THE ROLE OF DREAMS AND VISIONS IN THE
MAJOR NOVELS OF HERMANN HESSE

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Hermann Hesse's debt to psychoanalysis—to Freud and Jung—has been frequently documented, but English-language studies of Hesse have failed to adequately explore the role of dreams and visions in his major novels—Demian, Siddhartha, Steppenwolf, Narcissus and Goldmund, and The Glass Bead Game. This study attempts to summarize the present state of Hesse criticism in this area and to make a systematic study of the role of dreams and visions in each of the five major novels.

This study confines itself to sources written in the English language, omitting all untranslated items. Bibliographical items are limited since there are only eight book-length English-language studies of Hesse in print. Joseph Mileck's *Hermann Hesse and His Critics: The Criticism of Half a Century* provides comprehensive coverage of periodical and journal articles up to 1957. The *MLA Annual Bibliography* and the notes and bibliographies in the books on Hesse provide adequate coverage to the present. A basic list of about forty articles soon emerges, but only a few of them provide any useful information about the role of dreams and visions in Hesse's major novels.
The introductory chapter illustrates the prominence of dreams and visions in Hesse's major novels and points out the corresponding lack of scholarly criticism in this area. It mentions the eight books and the relevant periodical and journal articles on Hesse, summarizing their information concerning the role of dreams and visions in Hesse's major novels. Chapters two through six present detailed analyses of the role of dreams and visions in each of Hesse's five major novels, each novel being presented in chronological order of publication.

Chapters two and three examine Demian, Hesse's first post-psychoanalytical novel, and Siddhartha, which was published in 1922. In both of these novels dreams and visions serve as apocalyptic signposts, directing Hesse's protagonists to the ultimate goals of reconciliation and transcendence. Chapter four analyzes Steppenwolf, Hesse's experimental novel that marks the first evolutionary development of his use of dreams and visions. In Steppenwolf the real world and the ethereal realm of dreams and visions merge in the quasi-realistic Magic Theater. Chapter five deals with Mannissaus and Goldmund. In this novel Hesse regresses to his former use of dreams and visions, using them as a type of narrative short-cut to portray the personality of his protagonist and to lead him to the ultimate vision of the Jungian collective unconscious. Chapter six analyzes The Glass Bead Game. In this final novel, the evolutionary development of
dreams and visions is completed. The ethereal realm of dreams and visions supersedes the real world entirely in the tenuous atmosphere of Castalia. Thus, in utopian Castalia where ascetical existence is its own apocalypse, actual dreams and visions are no longer needed to lead man to ultimate reconciliation and transcendence. The humanistic Joseph Knecht, however, finds it impossible to continue living in sterile Castalia and attempts to enter the real world once again. But he dies in the process, suggesting that perhaps only death itself is the ultimate apocalypse. Hesse the romanticist, however, cannot accept this existential decree. In "Joseph Knecht's Posthumous Writings," a poem entitled "A Dream," and one of the three "Lives" called "The Indian Life," reconfirm his faith in dreams and visions and mark his return to asceticism.
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MAJOR NOVELS OF HERMANN HESSE

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Since his winning of the Nobel Prize for literature in 1946, Hermann Hesse has become increasingly popular with English language readers. Five of Hesse's works—Demian, Siddhartha, Steppenwolf, Narcissus and Goldmund, and The Glass Bead Game—were the first of his novels to be translated into English, and they have subsequently become the most popular with his English language readers. Hesse's English language critics have also acclaimed these five works as his major novels. Dreams and visions play a prominent role in all of these works, but English language studies of Hesse have failed to recognize their true significance. Although Hesse's debt to psychoanalysis—to Freud and Jung—has been frequently documented, no one has made a systematic study of the role of dreams and visions in Hesse's major novels. This study attempts to summarize the present state of Hesse criticism in this area and to trace and interpret the evolutionary development of dreams and visions that characterizes Hesse's enduring attempt to reconcile the conflicting realms of nature and spirit.

This study will deal exclusively with these five major novels since they represent the favorite work of Hesse's English language readers and, at the same time, reflect his mature use of dreams and visions. This study will also
confine itself to sources written in the English language, omitting all untranslated items. Although omission of the German language items undoubtedly limits the scope of the study, it seems in keeping with its strictly English-language perspective.

The technical difficulties involved in an exclusively English-language study are, naturally, minimal. Securing an adequate bibliography is not difficult. There are only eight book-length English language studies of Hesse in print. Joseph Mileck's *Hermann Hesse and His Critics: The Criticism of Half a Century* provides comprehensive coverage of periodical and journal articles up to 1957. The *PHLA Annual Bibliographies* and the notes and bibliographies in the books on Hesse provide adequate coverage to the present. Thus the only problem becomes one of selectivity. Seemingly relevant articles fall into two basic groupings. They either deal with an individual work or a certain aspect of that work. A basic list of about forty of these articles soon emerges. Unfortunately, however, only a few of them provide any useful information about the role of dreams and visions in Hesse's major novels.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Accordingly, the man susceptible to art stands in the same relation to the reality of dreams as the philosopher to the reality of existence; he is a close and willing observer, for from these pictures he reads the meaning of life, and by these processes he trains himself for life.

—Nietzsche

The publication of Sigmund Freud's The Interpretation of Dreams in 1899 gave a renewed impetus to the use of the dream as a device of twentieth century literature. ¹ Subsequent writings concerning dreams and visions by Freud's eminent disciple, Carl Gustav Jung, further enticed modern writers to use dreams and visions in their narratives. For Hermann Hesse, who was already a dreamer at heart because of his love for the German Romantic tradition and the Upanishads of India, the writings of Freud and Jung had a profound effect. ² During 1916 and 1917 Hesse underwent psychoanalysis with Joseph B. Lang, a brilliant disciple of Jung. ³ Psychoanalysis altered Hesse's subsequent life and


³Ibid., p. 9.
Particularly significant in this respect is the altered use of dreams and visions in Hesse's novels. His earlier novels had been characterized by their introspection and their keen interest in dreams, but as Mark Boulby points out, "The use of dreams in earlier works, however, is primitive in comparison with their use in Demian; it is not until Demian that we find dreams consciously constructed according to the tenets of psychoanalytic schools." Beginning with Demian and continuing through his final novel, The Glass Bead Game, Hesse's mature use of dreams characterizes his enduring attempt to reconcile the conflicting realms of nature and spirit. Serving as mediators between the unconscious and conscious mind, dreams and visions provide Hesse's protagonists with their only hope for self-realization, reconciliation, and ultimate transcendence. Functioning in this capacity, dreams and visions follow an evolutionary pattern throughout Hesse's major novels—Demian, Siddhartha, Steppenwolf, Narcissus and Goldmund, and The Glass Bead Game.

Although The Journey to the East also fits into this evolutionary pattern, it has not received the critical acclaim of the other novels, nor has it been as popular as the other novels in English-language translation. Thus it

4 Ibid., p. 10.
has been omitted. Actually, all of Hesse's pre-psychoanalytical novels and several of his minor prose works such as the short stories "House of Dreams" and "Dream Journeys" include dreams and visions. These items, although important, have also been omitted due to the limited scope of this study.

Preceding individual comments on the major novels, it seems necessary to distinguish between the terms "dreams" and "visions." For all practical purposes the terms are almost synonymous. Jung defines a dream as "a psychic product originating in the sleeping state without conscious motivation." Concerning visions, Jung states, "They are like dreams, only they occur in the waking state. They enter consciousness along with conscious perceptions and are nothing other than the momentary irruption of an unconscious content." Likewise, a day-dream is similar to a night-dream except that it is more conscious-oriented and lacks the vivid imagery of night-dreams and visions. Dreams and visions serve similar functions in Hesse's major novels, and he uses them interchangeably. Although most of his protagonists day-dream at one time or another throughout the novels, Hesse largely ignores this aspect, and day-dreams do not play a significant role in the major novels.

