solution of it. He has also taught about the Four Noble Truth and Eight Fold Path which is the mid way of salvation. The efficacy of causality is accepted by Siddhartha. No one has explained it so clearly earlier. He finds no flaw in his teaching and it was crystal clear to him but he says to Buddha that “No body finds salvation through teachings. To nobody, O Illustrious One, can you communicate in words and teaching what happened to you in the hour of enlightenment” (Hesse, Siddhartha 28). As Abhay Joshi asserts, “The author seems to conclude that no amount of second hand knowledge and learning can give you the real sense of peace or happiness until it is enlivened by real firsthand experience,” (Joshi 2011). Hence, Siddhartha too seeks refuge in him and travels on his own path to quench his thrust of his knowledge.

“The truth for which Siddhartha and Govinda search, is a universal understanding of life, or Nirvana. Siddhartha and Govinda both have a fundamental desire to understand their lives through spirituality, seek to do this by reaching Nirvana, and start with the conviction that finding Nirvana is possible” (Dave, 2012 p3).

Govinda is very much impressed with the teachings of Buddha so he pays his allegiance to him and his teachings. And he is accepted in the community and becomes a monk. It shows the temporariness of life. On the first hand when he realizes that his childhood friend cannot move further with him while on the second hand, he is self assured that it is not impossible for anyone to attain the ultimate Truth. Seeing Buddha's reaction after their conversation, Siddhartha says that "A man only looks and walks like that when he has conquered his Self. I also will conquer my Self" (Hesse, Siddhartha 29). So, he continues his journey for the truth. The end of the spiritual journey of Govinda becomes the beginning of the Siddhartha's spiritual journey.

Anger and Hatred are the main obstacle to compassion. These powerful emotions have the ability to overwhelm the mind completely, but we can sometimes control them. If we don't master them, they contently torment us, preventing us from attaining the serenity that characterizes a loving mind (Lama, Spiritual 21).

Buddha is a true image who is far away from anger and hatred. The absence of ahamkara is quite visible on his face. His non- egoistic reflection presents him as a man of satisfaction and stillness. "Ahamkara is a veritable disease. Pride, lust, anger, delusion, greed, jealousy, love and hatred are the attendance of Ahamkara. Ahamkara destroys our virtues and peace of mind. ... He who is free from egoism is very happy and peaceful" (Sivananda). It is the principle reason of dualism. Dualism creates the illusion where man is separate entity and not a part of Brahman or Creator. And it is promoted by Maya and Avidya (ignorance) under the influence of which man is entangled between conflicts and the differences arises between Atman and Brahman. Although Siddhartha has realized that the "Brahma is Satyam" and it is the kernel of every individual yet the shifting of his Self into living and non- living beings is unable to make him understand the liveliness which they carried within them.

Siddhartha's journey for ultimate knowledge takes him from place to place and he encounters with various people. Siddhartha is in constant search for a teacher or harbinger who can explore the meaning of life and finds him the silent side of self. In this respect, Siddhartha can be compared to Ekalavya who has a long journey to find a Guru before meeting Guru Drona (though he was rejected by Drona). But during his journey, Siddhartha realizes that the knowledge of self cannot be attained through any religion or joining any group but it should come out naturally and unaffectedly without chasing anyone's conviction and teaching. And Siddhartha does acquire this knowledge with the help of his friend Vasudeva who is only a ferryman for him at first glance. Though he is very much inspired by Buddha and considers him a self-realized being yet he could not accept him as his Guru, but this for the first time after realization he considers Vasudeva awakened soul and respects him as a guru.

The interaction with Buddha fills Siddhartha with confidence and brings to a halt for principles. As he leaves Jetavana grove, he feels a sense of freedom, freedom from possessions. He says to Kamaswami, "I am certainly without possession, but of my own free will, so I am not in need" (Hesse, Siddhartha 50). Like a snake sheds its old skin, something has left Siddhartha too. Hence, he decides to be his own teacher. "I will learn from myself, be my own pupil; I will learn from myself the secret of Siddhartha" (Hesse, Siddhartha 31). He starts listen his inner voice. Simultaneously, he realizes that he is no more a youth but a grown-up man now. Maturity comes with age, his experiences with various people like greatest and wisest teachers, the Perfect One, the Buddha makes him understand the worth of Self. He has understood that instead of conquering his self, he always has tried to get rid of it. It is, in fact, his existential outlook that extends his understanding about the self. He feels that "theoretical knowledge of scriptures or

mere verbosity of Vedanta would not lead one towards God or Self- realization” (Bhambar, 2010. p.144). His inner voice helps him to come out of these present problems.

Siddhartha experiences something new at every step of his journey which enralls and upgrades him. Initially, he is surprised with the beauty of nature, but later he finds it a fleeting and illusive veil and does not please by it any more. He feels that the illusive nature will distract him from the Self. He then joins the ascetics, but he realized that mere self- denial and yoga exercises won't take him towards his goal. After meeting the Illustrious One, he deeply concentrates on his aim. He suddenly feels awakened and realizes his invisible Self which is presented in everything. He accepts that “Meaning and reality were not hidden somewhere behind things, they were in them, in all of them” (Hesse, Siddhartha 32). He is only Siddhartha now, the awakened one, nothing else. Therefore, he chooses to live amongst people.

On the way, before crossing the river, Siddhartha spends a night in a ferryman's hut where he dreams about Govinda. In the dream, Govinda comes in typical yellow robe of an ascetic looking somewhat sad; he interrogates Siddhartha about leaving him. The whole incident symbolizes Siddhartha's attachment to the previous world of doctrines. Next day, Siddhartha crosses the river with the ferryman. After bidding farewell to ferryman, he reaches in a village. An eye pleasing picture is presented by Siddhartha of the village. “Children danced about in the Lane in front of the clay huts. They played with the pumpkin stones and mussels. They shouted and wrestled with each other” (Hesse, Siddhartha 40). As he moves on he sees “In the middle, in an ornamented sedan chair carried by four people, sat a woman, the mistress, on red cushion beneath a colored awning. ... Beneath headed- up black hair he saw a bright, very sweet, very clever face, a bright red mouth like a freshly cut fig, artful eyebrows painted in a high arch, dark

eyes, clever and observant, and a clean slender neck above her green and golden gown” (Hesse, Siddhartha 41-42). It was Siddhartha’s first interaction with Kamala.

Although kamala is a courtesan whom Siddhartha meets at the beginning of his worldly or materialistic life, she seems to be a self- realized being. Even though Kamala has many visitors and customers daily yet she is not in intimate relationship with any of them and so is Siddhartha. Once he says to her, “You are like me; you are different from other people. You are Kamala and no more else, and within you there is stillness and sanctuary to which you can retreat at any time and be yourself, just as I can. Few people have the capacity and yet everyone could have it” (Hesse, Siddhartha 56-57). Siddhartha too spends a long period in ‘samsara’ yet he remains indifferent towards other people. He learns the art of love from Kamala and spends a lot of time with her yet they both do not fall for each other but surrender their love and ego unconditionally for each other.

Living in ‘samsara’, Siddhartha not only learns the art of love from kamala, but he learns the tricks of business also from a merchant named Kamaswami. Though he works with Kamaswami as his business partner yet he remains indifferent towards it. “Like a player who plays with his ball, he played with his business, with the people around him, watched them, derived amusement from them; but with his heart, with his real nature, he was not there. His real self wandered elsewhere, far away, wandered on and on invisibly and had nothing to do with his life” (Hesse, Siddhartha 56). He is surrounded with people, but remains detached with them. He finds it worthless when people toil and suffer and living in childish and animal like way. Money, small pleasure and honor are the mundane issues for him. He is still a Samana at the core of his heart. That is why, when he sees people lamenting over pains, he ridiculously laugh on them.

With the passage of time, Siddhartha has been fully merged into the world of senses. His strong inner voice which he attained as a Samana has been declining now. He has been forgetting all those three arts of thinking, fasting and waiting which he skilled during his ascetic life. He has learnt now how to live a deluxe life. “He had learned to wear fine clothes, to command servants, to bathe in sweet- smelling waters... He had learned to play dice and chess, to watch dancers, to be carried in sedan chairs, to sleep on a soft bed” (Hesse, Siddhartha 60).

In the beginning of the novel, Siddhartha’s character and his quest for Self is so clear, but now he has been distracted from his path. His inner voice has become silent. “Like a veil, like a thin mist, a weariness settled on Siddhartha, slowly, everyday a little thicker, every month a little darker, every year a little heavier” (Hesse, Siddhartha 61). He finds no difference in him and an ordinary person. He enters in a cycle which is unending.

One day, Siddhartha sits with Kamala in the pleasure garden where she talks about Gotama. She uncovers her hidden desire to become a follower of Buddha and to take refuge in his teachings. He notices the fine lines and wrinkles on her face which reminded him of autumn and old age. Her weariness fills his heart with misery and despair. He tries to sleep but fails. “His heart was so full of misery, he felt he could no longer endure it” (Hesse, Siddhartha 64). He is alone and feels like a shipwrecked man. Full of nausea, he goes to pleasure garden and sits there with fear in his heart. This fear was of death. He has a dream at daybreak,

Kamala keeps a small rare songbird in a small golden cage. It was about this bird that he dreamt. This bird which usually sang in the morning became mute, and as this surprised him, he went up to the cage and looked inside. The little bird was dead and lay stiff on the floor. He took it out, held it a moment in his hand and threw it away on the road, and

at the same moment he was horrified and his heart ached as if he had thrown away with this bird all that was good and of value in himself” (Hesse, Siddhartha 64).

This pet bird of Kamala symbolizes the natural world and the inner voice of every individual. With the death of the bird Siddhartha feels that he is unable to behold the beauty and wisdom if he is without nature and voice. He indulges in deep thinking and loses into nostalgia. Then a voice comes from his heart, “A path lies before you which you are called to follow. The Gods awaits you” (Hesse, Siddhartha 65). His inner voice guides him towards his goal again. The game of sansara comes to an end. He could clearly feel that something has been died within him and he realizes that he is on the wrong path. Finally, he says goodbye to all the possessions. He abandons his pleasure garden, his worldly ambassador Kamala, the luxurious life and moves ahead on his path.

It is probably Siddhartha’s last phase of life. He wanders into the forest thinking about his sin and the only idea comes in his mind is death. He stops at the river and wants to even commit suicide. He is shaken from inside thinking about his purposeless life. The emptiness of his soul has been making him so restless that finally he has bent into the river and has closed his eyes.

Suddenly, he hears a familiar sound which comes from his soul. It is the holy word ‘OM’- “the ancient beginning and ending of all Brahmin prayers, the holy Om, which had the meaning of ‘the Prefect One’ or ‘Perfection’ (Hesse, Siddhartha 69). This divine word removes all his confusion and reaches to his consciousness and makes him remind of indestructible Brahman.

“In the Gita, it is said that Om is chanted by the students of Vedas to attain the supreme and its chanting is said to lead to liberation or ‘Moksha’ in due course” (Priya 41). According to Katha Upanishad, Om is Brahman and this syllable ‘Om’ is highest and one who knows how to

utter or how to meditate this syllable, he can desire anything and do possess that. Siddhartha too after pronouncing Om inwardly get the feeling of rejoice and has a very reviving sleep.

Success lies in failure. "Failure is success" saying Albert Einstein. "Evil is the necessary stage in the process of realization of good" (Bhamber, 2010. 146). In the words of Paul Edward Bhamber says, "Evil is explained as the ground eliciting the self-will of man in order to awaken him to the distinction between good and evil which is originally united in one identity. Thus evil is a necessary stage in the progress towards the total realization of good. Imperfection in being is perfection in the process of becoming" (Bhamber, 2010. 146-147). Siddhartha too after having indulged in sensual world awakes and moves towards serenity.

He has wonderful sleep that day and when he wakes up he is quite refreshed. He finds a monk by his side that he immediately recognized as Govinda, his best friend of youth. But Govinda is surprised to find him in rich clothes and shoes. Siddhartha, who now has given up the luxurious life, describes Govinda the transitory nature of world. Outward identity of a person is superficial. It passes with the age. A child is born, grow up, becomes mature and old, die and reborn. Whether it is a child blooms from embryo or a tree sprouts from a seed, everything passes through the life cycle and dies ultimately and are reproduced again. Thus, all things are transitory.

It is Siddhartha's new birth where he finds himself as a child knows nothing, possess nothing. Earlier as a Samana Siddhartha learns three skills of waiting, thinking and fasting but he has lost them too. From a man he has changed into a child. Hence, like a child, he starts his journey again with double force. He does not satisfy with his present situation that "It was right that it should be so; my eyes and heart acclaim it. I had to experience despair, I had to sink to the

greatest mental depths, to thoughts of suicide, in order to experience grace, to hear Om again, to sleep deeply again, and to awake refreshed again. I had to become a fool again in order to find Atman in myself... This path is stupid, it goes in spirals, perhaps in circles, but whichever way it goes, I will follow it" (Hesse, Siddhartha 75-76). It reflects his excitement for his goal. He enjoys the company of nature near the river. Nature has radical power. It is not just able to fade away the scent and worldly memories of town but man's stress and sin also. Since his childhood, Siddhartha is very well aware about the shallowness and temporariness of the world. Even after being intellectually sound, Siddhartha has not progressed on the path of enlightenment. There is difference between realizing things intellectually and experiencing them actually which is great. And Siddhartha progresses in wisdom through his experience not through learning and someone's teaching.

Siddhartha decides to live near the river and he finds shelter too by a ferryman, who once has already helped him before twenty years. He is very much impressed by the ferryman and his occupation. So he too becomes a ferryman and learns from him. There he learns many things not only from ferryman but also from the river. Vasudeva guides him in such a manner that previously no teacher did. Time passes and Siddhartha learns various skills of listening, calmness, stillness from the river. After many years, Siddhartha happens to meet Kamala who is going to see the divine Gotama with other Buddhist monks. When she meets Siddhartha she has been bitten by a black snake and is on death bed. She handovers her son to Siddhartha whom he knows that boy is his own son. She died that night finding the father of her son. Siddhartha is sad after Kamala's death but he is pleased also with the appearance of his son. Siddhartha treats him with consideration and remains soft to him. But young Siddhartha remains unfriendly and sulky, he behaves arrogantly to him. He tries every possible trick to please him but fails to bring him

around. His face reminds him of Kamala who once says him that “You cannot love” (Hesse, Siddhartha 95). He who always considers himself superior and differentiates from ordinary people is smashed by his own son. Life is all about ups and downs. His son leaves him and runs away and gives him wound permanently. “He remembered how once, as a youth, he had compelled his father to let him go and joins the ascetics” (Hesse, Siddhartha 102). Now his condition is same. He also suffers for his son.

Love and natural emotions become the high qualities of Siddhartha now. Ordinary people are no longer alien to him. Their passions, desires and urges are no longer trivial. He sees life, vitality and Brahma in their desire. He has been reached to the high stage of self-discipline and wisdom has grown and ripened. He realizes that “It was nothing but a preparation of the soul, a capacity, a secret art of thinking, feeling and breathing thoughts of unity at every moment of life” (Hesse, Siddhartha 101).

Constantly, Siddhartha has learned life in precise manner and about real wisdom. His feelings for his son are still strong and he suffers for him that one day he takes out the boat with the purpose to search him. But all at once he notices that the river is laughing on him. When he peeps into the water he sees the reflection of his father and remembers that how he leaves home and never returns. His father too would have suffered like him. He acknowledges the two dimensions of fatherhood and sonhood. In fact, it is the law of Karma which plays crucial role in Siddhartha’s life too. Whatever he does to his father is now being returned to him. Dr. Radhakrishnan compares Karma with fire “Which can be our effort fan into a flame or extinguish altogether” (Radhakrishnan, Indian 423). The person who wants no pain in his life, he must not do some painful activity with others. As one sow, so shall one reap, this is the basic principle of Karma. Only a wholesome action will get us the wholesome fruit. An unwholesome

action will always get the painful result. Therefore, Siddhartha's sufferings for his son are not his fate or something predestined. He has to experience the same pain which his father experienced. That is why; he is dragged into Sansara from the ascetic life.

Siddhartha then moves to the hut and finds Vasudeva there who is a tremendous listener. He opens up his heart to him. In fact, Vasudeva is his true guide, he guides him right from their first meeting when he meets Siddhartha twenty years ago and tells him about the teachings of river. Physically, he is weakened but his face is still unchanged and radiant. When Siddhartha unfolds his wound to him, he feels that his listener is like river and telling him everything is like bathing in the river. He keeps on telling him and instantly realizes that "This motionless listener was absorbing his confession as a tree absorb the rain, that this motionless man was the river itself, that he was God Himself, that he was eternity itself" (Hesse, Siddhartha 103). As he stops thinking about himself and his wound, he is filled up with the presence of Vasudeva. Vasudeva has been transformed into God or river for him, and he finds no difference in him and Vasudeva.

While talking, Vasudeva suggest him to listen the various voices of the river with him. Siddhartha hears the melodies music of the river. He observes the glimpse of many people into the water. He sees the sad face of his father and his own that is no longer different from his father's. Kamala's and Govinda's reflections also appears and passes on. Everyone seems to be the part of the river. Full of echo the river is flowing towards its goal. He observes the whole world in the foam of a river as it contains the "Voices of pleasure and sorrow, good and evil voices, laughing and lamenting voices, hundreds of voices, thousands of voices" (Hesse, Siddhartha). The world too is a mixture of such emotions. Siddhartha has learnt the art of listening perfectly. But all of sudden he finds himself inadequate to distinguish the different voices of anger, love, lament, laughter etc. These all voices are mixed together.

They were all interwoven and interlocked, entwined in thousand ways. And all the voices, all the goals, all the yearnings, all the sorrows, all the pleasures, all the good and evil, all of them together was the world. All of them together was the stream of events, the music of life. When Siddhartha listened attentively to this river, to this song of a thousand voices; when he did not listened to the sorrow or laughter, when he did not bind his soul to any one particular voice and absorb it in his Self, but heard them all, the whole, the unity; then the great song of a thousand voices consisted of one word: Om – perfection. (Hesse, Siddhartha 105)

The radiant smile emerges on both Vasudeva and Siddhartha's face. Siddhartha has got relief from his pain. His wound is healed and his pain has gone. His self has been merged into unity. His radiant smile is symbol of satisfaction and it appears only when one has gained the divine and perfect knowledge and his mind is full of calm and serenity. Finally, Vasudeva informs him that his purpose is fulfilled now and he is going into forest, leaving the job of ferryman, going into the unity of oneness. Siddhartha bids farewell to him and watches his steps full of peace and his glowing bright face. His appearance is similar to that of Buddha and this radiant smile is possessed by Vasudeva, Siddhartha and Govinda too. This is the smile of Self-realized being. Because only a self- realized being can be so peaceful even in adverse conditions. Siddhartha has also gained the same.