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7 Ibid., p. 307.
A brief glance at each of Hesse’s major novels reveals the prominence of dreams and visions. Hesse’s first novel directly influenced by psychoanalysis was Demian, published in 1919 under the pseudonym of Emil Sinclair. Almost every page of this novel about a German youth’s quest for self in the years immediately preceding World War I contains some reference to dreams, and Demian ends in an apocalyptic vision of cosmic significance. For the setting of his next novel, Siddhartha, published in 1922, Hesse chose classical India during the days of Gautama Buddha. Although Hesse relates only two actual dreams in Siddhartha, he mentions dreams throughout the novel, and they exhibit a profound influence on the life of Siddhartha. And like Demian, this novel also culminates in a unifying vision of the Jungian collective unconscious. Steppenwolf, which appeared in 1927, traces the schizophrenic development of a middle-aged German intellectual during the jazz era following World War I. A wild sequence of drug-induced dreams and visions culminates in the quasi-realistic realm of the Magic Theater. Dreams and visions in Narcissus and Goldmund, which appeared three years later in 1930, reveal the unconscious yearnings of an artist of the Middle Ages in search of the primal image of nature—the universal mother. Hesse’s final novel, The Glass Bead Game, did not appear until 1943. The intrinsic nature of this utopian novel of an ascetical realm of the future largely prohibited use of dreams and visions as

Considering the fact that dreams and visions do play such an integral role in Hesse's major novels, it seems unusual that there has not been more scholarly research done in this particular area. Of the eight English language books that deal with Hesse's life and works, not a single one devotes as much as a single chapter exclusively to the role of dreams and visions. Of all the periodical and journal articles in the English language that discuss Hesse's works, not a single one deals exclusively with his use of dreams and visions.

The first full-length English language book on Hesse, Hermann Hesse and His Critics: The Criticism and Bibliography of Half a Century, by Joseph Mileck, was published in 1958. This study is the classic of Hesse criticism written in the English language and the logical starting point for any would-be Hesse scholar. Unfortunately, however, Mileck provides little information concerning the role of dreams and visions in Hesse's major novels. In his critical commentaries, Mileck comments on the obviously Oedipal nature
Hesse's art is primarily confessional in form and function and akin to psychoanalysis. He also notes Hesse's practice of recording his dreams and interpreting them according to the methods of psychoanalysis which were then in vogue. The bibliographical section, of course, lists other items dealing with dreams, but only one of these (Larson, R. C., "The Dream as a Literary Device in Five Novels by Hermann Hesse: Unterm Rad, Rosshalde, Demian, Steppenwolf, Marziss und Goldmund”—B. A., Yale, 1949, 122pp.) is written in the English language, and it is unavailable on xerox or microfilm. Mileck gives a rather lengthy discussion of Hans R. Schmid's Hermann Hesse (Frauenfeld, 1928), a fine study of the dreams in Hesse's writings, particularly in Demian, and one of the few psychoanalytical approaches to Hesse's art. Schmid's excellent work, unfortunately, has not been translated into English.

In 1963, The Lyrical Novel: Studies in Hermann Hesse, Andre Gide, and Virginia Woolf, by Ralph Freedman, was published. Although this work does not deal exclusively with Hesse, it offers a great deal of information concerning the role of dreams and visions in Hesse's works. Freedman's insight in this area is probably due to his basic perspective for approaching Hesse's works—that of the lyrical novel.


9Ibid., p. 305.  
10Ibid., p. 70.
Freedman's only shortcomings lie in the fact that he is not comprehensive enough in his analysis, ignoring the role of dreams and visions in *Siddhartha* and *Mephisto* and *Goldmund*. Freedman notes Hesse's debt to psychoanalysis and discusses such things as the relationship of the individual self to the universal self, and the image of the Earth Mother to Jung's idea of the collective unconscious. He explains that Hesse's protagonists, in dreams and visions, see the individual self juxtaposed with the universal self. Freedman relates this universal self to Freud's idea of the super-ego, Jung's idea of the collective unconscious, and to the image of the universal mother. This universal self acts as a daemon for the individual self, leading it to the state of transcendence—reunion with the universal mother. This ultimate vision that reconciles all differences can only be perceived through mystical vision or the magic of art. Mystical vision and art are interdependent. The vision is more unified than art, but art must "freeze" these instantaneous visions to preserve them.

Following these introductory comments, Freedman gives a detailed analysis of the role of dreams and visions in *Deman*. In his initial comments on *Deman*, Freedman points out that this novel progresses through a series of dreams.

12 Ibid., p. 44.
13 Ibid., p. 49.
and that the culminating vision of the novel results in Sinclair's ultimate self-realization. Freedman relates Sinclair's Oedipal dream, noting its apocalyptic significance. He notes the vision of the storm-tossed landscape that anticipates the concluding scene, and finally, he recounts the final vision.

Next, Freedman begins a discussion of *Steppenwolf*. Analyzing Harry Haller's dilemma, Freedman points out that Haller must either commit suicide or find pure detachment in the impersonal magic of art. He notes that Haller attempts to resolve his schizophrenia in the hallucinatory Magic Theater. Freedman explains Maria's special function of releasing dreams from Haller's sensually deprived soul. He also points out that Pablo is responsible for the opium-induced visions of the Magic Theater and notes that he plays a transcendental function in the Magic Theater when he replaces Mozart. Then Freedman comments in detail concerning the role of mirrors. Finally, he notes the dual presence of the individual and the universal self in the Magic Theater.

Turning his attention to *The Glass Bead Game*, Freedman explains that the visions accompanying the Yogi-like intuitive trance of the individual have been replaced by an

\[14\text{Ibid.}, \text{pp. 60-69.} \quad 15\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 70.} \quad 16\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 71.} \]
\[17\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 75.} \quad 18\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 85.} \quad 19\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 87.} \]
\[20\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 90.} \quad 21\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 93.} \]
objective counterpart in the rational order of Castalia. He clarifies this idea by relating Joseph Knecht's two visions upon being appointed Magister Ludi.\textsuperscript{22} He also mentions the concluding vision of "The Indian Life,"\textsuperscript{23} but he fails to mention the importance of the poem entitled "The Dream."

In 1965, both Faith from the Abyss: Hermann Hesse's Way from Romanticism to Modernity, by Ernst Rose, and The Novels of Hermann Hesse: A Study in Theme and Structure, by Theodore Ziolkowski, were published. Rose gives a rather lengthy discussion of Hesse's psychoanalytic sessions and their subsequent results on his life and art. His analyses of Demian, Steppenwolf, and The Glass Bead Game are less detailed than Freedman's, but like Freedman, he also largely ignores the role of dreams and visions in Siddhartha and Narcissus and Goldmund. In his discussion of Demian, Rose mentions Sinclair's dream image and notes that Pistorius represents the psychoanalytic physician whom the patient must finally reject, in order to become independent and be cured.\textsuperscript{24} Rose's only comment concerning the role of dreams and visions in Siddhartha concerns the vision transferred to Govinda at the end of the novel.\textsuperscript{25} In his initial remarks about Steppenwolf, Rose suggests that training in Freudian

\textsuperscript{22}Ibid., p. 103. \textsuperscript{23}Ibid., p. 110.
\textsuperscript{25}Ibid., p. 71.
dream analysis is almost a prerequisite for grasping its meaning. He explains that Stern's novel, *The Moonbird*, revealed man's libido as presented by Freud as well as reflecting Jung's concept of the subconscious as a reservoir of spiritual archetypes and formative ideas.

Ziolkowski rivals Freedman in the amount of material concerned with the role of dreams and visions, but he also chooses to largely ignore this aspect of *Siddhartha*, *Narcissus* and *Goldmund* and *The Glass Bead Game*. In the first part of his book Ziolkowski notes the importance of dreams and visions to the major themes in Hesse's writings such as "magical thinking," "the chiliastic vision," and "the triadic rhythm of humanization." He explains that dreams and visions provide the only gateway to the infinite realm of reconciliation and transcendence.

In his initial summary of *Demian*, Ziolkowski notes that Sinclair's dreams reflect not only his internal problems, but universal problems and myths as well. Ziolkowski also compares Abraxas, the image of the sparrow hawk breaking out of the egg, and Sinclair's vision of the mother image to Jung's collective unconscious. Then, turning to an analysis of the religious character of *Demian*, Ziolkowski comments on Sinclair's strange vision in which he burns the painted

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dream image in his hands and eats the ashes.  

Finally, while discussing the archetype of Frau Eva, Ziolkowski further clarifies Hesse's affinity with the ideas of Jung and recounts the final vision of the novel.

Although his comments on Siddhartha are incomplete, Ziolkowski does give more of a commentary on this novel than either Freedman or Rose. He notes the apocalyptic dream that Siddhartha has as he departs from Govinda to experience the sensual life. He also comments on Siddhartha's final vision of transcendence.

Early in his analysis of Steppenwolf, Ziolkowski mentions Harry Haller's vision of the "golden track" that comes to him in moments of despair to remind him of the eternal values in which he believes. He explains that Haller is an eidetic, an individual capable of producing subjective images that in their vividness rival objective reality. Next Ziolkowski comments on the dream in which Haller interviews Goethe. Then he points out that, on the realistic plane, the Magic Theater is a reflection of Haller's own nature and a product of his eidetic vision under the influence of narcotics. Finally, he notes Pabló's significance in the Magic Theater and traces Haller's struggles in that

31 Ibid., p. 130.  
32 Ibid., pp. 132-138.  
33 Ibid., p. 145.  
34 Ibid., p. 160.  
35 Ibid., p. 175.  
36 Ibid., p. 196.  
37 Ibid., p. 197.  
39 Ibid., p. 216.
quasi-realistic realm. Concerning Narcissus and Goldmund, Ziolkowski merely comments on the relation of art to dreams and mentions Goldmund's vision of the Earth Mother.

In 1966, Ziolkowski's second work, a monograph entitled Hermann Hesse, was published. He begins this brief survey by commenting on Hesse's basic fantasy style that dominates the grand visions of Demian and the Magic Theater of Steppenwolf. He discusses "magical thinking" and its manifestations in grand, culminating visions. Finally, he comments on specific dreams and visions from each of Hesse's major novels.

In 1967, another full-length book, Hermann Hesse: His Mind and Art, by Mark Boulby, was published. Boulby avoids any introductory generalizations concerning Hesse's life and plunges directly into his analyses of the major novels. He gives a detailed analysis of Demian and comments on many of Sinclair's dreams and visions. His analyses of the dreams and visions in Siddhartha, and Narcissus and Goldmund are also more complete than those of earlier Hesse scholars. Boulby, however, does not stress the role of dreams and visions in Steppenwolf or The Glass Bead Game.

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40 Ibid., pp. 217-222.
41 Ibid., p. 251.
43 Ibid., p. 25.
Initially, in his discussion of Demian, Boulby remarks on Sinclair's dreams as tools of self-realization. Then he recounts several of Sinclair's Oedipal dreams. He also gives other examples of the Oedipal-complex in Hesse's art. He discusses the role of dreams and visions in carrying Sinclair back to states of pre-existence, and concludes by mentioning Sinclair's final vision of the Earth Mother.

In his analysis of Siddhartha, Boulby recounts both of Siddhartha's dreams and comments upon them. He also discusses Govinda's grand vision following his kissing of Siddhartha's brow. Concerning Steppenwolf, Boulby merely mentions "the golden track," recounts Haller's dream in which he encounters Goethe, and finally, briefly mentions Haller's second encounter with the Immortals—his scene with Mozart.

In his analysis of Narcissus and Goldmund, Boulby describes several of Goldmund's dreams and comments on their sexual imagery. He also points out the common mystery shared by great art and dreams. Boulby concludes his remarks in this section by commenting on Goldmund's ultimate vision of the

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47 Ibid., p. 115. 48 Ibid., p. 119.
49 Ibid., pp. 141, 145. 50 Ibid., p. 151.
51 Ibid., p. 186. 52 Ibid., p. 178. 53 Ibid., p. 199.
Concerning The Glass Bead Game, he merely notes Knecht's initial vision and briefly comments on Dasa's dream in "The Indian Life."

G. G. Jung and Hermann Hesse: A Record of Two Friendships, by Miguel Serrano, appeared in the English language translation by Frank MacShane in 1968. Although Serrano gives a delightful account of his personal friendships with Hesse and Jung, he fails to offer any insights concerning the role of dreams and visions in Hesse's major novels. In this connection, the value of his book lies mainly in its clarification of some of Jung's basic ideas concerning such matters as the Indian vision of totality, the unconscious as mother image, the significance of magic, and the apocalyptic nature of dreams.

Franz Baumer's short work, Hermann Hesse, has been translated by John Conway, and this English language edition came out in 1969. Baumer describes the romantic atmosphere of Hesse's early years in Calw and Wurttenberg, noting their influence in shaping Hesse's relationship to dreams and visions. Baumer discusses Hesse's disillusionment during

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56 Ibid., p. 232.  
57 Ibid., p. 281.  
58 Ibid., p. 308.  
World War One and his subsequent psychoanalysis. He also elaborates on Hesse's concept of the universal mother.

Not a single periodical or journal article in the English language deals exclusively with the role of dreams and visions in Hesse's works, and what information is offered is obviously inadequate in that it is not comprehensive. A few articles, however, do offer some information on this subject. The most valuable of these articles is "The Creative Unconscious and the Spirit: A Study of Polarities in Hesse's Image of the Writer," by Peter Heller. This study mentions Hesse's psychoanalytical treatment and comments upon the subsequent transformation in Hesse's art. Heller discusses the nature of the vision of the Earth Mother and the vision's accompanying primordial descent. He notes the artist's inability to translate visions and concludes by discussing Hesse's desire for transcendence.

Oscar Seidlin's classic article, "Hermann Hesse: The Exorcism of the Demon," is important for its stand against Freudian interpretations of Hesse's works. Seidlin discounts the Oedipus-complex at work in Sinclair's dreams and

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61 Ibid., p. 52. 62 Ibid., pp. 65, 66.


64 Ibid., p. 29. 65 Ibid., p. 31.

66 Ibid., p. 32.
stresses the mythic connotation of Frau Eva.67 He discusses the Earth Mother's role in Narcissus and Goldmund, explaining her magnetic attraction that was manifested in dreams and visions of a primordial paradise.68 Seidlin also discusses Steppenwolf, reevaluating its psychoanalytical implications.69

Another relatively significant article is "Hermann Hesse: The Psychological Implications of his Writings," by Eric Peters. This brief study notes the function of dreams and visions as mediators between reality and the infinite.70 Peters describes Castalia in The Glass Bead Game as the goal of the dreamer and visionary, and he mentions the prolonged vision in the final story, "The Indian Life."71

Ralph Freedman's "Romantic Imagination: Hermann Hesse as a Modern Novelist,"72 and Theodore Ziolkowski's "Hermann Hesse's Chiliastic Vision"73 and "Hermann Hesse's Steppenwolf:

68Ibid., p. 333. 69Ibid., p. 240.
71Ibid., p. 212.
A Sonata in Prose," are, naturally, important articles concerning the role of dreams and visions in Hesse's major novels. But since they have been incorporated into the authors' books on Hesse, further review is unnecessary. Leroy R. Shaw's article, "Time and the Structure of Hermann Hesse's Siddhartha," comments on Govinda's vision of unity, and Hilde D. Cohn's "The Symbolic End of Hermann Hesse's Glasperlenspiel," and Sidney H. Johnson's "The Autobiographies in Hermann Hesse's Glasperlenspiel," briefly comment on the role of dreams and visions in The Glass Bead Game.