“Siddhartha ceased to fight against his destiny. There shone in his face the serenity of knowledge, of one who is no longer confronted with conflict of desires, who has found salvation, who is in the harmony with the stream of events, with the stream of life, full of sympathy and compassion, surrounding himself to the stream, belonging to the unity of all things” (Hesse,

Siddhartha 105-106). It proves that Siddhartha has got the goal of his life. He has got the ultimate meaning of life and is awakened now.

On the other hand, Govinda, still a follower of Buddha, is still on his journey of self-realization. When he hears about the old ferryman who is living near the river and has a great wisdom, he longs to visit him. Govinda asks for few words from Siddhartha. Siddhartha is surprised to find him still as a seeker and makes him clear the difference between seeking and finding. “When someone is seeking, said Siddhartha, it happens quite easily that he only sees the thing that he is seeking; that he is unable to find anything, unable to absorb anything, because he is only thinking of the thing he is seeking, because he has a goal, because he is obsessed with the goal. Seeking means: to have a goal; but finding means: to be free, to be receptive, to have no goal” (Hesse, Siddhartha 108). Next morning Govinda again comes with more quires and asks him for a bit of knowledge. Siddhartha again shows his distrust for teaching whereas Govinda has strong believed in teaching. According to him, wisdom comes from teaching best. Siddhartha tells him that “Knowledge can be communicated, but not wisdom. One can find it, be fortified it, do wonders through it, but one can not communicate and teach it” (Hesse, Siddhartha 109-110). “Words do not express thoughts very well. They always become a little different immediately they are expressed, a little distorted, a little foolish” (Hesse, Siddhartha 112). He explains him that ‘someday’ is just an illusion. One who is sinner today will someday be Brahman or also can be Buddha. Deep meditation can scatter this illusion of time. “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” (Hesse, Siddhartha 111).

Siddhartha asks Govinda to kiss his forehead and when he does so, he sees no longer the face of Siddhartha but many other faces in it. Time and existence appear to vanish. Everything is

wearing a mask and this mask is Siddhartha's smile. His smile is exactly like that of Gotama's, a thousand fold smiles.

No longer knowing whether time existed, whether this uncovering has lasted a second or a hundred years, whether there was a Siddhartha, or a Gotama, a Self and others, wounded deeply by a divine arrow which gave him pleasure, deeply enchanted and exalted, Govinda stood yet a while bending over Siddhartha's peaceful face which he had just kissed, which has just been the stage of all present and future forms. His countenance was unchanged after the mirror of the thousand fold forms had disappeared from the surface. He smiled peacefully and gently, perhaps very mockingly, exactly as the Illustrious One had smiled (Hesse, Siddhartha 116-117).

Govinda bows low and is overwhelmed by the feeling of immense love toward Siddhartha. Now Govinda too becomes an awakened soul. The true knowledge of Self-realization has been passed from one to other – from Buddha and Vasudeva to Siddhartha and from Siddhartha to Govinda.

The novel *Siddhartha* is Hermann Hesse's one of the most popular novel all around the world and counted into Modern World Classics. Originally, the novel is written in German and first published in 1922. It has been translated into English around 1951 by Hilda Rosner. It has been adapted as a film also in 1972. The novel is a unique combination of the principles of Hinduism and Buddhism. The central character Siddhartha is on his spiritual journey to find the internal and undestroyable knowledge. His aim is to gain the ultimate truth which is also the aim of whole mankind. According to Hesse, the essence lies in knowing own self and to be own self. The novel finds its ground mainly in Vedas, Upanishads, and in Bhagavad- Gita, and also in

Buddhism. “Hesse’s philosophy of love and life that is beautifully depicted in Siddhartha can be said as having its thematic and spiritual anchor in the *Bhagavad Gita* the epitome of the Indic culture heritage, can also be discerned in Walker’s animism, Emerson’s ‘Over Soul’, Transcendentalism, Paul Coelho’s Universal Soul, and in the recent theoretical formulations of Ecocriticism and Ecospirituality, thus hailing the universality and timelessness of the novel” (Priya 42).

Various Literary tools and techniques have been used by Hesse to unfold the journey of Siddhartha. He has used several symbols in the novel. River is one of the major symbols in it as it is presented as a symbol of life. River is a frequent symbol in literature. Hesse also gives very much importance to it. In the beginning, Vasudeva states that “one can learn much from the river” (Hesse, Siddhartha 40). And after a long time when Siddhartha again comes to the river bank; his inner voice suggests him that “Love this river, stay by it, and learn from it” (Hesse, Siddhartha 79). The river tells him many secrets – “one that gripped his soul. He saw that the water continually flowed and yet it was always there; it was always the same and yet every moment it was new” (Hesse, Siddhartha 79). So is with life. From a child Siddhartha becomes a boy, a boy to adult and a adult to old man, but Siddhartha is as same as he was. His invisible Self never changes.

Vasudeva’s affection for the river is also not without any significance. He is aware of its sacredness and oneness. He suggest Siddhartha to listen the voices of it. Thousand of voices are pronounced by the river and the oneness of these thousand voices is heard in the form of ‘Om’.

Om is yet another symbol which symbolizes the unity of all things. It is considered as a sacred sound and also a mantra in Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism. According to

Shvetashvatara Upanishad, deep meditation of Om empowers one to recognize God within oneself, to be conscious of Atman or Self. “When Siddhartha listened attentively to this river, to this song of thousand voices; when he did not listened to the sorrow or laughter, when he did not bind his soul to any one particular voice and absorb it in his Self, but heard them all, the whole, the unity; then the great song of thousand voices consisted of one word: Om – perfection”

(Hesse, Siddhartha 105). Thus, it is when Siddhartha merged with the holiness of Om he is filled with enlightenment.

Epiphany is a literary device which is perfectly used by Hermann Hesse. According to M.H.Abrams, “Epiphany means a manifestation or showing forth , and by Christen thinker was used to signify a sudden spiritual manifestation of God’s presence within the created world”

(114). At the time of awakening Siddhartha realizes the immense power and the beauty of the nature. The natural world is transformed into mystic entity.

He saw tree, stars, animals, clouds, rainbows, rocks, weeds, flowers, brook and river, the sparkle of dew on bushes in the morning, distant high mountains blue and pale; birds sang, bees hummed, the wind blew gently across the rice field. All this, coloured and in thousand different forms, had always been there. The sun and moon always shone; the rivers had always flowed and the bees had hummed, but in previous times all this had been nothing to Siddhartha but a fleeting and illusive veil before his eyes, regarded with distrust, condemned to disregarded and ostracized from the thoughts, because it was not reality, because realty lay on the other side of the visible. But now his eye lingered on this side; he saw and recognized the visible and he sought the place in this world. He did not seek reality” (Hesse, Siddhartha 37).

He comes across with the fact that “Meaning and reality were not hidden somewhere behind the things, but they were in them, in all of them” (Hesse, Siddhartha 32). These all natural sights before his eyes turn into Brahman. Govinda too experiences this omnipresent kind of nature when he observes Siddhartha’s face,

He no longer saw the face of his friend Siddhartha. Instead he saw other faces, many faces, a long series, a continuous stream of faces – hundreds, thousands, which all came and disappeared and yet all seemed to be there at the same time... This smile of Siddhartha – was exactly the same as the calm, delicate, impenetrable, perhaps gracious, perhaps mocking, wise, thousand- fold smile of Gotama, the Buddha, as he had perceived it with awe a hundred times. It was in such a manner, Govinda knew, that the Perfect One smiled” (Hesse, Siddhartha 115-116).

The novel *Siddhartha* has some autobiographical soil. Thus, through the novel Hesse himself is on the journey for the ultimate knowledge. With the mouth of Siddhartha, he expresses his own feelings and emotions.

Hesse has beautifully presented the paradoxical nature of the world as well as of human being. No one in this world can be totally good or bad. Throughout the novel, Siddhartha keep introspected himself. From a Brahmin boy he changes into a Samana and from a Samana he indulges into Sansara and becomes a Sansari, and at the final stage of his life he becomes a ferryman and achieves his goal of enlightenment. As change is the law of nature, Siddhartha is unable to remain a Sansari or a Samana throughout his life.

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Chapter – III

Yann Martel's *Life of Pi*

Faith in human life is an exclusive motive power. It is the very essence of human life. Faith is that confidence or trust on a person or thing that is not based on proof; or it may refer to a particular system of religious belief. Broadly, there are six stages of faith development which begins since childhood and continues up to late adulthood – Intuitive, mythic, synthetic, individuative, conjunctive & universalizing faith. The first five stages are easy to acquire and one can choose to be fixed on a certain stage for lifespan. But sixth stage is the highest point of faith development which can be rarely attained by someone. It is the stage of 'enlightenment' where a person is uplifted from all the prevailed system of faith and lives his life on universal principles like love and compassion. Yann Martel's *Life of pi* is a spiritual journey of a young Indian boy whose firm faith in god keeps him alive in ocean on lifeboat with a Bengali tiger for 227 days. The theme of faith is the backbone of this novel. As it is stated by Jonathan Feng that, "Pi's story is a unique, high-seas adventure with many underlying theme. At its core is the idea of religious faith" (Feng, 2007). *Life of Pi* is a postmodern adventure novel which Martel has framed with an assertion that he is going to present "a story that will make you believe in God" (Martel, *Life* XII).

Life of a Pi a story of a young Indian boy named Piscine Molitor Patel (Pi) who lives in Pondicherry with his family. His father is a zookeeper and his mother is a housewife. He is raised with his brother in his father's zoo. Subsequently, because of political disturbance in India his family has to move to Canada in a ship along with zoo animal. Unfortunately this ship wrecks

and sinks and lives Pi in a lifeboat with a 450 pounds Bengali tiger. Bearing all the hardships, Pi still manages to live for 227 day in the ocean and ultimately finds land as Mexican Beach. Martel presents such an implausible story where Pi survives after a series of sufferings and traumas. His inner faith, belief in God and his spiritual become his strength in the adverse circumstances. PBC has reported this story as one of “personal growth through adversity”.

The inner growth of Pi, his religious faith, his spiritual thirst and the understanding of this physical world can be analyzed through three phases of his life. In the first phase of his life, he is shown as a devotee of God who practices three different religions at the same time –Hinduism, Christianity and Islam. Though, his faith in these religions is rational not irrational one. The driving force behind following the multi religion is the words of Mahatma Gandhi that “All religions are true” (Martel, Life 69). The second phase is full of adversities, now he sees life, his faith and love of God through the lens of a physical world depicted as wondrous, brutal and deeply mystifying”. (Feng, 2007). In the third phase of his life, he is a man of satisfaction as he has attained a peaceful mind and has understood the meaning of life.

This book can also be divided into three parts. The first part describe Pi’s childhood in Pondicherry, his interaction with animals and with different religious. The second part describes his life in Pacific Ocean with Richard Parker. And the third part about the incidents when he is back to land.

The novel begins with the Author’s note which is an integral part of the novel. Martel has used a unique idea of storytelling which works throughout the novel’s intricate structure. A fictional author has been introduced in the novel who is writing about Pi’s life. The fictional character is very similar to Yann Martel as he is also a Canadian writer. This Martel like writer describes that how after the failure of his two novels he comes to India to do the research work

on his next novel which is set in Portugal. But the idea of this new novel has too soon sputtered and died. The depressed author leaves Bombay and moves to south India, and finally arrives in the town of Pondicherry. There, in a coffee house, he confronts with an elder man named Francis Adirubasamy who offers him a story saying, "I have a story that will make you believe in God" (Martel, *Life* XII). The author, however with suspicion accepts his story to work on and moves back to Canada to meet the Protagonist of the story Mr. Patel. To Martel, Pi's story is "the better story" which is full of faith and shows the reality of life through the lens of imagination where the reality of life which is full of doubts is ascribed as "Dry, yeastless factuality". These two phases are recurring motifs throughout the book.

Back to Canada, Martel meets to Pi who is now a scientist in the department of zoology. He has got his bachelor's degree in religious studies and zoology. His religious studies' thesis is concerned with the cosmogony theory of Isaac Luria, while his zoology thesis is about the functional analysis of the three-toed sloth. These academic studies bring him back to life from the sufferings and pains of his previous events. Pi's story starts with tragic note. The opening line is the first chapter is: "My suffering left me sad and gloomy" (Martel, *Life* 3). His sufferings have much reason behind it. He suffers because he had to leave his country, he detached from his family during his shipwreck and he has to undergo various difficulties on the Pacific Ocean where he is left with an adult tiger. He feels miserable because at the time of departure Richard Parker did not returns back to say goodbye. He suffers of dying hunger. He is surrounded by a sense of guilt as well as grief when he kills his first fish. He suffers because he sees the unnatural death of zebra, orangutan and hyena and he suffers from the fear of his own death by the tiger. Even after coming to Mexico his sufferings do not end. He has nightmare. He says that his

“Pains like an axe that chops at my heart “(Martel, Life 6). Academic studies and his religious faith bring him back to life.

Further story goes in flashback. It goes continue in Pi’s voice. His name Pi is the short form of Piscine Molitor which is the name of a swimming pool. So, he is name after a swimming pool by Francis Adirubasamy whom he calls mamaji. Hence, Pi is not his technical name; he himself changes his name from Piscine to Pi because every now and then he has been teasing by other children who often call him “Pissing” instead of “piscine”. So, he settles a plan of an action that he will be “known to all as...Pi Patel... $\pi=3.14$ ” to resolve the problem of similar pronunciation of Piscine and pissing. (Martel, Life 22-23). In another incident, he is again ridiculed when living in Montreal in his university days, he orders a pizza. Escaping telling his real name he says to the pizza boy that his name is “I am who I am”. Half an hour later two pizzas arrived for “Ian Hoolihan” (Martel, Life 20). His nickname is presented as a symbol as it is a mathematical term and a Greek letter. In mathematics, it is an irrational and unending number to be used for reason. In the words of Mensch, Morse explains that this irrational number, “expresses the inability to find a common measure – an exact ratio – between the circumstances and the diameter of a circle. It is a number that goes on forever” (12). Therefore, Pi also takes over this irrational number as his nickname for a reason when he says,” in that Greek letter that looks like a shake with a corrugated tin roof, in that elusive, irrational number with which scientists try to understand the universe, I found refuge” (Martel, Life 24). Hence, both the names ‘Ian Hoolihan’ and ‘ π ’ are the mixture of contrary things. “I am who I am, Ian Hoolihan” blends religious allusion into reality the same way as “ π ” blends the irrational with the rational” (Morse 12). Pi has to do a lot of struggle to make his teachers and classmates accept his nickname. He compares humans to animals while making them understand about his new name.

He says, “Repetition is important in the training not only of animals but also of human” (Martel, Life 23)

Martel subtly balance to show the human’s animal kind of nature and the humanly nature of animals. In the beginning of the 8th chapter he says that “the most dangerous animal in a zoo is man” (Martel, Life 29). The zoo visitors as well as the zookeepers have injured and tortured animals in much heinous way, sometimes even more wired ways. His father had put a question on a wall: DO YOU KNOW WHICH IS THE MOST DANGEROUS ANIMAL IN THE ZOO?” (Martel, Life 31). An arrow instructed people towards a curtain and behind the curtain there is a mirror which obviously proves that the answer is ‘MAN’. But Pi’s realizes it later that this saying is not completely true. Human himself is not dangerous for them but it is his way to see animals through human eyes which is called *Animalus anthropomorphicus*. Pi too sees animals through his innocent humanly eyes. His father decides to make it visible the wilderness of dangerous animals. He chooses a Bengali tiger for this. He puts a goat before the tiger and the tiger cruelly kills it. Both Pi and his brother Ravi are horrified with this sight. Pi learns a lesson for lifetime that “an animal is an animal, essentially and practically removed from us, twice: once with father and once with Richard Parker.” (Martel, Life 31).

Further, in the novel, Martel moves from animal rituals to humans religious rituals. At a very early age, Pi has grown his interest in religion and theology. Pi is a strong religious believer as he is a following Hinduism, Christianity and Islam simultaneously. This surprising interest and belief and these three religious is inspect by one wish that he wants to love God. He throws a question to the pursuers that “We are all born like Catholics, aren’t we – in Limbo. Without religion, until some figure introduced us to God?” (Martel, Life 47). He is also introduced to

Hinduism by his mother and aunt. He is raised as a Hindu. He glorifies the rituals of Hindu religion. It has been give the first position among all other religions. Pi says,

I am a Hindu because of sculptured cones of red kumkum powder and basket of yellow turmeric nuggets, because of garlands of flowers and pieces of broken coconut, because of the clanging of bells to announce one's arrival to God, because of the whine of the reedy nadaswaram and the beating of drums, because of the patter of bare feet against stone floor down dark corridors pierced by shaft of sunlight, because of the fragrance of incense, because of flames of aratilamps circling in the darkness, because of bhajansbeing sweetly sung, because of elephants standing around to bless, because of colourful murals telling colourful stories, because of foreheads carrying, variously signified, the same word-faith (Martel, Life 47).

With the passage of time, he is deeply rooted with Hinduism and asserts that "I feel at home in a Hindu temple... My heart still skips a beat when I catch sight of the murit, of God Residing, in the inner sanctum of the temple" (Martel, Life 48). To him, "Religion is more than rite and ritual" (Martel, Life 48). The principles of Hinduism have inspired him very much. He says, "Truth of life is that Brahman is no different from Atman, the spiritual force within us, what you might call the soul" (Martel, Life 48). The ultimate truth of Reality in Hinduism is Brahman, the infinite, and knowing this ultimate truth is the sole purpose of a man. As Radhakrishnan remarks, "Brahman denotes the ritual and so is regarded as omnipotent. He who knows Brahman knows and controls the universe. Brahman becomes the primal principle and guiding spirit of the universe. There is nothing more ancient or brighter than this Brahman" (Radhakrishnan, Basic 115). Now the universe makes sense via Hindu eyes to him. He is touched by the universality of Hindu Gods. "There is Brahman, the world soul, the sustaining frame upon

which is woven, warp and weft, the cloth of being, with all its decorative elements of space and time” (Martel, Life 48). And it is through the Hindu religion Pi learns the importance of Karma and believes that Hinduism can land anyone towards liberation. He states, “The Paths of liberation are numerous, but the bank along the way is always same, the bank of Karma, where the liberation accounts of each of us is credited or debited depending on our actions” (Martel, Life 49). Hence, it is his unshakable faith in God which strengthens him in the Pacific Ocean and eventually saves his life.