Thus, English language studies have failed to adequately explore the role of dreams and visions in Hesse's major novels. Hesse's debt to psychoanalysis has been documented, and the role of dreams and visions in Demian and Steppenwolf has been analyzed rather extensively, but Hesse scholars have almost completely ignored the role of dreams and visions in Siddhartha and Narcissus and Goldmund and have failed to


note the significance of dreams and visions in "Joseph Knecht's Posthumous Writings" in The Glass Bead Game. In light of these deficiencies, it seems obvious that a systematic analysis of the role of dreams and visions in Hesse's major novels is needed.

The purpose of this study is to present such an analysis. A chronological examination of the role of dreams and visions in Hesse's major novels reveals their basic function as manifested in an evolutionary pattern of development. Mediating between the unconscious and conscious mind, dreams and visions play a significant role in the development of Hesse's protagonists. They reveal to them their total, timeless self and direct them toward the ultimate goal of reconciliation and transcendence. Following an evolutionary pattern with the exception of Narcissus and Goldmund, the mystical, ascetical realm of dreams and visions gradually replaces the real world for Hesse's protagonists.

In Demian and Siddhartha the actions of the protagonists take place in the real world, yet Sinclair and Siddhartha receive guidance and comfort from their apocalyptic dreams. Also, their ultimate self-realization is characterized by grand visions of totality. In Steppenwolf the real world and the dream world begin to merge in the quasi-realistic realm of the Magic Theater. Once Harry Haller enters that illusory realm, his dreams become the focal point of the action. In Narcissus and Goldmund Hesse
regresses to his original use of dreams and visions. Goldmund's experiences take place in the real world, but as he approaches death, he also perceives a grand vision of totality—the image of the universal mother. In Hesse's final novel, The Glass Bead Game, the Magic Theater is replaced by the ethereal kingdom of Castalia. The ascetical realm has finally superseded the real world altogether. Thus, in this utopian setting, the need for actual dreams and visions is largely vitiated. The Castalians are, so to speak, the Immortals, inhabitants of a seemingly timeless spiritual realm where there is virtually no disharmony of self, and where ascetical existence is its own apocalypse. This artistically-sterile realm of Castalia, therefore, has no need for dreams and visions, and they play a negligible role in the text of Joseph Knecht's biography. They do, however, emerge in "Joseph Knecht's Posthumous Writings," which were written during Knecht's years of independent study. One of the poems, "A Dream," and a prolonged vision in "The Indian Life," make valuable comments concerning Hesse's concept of the role of dreams and visions in man's destiny.

Now, having summarized the present state of Hesse criticism concerning the role of dreams and visions in his major novels and having briefly described their evolutionary development, it is necessary to begin a detailed examination of the individual novels. Such an examination begins with Demian, Hesse's first post-psychoanalytical novel, which was published in 1919.
CHAPTER II

ROADS TO THE SELF: THE ROLE OF DREAMS AND VISIONS IN DEMIAN

Whenever the collective unconscious becomes a living experience and is brought to bear upon the conscious outlook of an age, this event is a creative act which is of importance for a whole epoch.

—Jung

"I have always been a great dreamer," states Emil Sinclair in the second chapter of Demian. Following this initial comment, almost every remaining page of the novel contains some reference to dreams. Sinclair also has visions, and the novel ends in a grand, culminating vision of cosmic significance and transcendence. These dreams and visions played an intrinsic role in Sinclair's growth process, revealing to him his true self—both the individual self and the timeless, universal self. As a child and early adolescent, Sinclair's dreams revealed his hidden nature. He was plagued by nightmares, and his dreams were largely confined to the forbidden half of the world—the world of darkness. As he became a young man his dreams took on new meanings. He learned to interpret their symbolism—to read

their apocalyptic messages. And as he reached manhood, he recognized the cosmic significance of dreams and visions.

Having declared that he has always been a great dreamer, Emil Sinclair adds that those shadows sapped him of his health and energy. As a child Sinclair suffered from nightmares. Although his daytime activities were largely confined to the pleasant atmosphere of home and parents—the world of light, Sinclair's nights were filled with images from the forbidden world—the world of darkness. Domestic security and parental protection could not penetrate the realm of sleep where Sinclair's unconscious mind had dominion. The bully Kroner mistreated him in a recurring nightmare. Kroner spit and knelt on him, and forced him to commit horrible crimes. The worst of these crimes was Sinclair's murderous assault against his own father. In another recurring dream, Demian inflicted similar tortures on Sinclair. Yet Sinclair derived a strange pleasure from obeying Demian's commands. These childhood dreams reveal the existence of an Oedipus-complex at work in Sinclair and foreshadow his ultimate embrace of the realm of darkness. Kroner seems to be the catalyst that sets Sinclair's descent into motion. The assault against his father is a typical manifestation of the Oedipus-complex, and his willingness to endure Demian's commands prefigures his ultimate embrace of the realm of darkness.
Dreams also dominated Sinclair's early years of adolescence. "The great secret of puberty" did not fit into his sheltered childhood, and he was forced to retreat to the secret world of dreams. Sinclair explains his adolescent dilemma:

"My conscious self lived within the familiar and sanctioned world; it denied the new world that dawned within me. Side by side with this I lived in a world of dreams, drives, and desires of a chthonic nature, across which my conscious self desperately built its fragile bridges, for the childhood world within me was falling apart."

Sinclair doesn't relate any of the dreams that he had during this early adolescent period, but he points out that, "the important thing was that the dark world, the other world, had reappeared. What Franz Kromer had once been was now part of myself." Thus Sinclair is beginning to realize that the dark world of his dreams is actually a manifestation of his own personality.

Sinclair left his childhood world behind him as he left for boarding school, but he did not escape his dreams. Sinclair had his first vision following his initial drunken orgy with Alfonse Deck. Awakening after a brief period of depression-filled sleep, Sinclair recognized his revolting condition, and between fits of headache, nausea, and a raging thirst, experienced a vision of his past life. He visualized his house, parents, the school, Demian and the confirmation classes, and other images of that almost-forgotten

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4Ibid., pp. 40-41. 5Ibid., p. 41. 6Ibid., p. 41.
realm of light and purity. This vision pointed out the senseless depravity of Sinclair's condition. He did not, however, mend his ways, and during that period of debauchery, he became "a spellbound dreamer, restless and racked." Those dreams depicted a world of misery, a world of "back alleys full of foul odors and refuse." Those horrible dreams finally stopped when he reformed his ways again. Shortly after he completed his haunting portrait, the male-female, ageless image of his unconscious, Sinclair began having many dreams again. Hesse is using the dream again as a type of shorthand to dramatize Sinclair's return to a state of emotional turmoil. And it was at this time that his dreams began to take on new meanings. No longer strictly manifestations of his individual self, Sinclair's dreams began to merge with the universal self, manifesting themselves in juxtaposed images of Demian and the universal mother. They became apocalyptic signposts, directing him on his way to self-realization. The portrait often appeared in those dreams. It appeared, "alive and eloquent, friendly or hostile, sometimes distorted into a grimace, sometimes infinitely beautiful, harmonious, and noble." This dream image revealed to Sinclair that his portrait resembled