However, Pi praises Hinduism for its pantheistic facets and describes it as such a religion which can bring liberation from the birth cycle to human and he mentions that he will be a Hindu all his life as through Hindu he sees his “place in the universe” (Martel, Life 49). Yet he does not stick only to Hindu religion. It is the only truth. He comes into connective with Christianity when he is fourteen year old visiting Munnar. His prior knowledge about Christianity is bit cynical as “It had a reputation for few gods and great violence” (Martel, Life 51). It is for first time, he steps into a Church where he is moved by the loving nature of father Martin. He is the true representation of “good schools” as he is “open, patient –in case someone, anyone, should want to talk to him; a problem of the soul, a heaviness of the heart a darkness of the conscience he would listen with love and he would offer comfort and guidance to the best of his ability.” (Martel, Life 52). Next day, when he visits to father Martin again he has been told a story which places him in disbelief and he reacts: “What? Humanity sins but its God’s Son who pays the price?” (Martel, Life 53). Unsatisfied and disbelieved Pi asks for any other story because he “had never heard of a Hindu God dying” (Martel, Life 54). He believes that “the world soul cannot die, even in one contained part of it. (Martel, Life 54). But father Martin makes him understand that “Their religion had one story, and to it they come back again and again, over and

over” (Martel, Life 53). Pi feels restless to know that why God took death upon himself; why he did not leave it to the mortals. Father Martin answers him in just one word and that is “Love”.

The stains of Hinduism in him emerged in the form of comparison which he makes in between of Christ and different Hindu Gods. In one of the stories, he tells about Krishna who is scolded by his mother for eating dirt. When his mother Yashoda asks him to open his mouth she sees “the whole complete entire timeless universe” (Martel, Life 55). Next he tells the story of Vishnu, the dwarf. Vishnu asks for three strides land to the demon King Bali and as he gets permission he reintroduced his “full cosmic size” and “with one stride he covers the earth, with the second the heavens, and with the third he boots Bali into the netherworld” (Martel, Life 55).

In his next story, he makes comparison between Christ and Lord Rama who are the most human of avatars. To get his wife back, Rama fights with the evil King of Lanka. He had immense strength which “no man could have and weapons no man could handle” and says, “That is God as God should be” (Martel, Life 55). Pi’s love and affection for Hindu religion can clearly be seen through these fables. But his curiosity for Christianity takes him again and again to Father Martin. After a series of interrogation about Brahman he says to him “Every day I burned with greater indignation against Him, found more flaws to Him” (Martel, Life 56). However, later on, he accepts that “The more He bothered me, the less I could forget Him. And the more I learned about Him, the less I wanted to leave Him” (Martel, Life 57). He opens up his feelings to Father Martin that he wishes to be a Christian. Father Martin replies him with a smile, “You already are, Piscine – in your heart” (Martel, Life 57). Overwhelmed with happiness he offers “thanks to Lord Krishna for having put Jesus of Nazareth whose humanity [he] found so compelling, in [his] way” (Martel, Life 58). So now Pi is a follower of Hindu religion and Christianity as well.

It is hardly after a year when Pi adopts one more religion and that is Islam. Initially, his notion about Islam is like an outsider. To him, it is a worse religion. "Islam had a reputation worse than Christianity's – fewer gods, greater violence, and [he] had never heard anyone say good things about Muslim schools" (Martel, Life 58). Co-incidentally, he comes across with a Muslim named Satish Kumar who is a baker. When they talk about the recipe of bread, Mr. Kumar asks him to excuse him. He does prayer before Pi. Pi is mesmerized by the sight of his prayer and he asks him about his religion. In his reply Mr. Kumar says, "It is about the Beloved" (Martel, Life 60). This very explanation draws his attention towards Muslim religion and he throws a challenge towards readers: "I challenge anyone to understand Islam, and not to love it. It is a beautiful religion of brotherhood and devotion" (Martel, Life 61). Leaving behind the stereotypes, Pi decides to follow one more religion. Now he is follower of Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam. He feels deeply religious contact in the way Muslims prayer. Under the instructions of Mr. Kumar, he practices Islam. Here it is interesting to know the fact that Pi's life is extremely influenced by two Kumars and both are Satish Kumar. The first Satish Kumar motivates him to study zoology and the second Satish Kumar becomes his inspiration for studying theology. Martel has deliberately used the strategy of same name. "Names are a crucial means by which Martel suggests an interrelationship between science and religion" (Stephen 49).

The reason behind Pi's being multi religious person is the element of "Love". Love is the touchstone on which he examines religion true. The loving and gracious Krishna introduces him to Jesus Christ who pays for humanity sins and dies because of his love for people. Love is at the heart of Christianity according to Father Martin. Before adopting Islam too he is told by Mr. Kumar that Islam is about the "Beloved". Therefore, it is not shocking to see Pi following three religions and also loving his companion on the lifeboat Richard Parker because according to

pantheistic approach of Hinduism Atman or Brahman or “God is universal” (Martel, Life 68). It is in every atom of this universe. So his love for Richard Parker is driven from his religious faith.

In 1977, political turmoil arises in India and government declares ‘The Emergency’. His father decides to leave the country as it is not profitable to do business in such political conditions. They decide to move to Canada along with the zoo animals. They were as displaced from their place as an animal is displaced from his territory. On the Cargo ship, Martel presents the two different worlds and the connection between them. These two worlds are – human world and animal world. To Pi his zoo is the “paradise on earth” and he enjoys the company of zoo animals a lot (Martel, Life 14). He has learnt zoo keeping also from his father which he utilizes on the lifeboat.

With the leaving of the Pi’s family for Canada, we jump towards the second part of the book which is entitled as “The Pacific Ocean”. In the first part, where Martel has revealed the happy and joyful face of life, now he is all set to reveal the sorrowful and somewhat horrifying face of life. His struggle for survival starts with the sinking of the ship. He is left alone on the lifeboat. He sees Richard Parker swimming in the ocean; he gives him lifebuoy by which he is boarded on the lifeboat. It is for the first time readers are introduced with the real image of Richard Parker who is an adult Bengali tiger. Though Pi himself helps him to reach by the boat but soon he realizes his mistake and senses the danger having a tiger on his lifeboat. Besides tiger, there is zebra, an orangutan and a hyena also on the boat. Though, he is with the animals yet he feels the emptiness within him and becomes silent because he has lost his family and is surrounded by the hardships. “[he] was alone and orphaned, in the middle of the Pacific, hanging onto an oar, an adult tiger in front of [him], shark beneath [him], a storm raging about [him]”

(Martel, Life 107). It is his will to survive which keeps him clinging to the oar and out of Richard Parker's reach. Tarpaulin becomes the boundary between him and the animals.

Not only human beings but animals also show their will to survive. Though the zebra falls from forty feet his strong will keeps him alive. An old female orangutan named Orange Juice also presents the power of strong will when "She came floating on an island of bananas" (Martel, Life 111). She reminds him of his mother. Pi consoles himself that he will be soon rescued because people might have got the news of sinking of Tsimtsum. People start imagining happy moments very soon even before vanishing the sufferings. So is with Pi, he too dreams about the reunion with his family. But the whining hyena brings him back to senses.

Danger keeps a person more attentive. Pi too becomes very alert. He keeps one eye on the horizon and other on the lifeboat's end. The presence of the animals on the boat represents Martel's faith in the wonders of life. He presents these animals as the symbol of Pi's religious faith. In the words of Cooper, Feng quotes, "In the novel, the marvelous body of the animal becomes both the image of God and a sign of the inexplicable cruelty of the world" (Feng 2007). Zebra is an image of love and patience which is a feature of Christianity. Richard Parker can be seen in both images of peaceful face of God and the cruel side of the world. Orange juice is the symbol of love whereas hyena is the symbol of violence.

Time moves slowly, Pi and animals they all struggle to survive. There were animals' sounds as well as he notices the sounds the ocean too. For animals, it is the "battle for life" and there is one more battle which has been taking place beneath him "From the water, sudden flapping sounds and swishing sounds that were over and done with in an instant. The battle for life was taking place there too" (Martel, Life 119). With every new day, he wishes to be rescued but soon he leaves this hope too and tries to focus on his survival. The hyena has bitten off the

zebra's leg but zebra remains still alive. People care less about others when their own life is full of struggle; they better think to focus on their own life. When zebra is in pain he "didn't have pity to spare for long [his] sense of empathy is blunted by a terrible, selfish hunger for survival" then how could he be worried by an animal. (Martel, Life 120). Ultimately, the zebra is killed by the hyena. Pi again becomes the witness of brutality of animals. This incident makes even Orange Juice a danger animal that is by the way a peaceful creature. She fights with hyena till her last breath. Her death symbolizes the death of Christ. Pi explains that "She looked like a simian Christ on the Cross. Except for her head. She was beheaded. The neck wound was still bleeding. It was a sight horrible to the eyes and killing to the spirit" (Martel, Life 132). Her death leaves Pi in the state of delirium. Now he is left with two beasts on the lifeboat, one is hyena and the other is Richard Parker. But now the reason of his sufferings is not these two animals but something else is. The fear of hyena does not bother him any more as he comes to know that there is a "greater beast" in the lifeboat. "But the great beast was not behaving like a great beast" (Martel, Life 137). Because Parker too is suffering from sedation and seasickness. Pi has been also dying of hunger and thirst.

Hunger and thirst, these two words are not used simply by Yann Martel and it is not like that these two words have to do only with human physicality, but these words explores the spirituality too. Martel used the word hunger in the very first line of "Author's Note" as "This book was born as I was hungry" (Martel, Life ix). Martel himself, in the beginning of his career, is also hungry for success and "beyond literary success, Martel, the author –author was hungering for a meaningful legacy, a life with a family or a career that was worth something. Just before meeting Adirubasamy, the real and fictional authors were wandering through restless uncertainty" (Morse 16). The reason why Pi does not take stand against hyena is the "lack of

strength and stick, not lack of heart” (Martel, Life 136). It is Pi’s hunger which drags him to the “level of savagery [he] never imagined possible” (Martel, Life 197). Thirst does not let him think anything else. He describes the sufferings created by thirst by giving the exempt of Jesus Christ. “Look: Christ on the cross died of suffocation, but his only complains was of thirst”. So, “ If thirst can be so taxing that even God Incarnate complains about it, imagine the effect on a regular human”.(Martel, Life 135). Hunger restores his faith in religion. “It seems orange- such a nice Hindu colour- is the colour of survival”. (Martel, Life 138). His dire hunger changes his perspective towards the lifeboat which is earlier not less than a death boat.

It’s been only few day in the ocean but Pi has collected all the necessary things of survival. But he has not been overcome by the fear of tiger. He becomes so busy and joyful as well in collating the survival material that he has forgotten about the tiger. Suddenly he awakes “to the reality of Richard Parker. There was a tiger in the lifeboat. I could hardly believe it, yet I knew I had to. And I had to save myself” (Martel, Life 147). Pi’s acknowledgement about his inevitable death allows him to act freely without any kind of fear. It is said in Bhagavad Gita too that only a disillusions free intellectual can be indifferent towards the consequences of his action. His inner voice and his faith in God direct him. “The voice said, “I will not die. I refuse it. I will make it through this nightmare. I will beat the odds, as great as they are. I have surprised so far, miraculously. Now I will turn miracle into routine. The amazing will be seen every day. I will put all the hard work necessary. Yes, so long a God is with me, I will not die. Amen” (Martel, Life 148). His determined hope helps him to organize his survival.

Meanwhile, Richard Parker kill the hyena: “A massive paw landed on its shoulders. Richard Parker’s jaws closed on the side of the hyena’s neck. Its glazed eyes widened. There was a noise of organic crunching as windpipe and spinal cord were crushed. The hyena shook. Its

eyes went dull. It was over” (Martel, Life 150-151). After a series of killings, Richard Parker is only alive animal remains with Pi. Though, Richard Parker’s presence is overwhelming him yet he is an animal after all who can become aggressive any time. But Pi once again starts hoping to survive and he starts to tame the tiger. He offers a rat to the tiger which satisfies him. Animals do not like someone entering in their territory, that’s why Pi makes a small raft and keep it off the lifeboat. Next day it rains all the night which makes Pi restless and he has a sleepless night. In that dark and cold night, he plans to get rid of Richard Parker. He makes several plans of his killing:

Plan Number One: Push Him Off the Lifeboat.

Plan Number Two: Kill Him with the six Morphines.

Plan Number Three: Attack Him with all available weaponry. Plan Number Four: Choke Him.

Plan Number Five: Poison Him

Plan Number Six: Wage a war of Attrition. (Martel, Life 157-158)

Anyhow the night passes. But plan number six repeatedly strikes in his mind but later he realizes that it is the worst plan because hungry tiger can swim to him and can eat him. Fear prevails in his mind as he thinks about this fact.

I must say a word about fear. It is life’s only true opponent. Only Fear can Defeat life. It is a Clever, treacherous adversary, how well I know. It has no decency, respects no law or convention, shows no mercy. It goes for your weakest spot, which it finds with unerring ease. It begins in your mind, always... fear next turns something terrible wrong is going on (Martel, Life 161).

Besides Richard Parker's Physical and visual impression of brutality and spirituality, he brings faith and hope of survival to Pi. Pi admits: "It was Richard Parker who calmed me down. It is the irony of this story that the one who scared me witness to start with was the very some who brought me peace, purpose, I dare say even wholeness"(Martel, Life 162). Though Richard Parker is a regular threat for him but his presence keeps him alert every moment. His presence revives his desire to live that is the reason why Pi starts taming him. He is very grateful to him because he keeps him away about the tragic circumstances. He says "If he dies I would be left alone with despair, a foe even more formidable than a tiger. If I still had the will to live, it was thanks to Richard Parker. He kept me from thinking too much about my family and tragic circumstances. He pushed me to go on living...I was grateful. I *am* grateful" (Martel, Life 164). He tells to the author that without Richard Parker, he would not be living today to tell him the story. He starts training him and follows his final plan about Richard Parker: "Plan Number Seven: Keep Him Alive" (Martel, Life 166). He finds it less difficult to train Richard Parker because he has seen it so many times in zoo in Pondicherry. He even uses scientific methods like he splashes urine to mark their territory.

One day, they are troubled by a school of fish. Parker get mouthful food and Pi also keeps some fish so that he can use them as bait. He is extremely happy. Still the sense of humanity has not left him as he has not killed any species even he has been starving of hunger. (But later on hunger wins). He does thank to Lord Vishnu for the Fishes: "Thank you, Lord Vishnu, thankyou...once you saved the world by taking the form of fish. Now you have saved me by taking the form of a fish. Thankyou, thankyou" (Martel, Life 185). Pi keeps himself busy in the activity so that he can remain away of the despair and depression. His routine includes feeding Richard Parker and himself, fishing, raft maintenance and prayer. Pi used to be a strict

vegetarian but soon he converts into non-vegetarian as he starts eating raw meat. His hunger had made him animal-like but his stickiness with the religion shows a very human of him. He longs to have a scripture to read. But in the name of book, he has only a survival manual which he reads ten thousand times during his whole journey. His life on the boat is not much of a life. He compares it with “an end game in chess a game with few pieces” (Martel, Life 217).

Martel takes a move from ordinary or low ideas to sublime idea. He came out with the secret of happy life. He says that a person enjoys his happiness more feels no pain if he has contract over his sense and mind. Time and place are just illusion. As John Milton has said that it is man’s mind which “Can make a Heav’n of Hell, a Hell of Heav’n” (225). Martel too remarks, “You get your happiness where you can. You reach a point where you’re at the bottom of hell.

Yet you have your arms crossed and a smile on your face, and you feel you are the luckiest person on earth” (Martel, Life 217). That’s why, in spite of being surrounded by dangerous sharks and other sea animals as well as Richard Parker, he finds sharks his “old friends” and finds them attractive (Martel, Life 218).

It is the climax of his sufferings when he gets stuck into a storm. He bursts into tears when he sees the sorry state of his raft and boat. He has lost almost everything in the storm. His “little marine town” has vanished (Martel ,Life 228). But happiness returns when he notices a ship coming closer to them. He thanks to Lord Ganesha. But unfortunately they don’t get noticed by the ship and the ship passes away. But he does not let his hope down whereas Richard Parker fills with grief. He just utters a cranky meow. When Pi sees Richard Parker’s hurt, longing, anguish and loneliness eyes, his emotions comes out with an assertion. He says

I love you! The words burst out pure and unfettered, infinite. The feeling flooded my chest. “Truly I do. I love you, Richard Parker. If I didn’t have you now, I don’t know

what I would do. I don't think I would make it. No, I wouldn't. I would die of hopelessness. Don't give up Richard Parker, don't give up. I'll get you to land, I promise, I promise!" (Martel, *Life* 236).

With the extreme dehydration both Richard Parker and Pi go blind. He encounters with another blind man who is known as the blind Frenchman in the novel. His clash with the Frenchman represents the effects of hazardous sufferings and maximum hunger. They both exchange their survival story with each other. During their conversation the Frenchman tells Pi that a human being is "The very definition of an animal" and it is a truth because later we come to know that the Frenchman is a cannibal. He also tries to kill Pi to eat his flesh. But again Pi is saved by Richard Parker because he kills that castaway. "The Frenchman is the symbol of the death man's spirit through his complete regression into the most evil senses of his animality" (Morse 22). Now Pi lives a life at the price of another human's life. Though he himself is saved but his brother's (Frenchman) death scattered him from inside: "Something in me died then that has never come back to life" (Martel, *Life* 255). The cannibalistic nature of Frenchman shows the reality of that scary truth which says that a person can get use to anything, no matter it is evil or what.

Martel's use of surrealistic elements makes this novel exceptionally adventurous. The bitter and cannibal Frenchman's episode is followed by an another carnivorous algae island which he defines as "an exceptional botanical discovery" (Martel, *Life* 256). It seems to be his hallucination first but as he steps onto the island, he it is not his hallucination but a pleasant reality. The island is full of vegetation and fresh water. He is soon back to his senses. But the pleasure that he gets from this mysterious island is short timed. He soon realizes its murderous capacity. Firstly, he notices Richard Parker's strange behavior and when he finds a human tooth,

he gets confirmed and out of grim he takes decision: "I prefer to set off and perish in search of my own kind than to live a lonely half-life of physical comfort and spiritual death on this murderous island" (Martel, Life 282-283). It is not possible for him to stay on this island just for the sake of pseudo safety. The episode of this mysterious island is as unbelievable as the episode of blind Frenchman is. Pi states, "I know my survival is hard to believe. When I think back, I can hardly believe it myself" (Martel, Life 223). "The island of comfort privileges a philosophical worldview that is only concerned with maximum pleasure and mitigating pain" (Morse 23). The island symbolizes the spiritual death.

Pi has been totally scattered by these extreme sufferings and pains. Now he leaves everything on God. Finally his faith on God works and they reach on the land of Mexico. But very soon his joy converts into big pain when he sees that Richard Parker, companion of his torment, leaves him awfully and doesn't turn to him once. "I wept like a child. It was not because I was overcome at having survived my ordeal, though I was. Nor was it the presence of my brothers and sisters, though that too was very moving. I was weeping because Richard Parker left me so unceremoniously. What a terrible thing it is to botch a farewell" (Martel, Life 285). He wants to express his extreme gratitude towards him because it is because of Richard Parker he survived. Even after years he feels melancholy for not to bid farewell properly. 'It's important in life to conclude things properly. Only then can you let go. Otherwise you are left with words you should have said but never did, and your heart is heavy with remorse" (Martel, Life 285). On one hand, where Pi's life is transformed by a formative experience, other hand he is full of remorse losing his companion.