7 Ibid., p. 61.  
8 Ibid., p. 64.  
9 Ibid., p. 64.  
10 Ibid., p. 69.  
11 Ibid., p. 69.
After recognizing Demian's features in the portrait, Sinclair began to long for his childhood friend. One night after he had tried to remember all the things that he and Demian had done together, Sinclair dreamt about Demian and the coat of arms. Toward the end of the dream Sinclair ate the coat of arms, and when he had swallowed it he felt that the heraldic bird was coming to life inside of him, that it had begun to swell up and devour him from within. Once again, Hesse is using the dream as a type of narrative shortcut to depict Sinclair's emotional state and to suggest his subsequent actions. Immediately following this dream, two important events occurred. First, a rainstorm soaked the portrait, and when it dried out again the mouth of the image had been transformed to an exact copy of Demian's mouth. Secondly, Sinclair painted a picture of the heraldic bird that he had seen in his dream and mailed it to Demian's old address. Thus Sinclair had begun to realize the new significance of his dreams—that they were guiding him toward some goal. Perhaps Sinclair did not recognize it at the time, but the heraldic bird probably symbolized his own searching soul, attempting to escape the false worlds of light and darkness. His spirit yearned for a god that was god of both worlds—a god that would give unity and peace to his ambivalent, restless soul.
A short while after his dream about the coat of arms, Sinclair had the most significant dream of his life. He dreamed that he was returning to his father's house:

Above the entrance glowed the heraldic bird, yellow on a blue background; in the house itself my mother was coming toward me—but as I entered and wanted to embrace her, it was not she but a form I had never set eyes on before, tall and strong, resembling Max Demian and the picture I had painted; yet different, for despite its strength it was completely feminine. This form drew me to itself and enveloped me in a deep tremulous embrace. I felt a mixture of ecstasy and horror—the embrace was at once an act of divine worship and a crime. Too many associations with my mother and friend commingled with this figure embracing me. Its embrace violated all sense of reverence, yet it was bliss.

Once again, the Oedipus-complex is obviously at work. Gradually Sinclair was able to link this mysterious dream image with Abraxas, the god of both worlds. Yet the image had an identity of her own. She was the universal mother, the creative force of all things. She was the ultimate image, the symbol of all that had ever been or was ever to be (Jung's collective unconscious). She unified the instinctual, rational, and mystical worlds. Sinclair longed to find the literal manifestation of his dream image, and he searched for her everywhere. She continued to haunt his dreams, and he knew that he would find no rest until he found her fleshly counterpart.

As Sinclair approached manhood, he met Pistorius, the organist. Pistorius was a dreamer who loved to stare into

\[13\] Ibid., p. 79.
the fire, absorbing its magical images. While staring into the fire, Sinclair had a vision of his childhood in which he was at one with the image-world of nature. Unlike his previous vision, this one served as a tonic, renewing his strength and joy and intensifying his self-awareness.

Pistorius knew how to interpret dreams. He interpreted one of Sinclair's dreams in which he was able to fly. The feeling of flight had an initial exhilarating effect, but Sinclair soon became frightened because he was unable to control his rapid ascension. Then he realized that he could regulate the rise or fall of his flight by holding or releasing his breath. Pistorius explained that the desire to fly is emblematic of the longing for the infinite within all men. Most people let the fear conquer them and shed their heavenly wings. Others fail to find the means of control and go mad. But Sinclair discovered the secret steering mechanism. Pistorius explained that this guiding device was a vestige of the primeval fish bladder. Dreams and visions serve a similar function. They serve as apocalyptic signposts on Sinclair's journey of life, keeping him going in the right direction.

One night during the Knauer episode, shortly before Sinclair prevented the young man's death, a vision of Sinclair's dream image appeared to him. When he awoke he

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14 Ibid., pp. 87, 88. 15 Ibid., p. 90. 16 Ibid., p. 99.
could remember her features so distinctly that he began painting her picture. The final result pleased him and gave him new confidence. Later, explaining this new feeling, he said, "What invigorated me most was the progress I had made in discovering myself, the increasing confidence in my own dreams, thoughts, and intimations, and the growing power within me." It was then that he discovered the secret of his painting of the dream image:

This being [the half-male, half-female dream image of his daemon] was no longer confined to my dreams, no longer merely depicted on paper, but lived within me as an ideal and intensification of my self.

Now, the only remaining mystery was the identity of the literal manifestation of the dream image.

The moment Sinclair saw a photo of Demian's mother, he recognized that she was the embodiment that he had been seeking. And somewhat later, when he actually met Frau Eva, his premonition was confirmed. Sinclair explained that his dream had enabled him to find her at last. Then Eva taught him more about the nature of dreams. She explained that the finding of one's dream did make things easier, but she cautioned him against clinging to any particular one, because no dream lasted forever. One should remain faithful to a dream only as long as it is one's fate. During their meetings she also taught Sinclair "to see how humanity's entire store of ideals so far consisted of dreams that had emanated

17 Ibid., p. 102.
18 Ibid., p. 103.
from the unconscious, of dreams in which humanity groped after its intimations of future potentialities." Then Sinclair's dreams became larger in scope. He dreamed that "the whole world was in turmoil" and that by himself or with Demian, he "was tensely waiting for the great moment." Once during a rainstorm he saw the image of the sparrow, hawk, the heraldic bird, in the sky. He told Demian that he felt that it signified some cataclysmic event, some move on the part of destiny. Demian agreed with him and recounted one of his own dreams that had a similar implication. He had dreamed that he was climbing a ladder placed against a tree trunk or tower. When he had reached the top he saw, "the whole landscape ablaze—a vast plain with innumerable towns and villages." Then Sinclair questioned him about their dreams, Demian explained that it was necessary to "differentiate quite sharply between dreams that reveal movements within one's soul and the other, far rarer dreams in which the fate of all mankind suggests itself." Shortly after this time war broke out, and Sinclair realized the apocalyptic and cosmic significance of certain dreams. He had learned much from dreams since the days of his childhood nightmares, and now they had revealed to him "the collapse of an old world."
Demian and Sinclair went off to war, and Sinclair experienced a final vision of transcendence. One night in early spring as Sinclair gazed at the boiling Flemish sky, it metamorphosed into huge series of swirling images:

A huge city could be seen in the clouds out of which millions of people streamed in a host over vast landscapes. Into their midst stepped a mighty, godlike figure, as huge as a mountain range, with sparkling stars in her hair, bearing the features of Frau Eva. The ranks of the people were swallowed up into her as into a giant cave and vanished from sight. The goddess cowered on the ground, the mark luminous on her forehead. A dream seemed to hold sway over her; she closed her eyes and her countenance became twisted with pain. Suddenly she cried out and from her forehead sprang stars, many thousands of shining stars that leaped in marvelous arches and semicircles across the black sky.24

"One of [the] stars shot straight toward [Sinclair] with a clear ringing sound. . . . Then it burst asunder with a roar into a thousand sparks, tore [him] aloft and smashed [him] back to the ground again, the world shattered above [him] with a thunderous roar."25 This apocalyptic vision that immediately preceded Sinclair's being wounded is reminiscent of the Book of Revelation. The godlike figure of Frau Eva symbolizes the universal mother swallowing up the stream of humanity—the universal self is absorbing the individual self. Her ambivalent expression symbolizes the mystical union of reality and the infinite. This apocalyptic vision prefigured not only Sinclair's subsequent wound, but the greater wound of humanity as well. Yet, the vision of Frau

24 Ibid., p. 139. 25 Ibid., p. 139.
Eva also provided the state of transcendence longed for by Sinclair: "When [Sinclair] realized that the ideal, the justification of his life, lay within him and not in the external world, he had reached the ethiastic realm."26

Thus, dreams and visions played an important part in Emil Sinclair's growth process. During childhood and early adolescence his nightmares transported him to the realms of darkness, revealing his instinctual urges. When he became a young man dreams and visions became tools of self-realization, apocalyptic signposts, directing him toward his goal—reunion with the universal mother. And as he approached manhood, his dreams and visions juxtaposed the individual self and the universal self in an apocalyptic image of cosmic proportions, engulfing the fate of all mankind.