The last and the final part of the novel is entitled as "Benito Juarez Infirmary, Tomatlan, Mexico". In this part, Pi is investigated by two Japanese officers named Tomohiro Okamoto and

Atsuro Chiba. They conduct an interview segment with Pi. After listening whole story they say that his story is “very interesting”, but they show the expressions of disbelief and give many scientific reasons not to believe his story. Pi also defends their every objecting point nicely and even asks them to improve their learning. When they say that his island is “botanically impossible’ and they believe what they see. In counter attack, Pi says that if it is about mere believability, then “Love is hard to believe ask any lover. Life is hard to believe, ask any scientist. God is hard to believe, ask any believer” (Martel, Life 297). Then what’s hard for them to believe his story.

The Japanese officers repeatedly force him to be rationalist and talk to them with reason because his story is extremely hard to believe. Pi covers up their point saying “Reason is excellent for getting food, clothing and shelter. Reason is the very best tool kit. Nothing beats reason for keeping tigers away” (Martel, Life 298). But still the officers remain unconvinced. Pi again reinforces: “Tigers exist, lifeboats exist, and oceans exist. Because the three have never come together in your narrow, limited experience, you refuse to believe that they might” (Martel, Life 299). But still the officers ask him to present the “straight fact” and then Pi comes up with new story.

In the new story, he introduces three more human characters except him. One is his mother who comes to lifeboat on bananas, and the other two are cook and sailor who are already on the boat. Firstly, the officers find themselves unable to understand the difference between two stories. They are left puzzled and could not understand what really happened. Pi puts some questions before the investigators which are the key questions in the novel. He asks them: “Doesn’t the telling of something always become a story?” and “Isn’t telling about something already something of invention?” (Martel, Life 302). Here, Pi gives a shape to Martel’s opinion

that the true reality is immanently not possible to transfer or to communicate to others. So any kind of realistic and faithful telling is actually a story in some other words.

Though, the other story seems more believable. In human story, Richard Parker is replaced by Pi himself that represents the cruel side of Pi's self though he is less strong to him. In both the stories, Pi is non-vegetarian. The series of murders which Pi does for his survival makes this human story more horrible than the animal version. But the way Pi describes these horrors in the human story, it seems that either he himself is creating this human story or tries to place all his faith in the animal story in a subtle way. The investigators now find no factual differences in both the stories. The last scene presents the pinnacle of novel's theme when Pi asks them "Which story do you prefer? Which is the better story, the story with the animals or the story without the animals?" (Martel, *Life* 317). Both the officers agree that "the story with animals" is the "better story" (Martel, *Life* 317). Pi reacts to them with "And so it goes with God" and starts crying (Martel, *Life* 317). So, for Pi, a world with God is the better world and this is how, the animal version of the story is the 'better story'.

Pi's better story is not just about faith in God but about relativity between science and religion too. In the very beginning of the novel, Pi gets it notified that he has received a double major Bachelor's degree in religious studies and zoology. The parallel approach of science and religion is used as leitmotif by Martel. It can again be seen when Pi introduces his teachers Mr. and Mr. Kumar. Both Kumars carry him towards the parallel paths of science and religion: "Mr. and Mr. Kumar taught me biology and Islam. Mr. and Mr. Kumar led me to study zoology and religious studies at the University of Toronto. Mr. and Mr. Kumar were the prophet of my Indian youth" (Martel, *Life* 61). Pi's idea of freedom also indicated by both science and religion: "I have heard nearly as much nonsense about zoo as I have about God and religion. Well meaning

but misinformed people think animals in the wild are “happy” because they are “free” (Martel, Life 15). Though an animal is territorial he has desires for comfort like human beings but if a zoo provides him those comforts then he has no desire to escape. But still people consider zoo as a cage: “I know zoos are no longer people’s good grace. Religion faces the same problem. Certain illusions about freedom plague them both” (Martel, Life 19). Both Pi and Martel enthralled by the criss- cross of science and religion.

After the shipwreck, Pi is the only human left behind as a sole survivor. When he sees Richard Parker struggling at the surface of water, his religious instincts make him shout with happiness: “Jesus, Mary, Muhammad and Vishnu, how good to see you Richard Parker!”

(Martel, Life 97). But as he realizes the risk of being with a fully grown Bengali tiger, he returns back to his religious prayer: “Vishnu preserve me, Allah protect me, Christ save me, I can’t bear it” (Martel, Life 98). In the beginning of his sea journey, he is encouraged by his religious faith, but the circumstances put him in scientific thinking. As a son of zookeeper, he knows much about animals and their psychology that’s why he uses whistle to train or direct Richard Parker.

Thus, the combination of whistle and human intelligence or knowledge turns out to be a tool of authority or mastery or an illusion of authority. Because most of the people think that animal are to serve human beings. But because a man cannot fully control them, he confines animals within controlled space to give himself the illusion of authority. In the beginning, Richard Parker is the master as he controls the life of Pi because with the fear of him Pi has to live on a raft. For few days, the tiger remains passive towards him as he has enough food on the lifeboat in form of the dead bodies of hyena and zebra. But as his food is finished, he starts responding Pi.

When Richard Parker’s ember eyes met with mine, the stare was intense, cold and unflinching, not flighty and friendly, and spoke of self possession on the point of

exploding with rage. His ears twitched and swiveled right around. One of the lips began to rise and fall. The yellow canine thus coyly revealed was as long as my longest finger. Every hair on me was standing up, shrinking with fear (Martel, Life 152).

Pi makes every possible effort to get rid of Richard Parker and to control him but soon all plans fail. The goal is attained when Pi finally decides to “Keep Him Alive”. Thus, instead of being his master, Pi becomes a servant of him. Although Pi is not a practitioner of Buddhism or it can be said that he is quite unaware of this very religion, yet this novel is rich with Buddhist philosophy. Buddha, in his teachings, mainly talks about the human sufferings and shows the path to get liberated from these sufferings. This path is known as the Middle Way and the end of man’s sufferings is nirvana. Pi’s life also symbolizes his journey which goes through a series of sufferings. The Pacific Ocean symbolizes ‘samsara’ or the world of sufferings whereas land symbolizes nirvana or salvation. The Pacific Ocean on which novel’s main incident takes place is a sphere of pain and sorrow. Pi is accidentally imprisoned in this sphere where he is powerless to do anything. He confronts with lots of problems and does every possible thing for his survival. Not only Pi, but the animals on the lifeboat also have to fight for their survival. The shipwreck shows the temporariness of life. It shows the idea that nothing is permanent but everything has to change some or other day. The lifeboat or the raft, these become the instruments that enable Pi to be saved.

Human life cycle is started with the birth which initiates the journey of joy as well as sorrows. The novel represents birth in its symbolic meaning, not in its factual sense. In the novel, birth takes place when the lifeboat drops onto the sea from the cargo ship. As a fetus is preserved in its mother’s womb, likewise the lifeboat is also safe and protected in the big cargo ship. Sudden changes become the reason of dropping the lifeboat into the sea. Birth does not only

mean the physical detachment from its mother, but it brings all the happiness and despair to life.

Pi's life also takes turn when he is detached from the ship. The falling of the boat into the ocean is the outset of Pi's trial. The birth cycle is not completed until or unless it is accompanied by maturity, disorder and death. Once a cycle is completed another begins. And this cycle keeps continue until an individual gets into the state of enlightenment and attains salvation. Pi learns it through Hinduism that life is a never ending cycle and this cycle is full of temporariness and sufferings. Evil and death, these are the inevitable parts of human life. Pi's sufferings are the example of this. He extremely suffers from his body weakness, sunburned and his cloths are torn and even he becomes partially blind. His sufferings indicate the upcoming end of his life. But as he reaches on Mexican coast, his sufferings ends and it symbolizes the death of a life which is full of pain and despair.

Pi is transferred from pleasant to unpleasant. The chain starts when he leaves India and is separated from loved ones and the zoo and his loving country. He is departed from his family also when the ship sinks and he is left orphan. Death is the ultimate truth and it can come in any form and at any time. Pi sees his death in the form of Richard Parker. He describes his pain of death:

Oncoming death is terrible enough, but worse still is oncoming death with time to spare, time in which all the happiness that was yours and all the happiness that might have been yours becomes clear to you. You see with utter lucidity all that you are losing. The sight brings on an oppressive sadness that no car about to hit you or water about to drawn you can match. The feeling is truly unbearable. (Martel, Life 147-148)

Death is so horrifying that it snatches all the pleasant things from life which we love. Pi states that "Life is so beautiful that death has fallen in love with it" (Martel, Life 6). Pi is the sole

survivor who finally finds land. This is the attaining of nirvana according to Buddhist philosophy. After bearing all the sufferings he reaches to the land. He is the only being on the board that does not lose his religious temperament. His faith becomes the invisible vehicle that brings him back to land. “The ongoing miracle of his existence at sea is also foreshadowed by his spiritual life on land. Pi is a creature of faith (or faiths) who sees eternally renewed wonder in God and his creation” (Jordon 2002). His liberation is the result of his inner faith instead of any supernatural help. During his ordeal, Pi’s routine includes religious prayers too. He finds solace in religious rituals which converts his pain into something sublime. “But sometimes it was hard to love” (Martel, Life 208). He feels distorted. At that moment, he would motivate himself and points out his shirt and calls it

THIS IS GOD’S HAT!”

[He] would pat [his] pants and say aloud, “THIS IS GOD’S ATTIRE!”