26Ziolkowski, The Novels of Hermann Hesse, p. 145.
CHAPTER III

BETWEEN A MAN AND SANSARA: THE ROLE OF DREAMS AND VISIONS IN SIDDHARTHA

In Siddhartha, which appeared three years after Demian, in 1922, Hesse abandoned the setting of contemporary Germany and retreated to classical India during the time of Gautama Buddha. Despite this change in setting, Siddhartha, like Demian, is basically the story of a man in search of Self—the timeless, transcendental realm where all diversities are resolved. Although Hesse only relates two actual dreams in Siddhartha, he mentions dreams throughout the novel, and they exhibit a profound influence on the life of Siddhartha. Acting as mediators between his unconscious and conscious mind, they serve as apocalyptic signposts that direct him toward his ultimate goal of transcendence. Siddhartha also has several visions during the course of the novel, and ultimately, he becomes the living reflection of the flowing vision of timelessness and unity.

Hesse suggests several meanings and sources of dreams in the early part of Siddhartha. Initially, he equates dreams with imaginative states of restlessness and unfulfilled desires. The sources of these dreams are nature and the spiritual world. Hesse states:
Dreams and restless thoughts came flowing to him from the river, from the twinkling stars at night, from the sun's melting rays. Dreams and a 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 teachings of the old Brahmins.

He cites the Upanishads as the source for his next comment on dreams. It is written in the Upanishads that when a man sleeps, he dwells in Atman, the innermost self. The function of dreams is to be the interpreter of Atman, to mediate between the unconscious and the conscious mind. In other words, the unconscious manifests itself in dreams, and these unconscious images are not only perceived during sleep or visionary states, but are also carried over into the conscious realm upon awakening. Although many of the details of dreams are often forgotten when the dreamer awakens, these fleeting images provide the only combination to the vault of the unconscious. Thus the role of dreams and visions is to mediate between the unconscious and the conscious realms—to provide a fragile link between Atman and Samsara, reality and illusion. Although dreams are the interpreters of Atman, they are not perfect reflections of man's true self. When Siddhartha is searching for Atman as a Samana, he strives to become empty of dreams, wishing to bypass the limbo-like

2 Ibid., p. 4.
3 Ibid., p. 11.
world of dreams, he hopes to enter the realm of Atman directly, through devout contemplation and meditation. Siddhartha, however, soon becomes aware of the apocalyptic value of dreams. Shortly before relating the first actual dream of the novel, Hesse hints of this apocalyptic nature of dreams:

Siddhartha looked up and around him, a smile crept over his face, and a strong feeling of awakening from a long dream spread right through his being. Immediately he walked on again, quickly, like a man who knows what he has to do.

Siddhartha's first dream occurs at the beginning of the chapter entitled "Kamala." Siddhartha has forsaken the austere existence of the Samanas and has determined to seek a new experience in life. His faithful friend Govinda has gone with the Buddha, and as he sleeps in a ferryman's straw hut, Siddhartha has a dream:

He dreamt that Govinda stood before him, in the yellow robe of the ascetic. Govinda looked sad and asked him, "Why did you leave me?" Thereupon he embraced Govinda, put his arm round him, and as he drew him to his breast and kissed him, he was Govinda no longer, but a woman and out of the woman's gown emerged a full breast, and Siddhartha lay there and drank; sweet and strong tasted the milk from this breast. It tasted of woman and man, of sun and forest, of animal and flower, of every fruit, of every pleasure. It was intoxicating. This apocalyptic message is relatively obvious. Although Siddhartha loves Govinda, he knows that his searching soul demands more than the quiet life of an ascetic accompanied by his faithful friend. The woman represents Kamala, who

Ibid., p. 31.  
Ibid., p. 40.
will soon fill the space that Govinda has vacated. The full breast represents the knowledge that Siddhartha will gain from Kemala. Its milk is the milk of the world—the sensual world that Siddhartha has avoided until now. And the milk is intoxicating—an indication that its enticing sweetness will not last forever. On a broader level, the woman is the universal mother, and the milk is the milk of paradise—the flowing manifestation of timelessness and unity. Thus, this dream, functioning as a foreshadowing device, prophesies not only Siddhartha's subsequent encounter with Kamala and the sensual world, but also his ultimate vision of transcendence.

The intoxicating sweetness of the world of Kamala and Kamaswami does not sustain Siddhartha forever. He learns to enjoy the sensual pleasures of life. He becomes hard and mean in business, amassing a great fortune. He even dreams of money at night. But eventually he begins to notice that he is not happier than before, but merely uglier and older. And he is as far away from his goal of inner peace as ever. One night he is feeling particularly distressed and cannot sleep. At daybreak when he finally manages to doze off, he has a dream about Kamala's small, rare songbird that lives in a golden cage:

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

6 Ibid., p. 69.
in his hand and then 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 dead bird all that was good and of value in himself. This dream convinces Siddhartha that it is time to do something about his wretched state of existence. He recognizes that the bird is "the bird in his own heart." The golden cage symbolizes the materialistic life that has engaged Siddhartha's spirit. So the dream once again fulfills its apocalyptic function by making Siddhartha aware of the fact that his spirit is dying. Later, speaking to himself, Siddhartha says, "I commend you, Siddhartha, that after so many years of folly, you have again had a good idea, that you have accomplished something, that you have again heard the bird in your breast sing and followed it." 

Thus Siddhartha forsakes the sensual world and returns to the river where, as a youth, he had first met Vasudeva the ferryman. Siddhartha, realizing that the old man has found inner contentment, becomes the ferryman's apprentice. Vasudeva teaches Siddhartha to listen to the river. Siddhartha continues to live by the river. He witnesses the death of Kamala and learns to love their son. When he discovers that his son has run away, Siddhartha is heartbroken and returns to the edge of the town in search of him. As he stands at the entrance of the beautiful pleasure garden that once belonged to Kamala he has a vision of his past life.

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8Ibid., p. 70. 9Ibid., p. 79.
Hesse uses this vision as a flashback technique in which Siddhartha is able to view his emotional problem from the proper perspective. He sees himself as a young Salama; he sees the beautiful Kamala; he sees Kamaswami and the varied manifestations of his sterile, materialistic realm; he sees Kamala's songbird in the cage. This vision parallels Desian's first vision in which he became disgusted with, and saw the folly of, his depraved condition. Siddhartha experiences similar sensations. Thoughts of his past life fill him with nausea, and he desires to die. He realizes the futility of his attempt to cling to his son. At the same time, however, this vision has a soothing effect on Siddhartha: "He felt a deep love for the runaway boy, like a wound, and yet felt at the same time that this wound was not intended to fester in him, but that it should heal."  

Later, as Siddhartha is staring into the flowing water of the river, he has another vision. It is another vision of timelessness. He sees his father mourning for his son and himself longing for his faraway son. He sees images of his son, Kamala, Govinda, and others flowing together and merging with the river. The river is the goal of all the people in Siddhartha's vision. The river is equivalent to the universal self—the timeless, flowing river that absorbs

10 Ibid., pp. 102, 103. 11 Ibid., p. 103. 12 Ibid., p. 110.
the eternal voices of mankind and releases them once again in dreams and visions. Thus, this vision of timelessness and unity has finally brought Siddhartha to the meditative state of transcendence where "it is possible to dispel time, to see simultaneously all the past, present and future, and [where] everything is good, everything is perfect, everything is Brahman."\textsuperscript{13}

At the end of the novel Siddhartha and Govinda meet once again. Govinda, realizing that his old friend has reached the end of his searching, questions him concerning his success. Siddhartha explains that words can convey only half-truths because they lack the totality of experience. (That is why dreams and visions are important—they transcend the single-dimensional world of words, recreating life in that ethereal realm between the unconscious and the conscious mind.) He instructs Govinda to kiss him on the brow. As Govinda does so, Siddhartha's countenance becomes the living reflection of the flowing vision of timelessness and unity:

He no longer saw the face of his friend Siddhartha. Instead he saw other faces, many faces. . . . He saw the face of a fish...a dying fish with dimmed eyes. He saw the face of a newly born child. . . . He saw the face of a murderer. . . . He saw the naked bodies of men and women in the postures and transports of passionate love. He saw the heads of animals—. . . . He saw Krishna and Agni. He saw all these forms and faces in a thousand relationships to each other, all helping each other, loving, hating and destroying each other and becoming newly born.

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., p. 116.
And all these forms and faces rested, flowed, reproduced, swam past and merged into each other, and over them all there was continually something thin, unreal and yet existing, stretched across like thin glass or ice, like a transparent skin, shell, form or mask of water—and this mask was Siddhartha's smiling face which Govinda touched with his lips at that moment. Govinda realizes that Siddhartha's mask-like smile of unity is exactly the same as the smile of Buddha. It is the visible manifestation of transcendence. The mind and body are in a perfect state of equilibrium, and the soul is dwelling in Atman.

Thus, dreams and visions do exhibit a profound influence on the life of Siddhartha. They act as mediators between his unconscious and conscious mind, projecting juxtaposed images from the ethereal realm between Atman and Samsara. They serve as apocalyptic signposts, directing him toward his goal. They direct him to the sensual, materialistic world as a young man, and when he is old, lead him back to the spiritual world. And finally, they reveal the timeless, transcendental realm of the universal mother.

Ibid., p. 11.
CHAPTER IV

IN SEARCH OF THE IMMORTALS: THE ROLE OF DREAMS AND VISIONS IN STEPPENWOLF

Publication in 1927 of Steppenwolf, the chronicle of a middle-aged schizophrenic in the German jazz era of the 1920's, plunged Hesse into the existential age. This novel also marks the second stage of the evolutionary development of the role of dreams and visions. The culminating vision of transcendence that had characterized Demian and Siddhartha becomes fleeting and illusive in Steppenwolf. In these earlier novels dreams and visions mediated between the unconscious and conscious mind, serving as a daemon who could lead the protagonists to ultimate reconciliation and transcendence. In Steppenwolf apocalyptic dreams and visions no longer lead Hesse's protagonist from the sensual, real world to the transcendental, spiritual realm. The dichotomies between darkness and light, nature and spirit, are ultimately broken down, and the limbo-like, ethereal realm of dreams and visions becomes the focal point of the action in the Magic Theater. In other words, in the quasi-existential atmosphere of Steppenwolf (where the mystical vision of transcendence is fleeting and illusive, and the sterile bourgeois world of reality curtails man's natural urges), the realm of
dreams and visions—the link between darkness and light,
Atman and Samsara—becomes the only possible hope for self-
realization. Harry Haller's schizophrenia is emblematic of
the greater sickness of the age, and both his individual
self and the manifestation of his age clash on the quasi-
realistic stage of the Magic Theater. Thus, in Steppenwolf,
dreams and visions play a basically therapeutic role. They
reveal the many facets of Haller's disintegrated personality
and explore the absurdities of the age. They also suggest
the final solution—to laugh. The old Steppenwolf cannot
hope to reach the realm of the Immortals by moralizing, ra-
tionalizing, or even by meditating; he must laugh and act.
He must be.

In the introduction to Steppenwolf the bourgeois nar-
rator notes that "the Steppenwolf's look pierced our whole
epoch, its whole overwrought activity, the whole surge and
strife, the whole superficial play of a shallow, opinionated
intellectuality." In the opening remarks of "Harry Haller's
Records," the Steppenwolf reveals that he is a romanticist who
has lost his way in a sterile, materialistic world. Beauti-
ful music is the only remaining catalyst capable of setting
into motion dreams and visions of the chiliastic realm:

It was at a concert of lovely old music. After two
or three notes of the piano the door was opened of a
sudden to the other world. I sped through heaven and

1Hermann Hesse, Steppenwolf, translated by Basil
Creighton and revised by Joseph Hilleck and Horst Frenz
saw God at work. I accepted all things and to all things gave my heart. It did not last very long, a quarter of an hour perhaps; but it returned to me in a dream at night, and since, through all the barren days, I caught a glimpse of it now and then.2

Haller calls this last link with the chiliastic realm the "golden track" and points out that it sometimes occurred in dreams or while reading a particular poet, and that it once appeared while he was pondering the thought of Descartes. It appeared later while he was studying Pascal and once while he was in the presence of his beloved.3 Then he points out the romanticist's dilemma in an arid, materialistic age: "Ah but it is hard to find this track of the divine in the midst of this life we lead, in this besotted humdrum age of spiritual blindness, with its architecture, its business, its politics, its men! How could I fail to be a lone wolf, an uncouth hermit, as I did not share one of its pleasures?"4 Thus, the Steppenwolf is an anachronism in his modern, industrial age where middle-of-the-road bourgeois respectability reigns supreme. Realizing that his vision of the transcendental realm of reconciliation is slowly fading away in this sterile atmosphere of modernity, and tiring of the physical discomfort of middle age, Haller often contemplates suicide.

Once during one of his frequent nightly walks, Haller has a vision in which he sees a small doorway with a Gothic

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2Ibid., pp. 29, 30.  
3Ibid., p. 20.  
arch in the middle of an old stone wall that connected a little church and an old hospital. Symbolically, the doorway represents an escape from the spirituality of the past and the pathogenic decadence of the present. A neon sign reflects the following message on the old wall: "Magic Theater Entrance not for Everybody." And as he leaves, the asphalt reflects the remainder of the message: "For Madmen Only!" Haller recognizes a similarity between this vision and the "golden track": "I had had a greeting from another world, and a few dancing colored letters had played upon my soul and sounded its secret strings. A glimpse of the golden track had been visible once again." Thus, this vision prefigures Haller's entrance into the realm of dreams and visions and his ultimate quest of self-realization in the Magic Theater.

Directly following this experience, Haller goes to a tavern where, as he sips the Elsasser, he regains his vision of the "golden track." In this vision he sees Giotto's angels, Hamlet and Ophelia, Gianozzo the aeronaut, Attila, and thousands of other timeless images. In beautiful prose the Steppenwolf restates his dilemma: "Who read by night above the Rhine the cloudscript of the drifting mists? It was the Steppenwolf. And who over the ruins of his life pursued its

5Ibid., pp. 30, 31.  6Ibid., p. 33.  7Ibid., p. 35.
fleeting, fluttering significance, while he suffered its seeming meaninglessness and lived its seeming madness, and who hoped in secret at the last turn of the labyrinth of Chaos for revelation in God's presence? The spell of the vision soon wears off, however, and Haller becomes depressed by the solitude that dominates his life. As he walks by a dance hall, the "raw and savage gaiety" of lively jazz music beckons to the Steppenwolf's libidinal nature. Shortly thereafter, he encounters the placard carrier whose sign repeats the visionary message of the wall. The tired man shoves the "Treatise on the Steppenwolf" into Haller's hands and disappears into a doorway.

Like the message of the wall, the "Treatise" is translated via Haller's eidetic imagination. The "Treatise" reviews Haller's schizophrenic obsession with his so-called "wolf" and "human" natures and notes his inclination toward suicide. It elaborates on the bourgeois concept of life as a search for balance and notes Haller's inability to fit into their limbo-like solution of existence. The "Treatise" explains that only the great among the Steppenwolves can achieve cosmic transcendence. The remainder must seek reconciliation in the realm of humor:

In its imaginary realm the intricate and many-faceted ideal of all Steppenwolves finds its realization. Here it is possible not only to extol the saint and the profligate in one breath and to make the poles

\[3\text{Ibid., p. 36.}\]
meet, but to include the bourgeois, too, in the same affirmation. . . . Humor alone . . . attains to the impossible and brings every aspect of human existence within the rays of its prism.