[He] would point to Richard Parker and say aloud, “THIS IS GOD’S CAT!”

[He] would point to lifeboat and say aloud, “THIS IS GOD’S ARK!”

... [He] would point at the sky and say aloud, “THIS IS GOD’S EAR!”

And in this way [he] would remind [himself] of creation and of [his] place in it (Martel, Life 209).

Prayers purify his mind and soul and fill him with vibrant energy. This very feature of his character brings him toward the happy ending. God, to Pi, is the sole power who commands this universe. The concept of God can be extended to the various levels of abstractions. According to Pi,

There is Brahman nirguna, without qualities, which lies beyond understanding, beyond description, beyond approach; with our poor words we sew a suit for it ... But there is

also Brahman saguna, with qualities, where the suit fits. Now we call it Shiva, Krishna, Shakti, Ganesha; we can approach it with some understanding; we can discern certain attributes – loving, merciful, and frightening – and we feel a gentle pull of relationship. (Martel, Life 48).

In Hinduism, where is God is referred to ‘nirguna brahman’ and ‘saguna brahman’ and has thousands of gods and goddesses. In Islam and Christianity, people believe in one God only known as Allah and Jesus respectively. But ultimately all the religions believe in monotheism that believes in one true God. But it is not necessary to prove God as God is always questionable. “According to Advaita Vedanta, the reality of Brahman the Supreme Being does not need to be proved since it is a datum of consciousness, bound up with the consciousness of man’s own existence” (Radhakrishnan, Religion 92). Hence it is upon one’s consciousness whether there is the presence of God in the universe or not.

Thus, the story of Piscine Molitor Patel aka Pi Patel is an amazing story of courage. Throughout the novel, his life has been interrogated with different circumstances but his faith remains at the core. Daily mail describes about this novel: “An inventive, shocking and ultimately uplifting story”. Martel himself has summarized this novel in three statements: “Life is a story ... You can choose your story ... A story with God is the better story” (Jennie 2013). Thus Pi’s “better story” with animal “goes with God”. He has finally got the goal his life. His spiritual quest of knowing the ultimate truth is fulfilled at climax when he is safely landed on the Mexican coast.

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Chapter - IV

Conclusion

Both Hermann Hesse and Yann Martel have aimed to find the meaning and goal of human life through their novels. They both have presented a universal theme in their novels. Although, thirst for physical and mental comforts differ from person to person; yet the spiritual quest for true knowledge is universal. This ultimate goal of true or real knowledge can be attained by following certain principles and beliefs. In the selected novel, the noble human characteristics are found as - the protagonist's innate thirst for true knowledge, the virtue of being calm and tolerant, the art of listening, patience, continuity after sufferings, faith in almighty, conscious about inner voice, dreams. Even after having these virtues, there is always a need of spiritual guru to uplift man's spiritual desires, because the soul of human being is easily get trapped into delusions and get affected by Maya. But realizing the ultimate goal of life makes man free from these delusions. The ultimate goal of man's life is self-realization or God-realization. The goal can be attained through several paths, as observed in the selected novels- Herman Hesse's *Siddhartha* and Yann Martel's *Life of Pi*.

Although, both Hesse and Martel are European and Canadian writers respectively yet they were greatly influenced by Indian philosophy. A part of Hesse's childhood was spent in India, whereas Martel has also taken some trips to India. In spite of being foreign writers, they both chose India as the background of their novels. According to RadhaKrishnan, "The one doctrine by which Indian culture is best known to the outside world is that of '*tat tvam asi*'. The eternal is in one's self. The real which is the inmost of all things is the essence of one's own soul

(Religion 100). Both the novels show not only the spiritual journey of the protagonists but through their novels both Hesse and Martel also try to search their own real self. Thus, both the novels are autobiographical in nature.

The central characters of both the novel starts their spiritual journey at a very young age. They both have unquenchable thirst for ultimate knowledge. Though they both chose different paths to quench their thirst yet the destination is same. Both Siddhartha and Pi have to go through this chaotic world to reach their destination. As the novels develop and the characters mature, the protagonists realize the fact that this world is contradictorily designed for a reason and with a purpose. With the passage of time both Siddhartha and Pi accept this fact and decrease that dividing line which differentiates the binary nature of world. Siddhartha realizes it when he gets indulged into the sansara where as Pi realizes it when he tries to survive in the ocean. These circumstances show the concept of completeness and unity of the world.

In both the novel, the central figures are shown in restless position as the novels open. In *Siddhartha*, we can see that though Siddhartha is all's favorite in his family as well as in the society, he has very well learned Vedas and Upanishads and has learned the art of contemplation yet he is unhappy and restless and longs to find or realize God. He gains confidence and sees a ray of hope with the arriving of Samanas which finally gets detached him from the family and takes him into the forest where he lives the life of an ascetic. In *Life of Pi*, Pi is also stressed and confused firstly because of his name and then about religion. Not only Pi but Martel himself is in despair as it is shown in the 'Author Note' that his earlier books were proved failure and he is in desperate need of success. Pi's restlessness sets in when he shortens his name from Piscine to Pi and proves his rationality through irrationality. His confusion about religion also removed when he learns that all religious are true and man is free to occupy any of them.

At the next phase; it is quite easy to notice the restoration of spirituality that enables the protagonist to resume their journey. It is an inner counsel that keeps them going with conviction on their journey. The inner-voice plays an essential role in both the novels. In *Siddhartha*, it is his inner-voice which motivates him to leave the materialistic life when he is just ten year old. This inner voice guides him time to time and helps him to make right decision on every path of life. Even when he is filled with the sense of guilt and tries to commit suicide, it is his inner voice which awakes him.

In *Life of Pi*, Pi too is guided by his inner voice. It is inner his voice which does not let his hope down and keeps his alive for 227 day into Pacific Ocean. When he is surrounded by various difficulties, he is guided by dreams also. His dreams motivate him and fill him with the courage and also restore his faith in God.

The protagonists are revealed about their future through visions or dreams. Siddhartha's dream about the bird warns him as it symbolizes his spiritual death. Pi's day dreams make him forget about the sufferings and pains of life. Time is presented as an illusion by both Hesse and Martel. In *Siddhartha*, the central character realizes the illusive nature of time and totality of space through the symbol of river. In the hours of enlightenment Siddhartha envisions in the flowing river's water where every face from past, present and future mingle into one. He sees the faces from his father to his son. He also hears several kinds of voices of the world which mixed well and emerges as a perfect sound- Om that shows the unity of space. His friend Govinda too experiences the same timeless unity at the time of his enlightenment. To Pi also, time is an illusion that only makes people pant. Pi's survival is the evidence that he has forgotten the very notion of time.

The central figures of both the novels has outstanding attributes such as determination, patience, calmness, acceptance and adjustability in life, anguish rescued by faith, faith in own self as well as God, faith in the law of Karma and remorse. Finally the faith wins and ego is smashed.

In the First chapter of *Siddhartha*, the small boy Siddhartha stands before firmly before his father to get the permission of leaving home. His determination and patience has made him physical weak yet he keeps on standing. Thus, his success is the result of patience as well as determination. He doesn't become panic when he has a loss in business; he remains very soft-hearted and patient. Even when his son runs away he bears this pain too. After living a life as a sansari, a sense of guilt surrounds his soul and leads him to commit suicide but his inner voice save him. He very well has understood the reason of his son's leaving him. He knows that it is the law of Karma as he left his father at very young age so is happening with him.

In the novel *Life of Pi*, Pi's determination can also be seen at a very young age when he makes his classmates and teachers train through continuous repetition for whole day. The following of three religious at the same time shows his faith in the unity of all things. Even after teasing or opposing his father and brother he is clang with all three religions. Love is the driving force for Pi. He bears the loss of his family. He remains calm and patient with Richard Parker. These characteristics of his nature keep him alive and help to survive him.

In both the novels, the guru-disciple bond is apparent. It is a universal symbol. Each and every human being needs a guru or teacher on his spiritual journey who has already gained the ultimate reality of life. Though, in the beginning Siddhartha rejects the teaching of his teachers, but that it is not possible to gain anything without the teacher. Kamala is his first guru who makes his learn the art of love. After leaving the materialistic world, Vasudeva becomes his

spiritual guru who is already an awakened soul. Through Vasudeva Siddhartha Govinda gains the ultimate truth. In *Life of Pi*, Pi is also motivated by his two teachers named Mr. and Mr. Kumar. Their motivation leads him towards zoology and theology. He specially pays his gratitude towards his teachers. Father Martin, like a guru, shows him the right path of Christian religion.

In both the novel, the importance of meditation has been shown by Hesse and Martel. During meditation human's mind remains calm and rests on peace. Meditation or contemplation is one of the best tools to attain self-realization, that's why it is given more importance by all spiritual gurus. Siddhartha learns this art of meditation through Vedas and Upanishads. For Pi, it is the time of meditation when he does prayer. This is the power of meditation which keeps him calm in such horrifying situations. The use of meditation signifies that it is the medium to enter in the spiritual world.

Both Hesse and Martel have used journey as motif. Siddhartha's spiritual journey encompasses Brahmanism, Shamanism, Buddhism, and Sansara, recognition of vices, shattering of his ego and ultimately gaining true knowledge. Pi's journey also encompasses Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, animalized face of his character, return to humanity, remorse, attaining the meaning of life. Both the characters are on their spiritual journey to realize the Self and ultimately and consciously they realize the unification of self or atman with Brahman in their journey. Thus, both Hesse and Martel spread out the secrets of life and make a conclusion that attaining the true meaning of life makes life complete.

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