Simply stated, the lesson of humor is "to be"—to act—to disregard with humorous detachment the seemingly contradictory forces of human nature. But, as the "Treatise" points out, in order to attain this level of humorous detachment, the Steppenwolf must take a good look at himself. He must "look deeply into the chaos of his own soul and plumb its depths." He must realize that there are not merely two discordant aspects of his personality, but thousands, all of which demand attention and development.

Having read the "Treatise," Haller realizes that his dilemma offers two solutions. He must either commit suicide or find self-realization: "He must with his own hand make an end of his detested existence—unless, molten in the fire of a renewed self-knowledge, he underwent a change and passed over to a self, new and undisguised." Haller rereads the "Treatise," and the vision of the magic letters on the wall returns to him. Thus, the ultimate search for self in the Magic Theater is prefigured once again.

Before Haller enters the actual Magic Theater, however, he is introduced to the fantasy-like atmosphere of "The Black Eagle" public house. Although he has decided to take the

9 Ibid., pp. 54, 55. 10 Ibid., p. 55.
11 Ibid., pp. 93-98.
advice of the "Treatise" and commit suicide on his fiftieth birthday, Haller is contemplating an immediate termination of his life as he enters "The Black Eagle." Then he meets the sympathetic Hermine, who babies him and orders him about like a child. She reminds him of someone, but he cannot discern who that someone might be. As she goes off for a dance Haller leans his head against the wall, falls asleep, and has a dream. He dreams that he is a reporter interviewing Goethe. He is nervously anticipating the interview, and an encounter with a scorpion further agitates him. The situation is made even more confusing when he becomes uncertain as to whether he has been announced to Matthisson instead of to Goethe. He even confuses Matthisson with Burger, whom he takes to be the author of the poem to Molly. Then he wishes it were the beautiful Molly that he is to interview, and he somehow associates the scorpion with her. Haller's agitation extends itself to Goethe when they are finally introduced. He accuses the old genius of being too vain and not outright enough. Goethe requests him to elaborate, and Haller explains that Goethe has been hypocritical. Although Goethe has observed the utter lack of purpose in life, he has preached its opposite, spouting faith and optimism—perpetuated the myth that life is sacrosanct. When Goethe points out the faith and optimism inherent in Mozart's Magic

\[\text{Ibid.}, \text{ pp. 93-98.}\]
Flute, Haller excuses Mozart because of his youth and his early death. Goethe admits that death is the ultimate apocalypse, but he points out that a serious attitude does nothing to improve the situation. He explains that seriousness results from placing too high a value on time. In humor, time is forgotten, and the despair of life loses its sting. Following this explanation, old Goethe goes into a joyful dance. Haller remembers Molly and the scorpion and asks if Molly is in the realm of the Immortals. Goethe laughs aloud. He produces a tiny leg from a small box and tantalizes Haller with its enchanting appeal. As Haller reaches for it, it turns into the scorpion. As the dream ends, Goethe, still holding the scorpion, becomes a thousand years old, and his flowing beard is shaken by his soundless laughter. Thus, Haller makes his first actual contact with the Immortal realm.

Goethe's advice, like that of the "Treatise," is to seek reconciliation in the realm of humor. The sexual imagery of Molly and the scorpion prefigures Haller's subsequent relationship with Hermine and Maria. Goethe is highly amused by Haller's obsession with sex and his inquiry as to whether it is part of the chiliastic realm of the Immortals. Only when he is able to view sex, like any of the other countless facets of his personality, with humorous detachment, will Haller be able to enter the timeless realm of the Immortals. This dream also suggests Haller's ultimate encounter with the Immortals in the Magic Theater.
Hermine begins to initiate Haller into his search for self-realization. She determines to teach him to dance, and Haller arranges another meeting for the following Tuesday evening. Haller immediately recognizes the importance of Hermine to his future when he states, "She had to teach me to live or teach me to die." When they meet on the following Tuesday he realizes that Hermine reminds him of Herman, a friend of his childhood days, and he is able to guess that her name is Hermine. Thus it is becoming evident that Hermine is representative of Haller's own self—a manifestation of his own libido. During their discussion on this occasion, Hermine predicts that Haller will kill her. She persuades him to learn to dance, and they buy a gramophone. She goes up to his room and gives him the first lesson.

She continues the dancing lessons and during one of them at the Balance Hotel, she introduces Haller to Pablo, a handsome Spanish saxophone player, and to Maria, a beautiful and sensual girl. Both Pablo and Maria are to further prepare Haller for his ultimate self-encounter in the Magic Theater. Hermine soon explains that Pablo is an expert at concocting many drugs. These drugs can still pain and induce sleep and beautiful dreams. And later, Hermine sends the lovely Maria to spend the night with Haller. She too releases the Steppenwolf's dreams: "And so in the tender beauty of the night

many pictures of my life rose before me who for so long had lived in a poor pictureless vacancy. Now at the magic touch of Eros, the source of them was opened up and flowed in plenty."\(^{15}\) He dreams of his mother, his childhood friend Hermen, his wife, and hundreds of other images of the past.\(^{16}\) Haller begins to realize that these dreams hold the only meaning of his life: "These pictures...were my life's possession and all its worth... Their series was the story of my life, their starry light the undying value of my being."\(^{17}\) Haller comments that his soul has breathed once more and recognizes that he is ready for the quest for reconciliation in the Magic Theater:

...I felt with a glow that I had only to snatch up my scattered images and raise my life as Harry Haller and as the Steppenwolf to the unity of one picture, in order to enter myself into the world of imagination and be immortal.\(^{18}\)

He continues to see Hermine and Maria, and he often takes advantage of Pablo's drugs. He, once again, confirms his faith in dreams and visions when he states, "And I knew that my dreams had been right a thousand times over... It was life and reality that were wrong."\(^{19}\) Hermine invites Haller to a masked ball, and it is here that he actually enters the Magic Theater. Having failed to find Hermine at the ball,
Haller determines to leave, he has lost the numbered ticket for his coat, but a fellow in a devil costume offers him his own ticket. The ticket bears a magic inscription similar to that of the wall: "Tonight at the Magic Theater—for Madmen Only—Price of Admittance Your Mind—Not for Everybody—Hermine is in Hell." Haller succeeds in finding Hell and locates Hermine, who has disguised herself as a boy. He realizes that he is, in effect, accompanying his own Self. He also makes it clear that he is entering the realm of fantasy: "It was all a fairy tale. Everything had a new dimension, a deeper meaning. Everything was fanciful and symbolic." Hermine reappears in alluring feminine attire, and together with Haller, they dance the night away. As the dawn approaches, Hermine and Haller remain alone in the hall, and she asks him if he is ready for the final encounter in the Magic Theater. Haller nods agreement, and Pablo appears and offers them strange drugs. The drugs soon take effect, and as Haller prepares to enter the Magic Theater, Pablo explains, "I can throw open to you no picture gallery but your own soul. All I can give you is the opportunity, the impulse, the key. I can help you to make your own world visible. That is all." Pablo also reminds Haller that the "Treatise," the masked ball and the drugs have helped to

20Ibid., p. 164.  
21Ibid., p. 167.  
22Ibid., p. 175.
prepare him, but before he enters the Magic Theater he must also lay aside his personality. And so Harry and Hermine enter the Magic Theater, Harry from the left, and Hermine from the right. Their union should mark Haller's reconciliation.

From this point on, Haller's dreams and visions become the focal point of the action. Unable to find self-realization and reconciliation in the real world, he seeks the answers to life in the quasi-realistic realm of the Magic Theater. Although the Magic Theater is only a fantasy-world induced by drugs, its rapid scene changes and unreal visual effects are believable precisely because of this fact. Hesse's use of dreams and visions here, therefore, enables him to make an otherwise unreal situation quite believable.

As he enters the Magic Theater, Haller is forced to laugh at the faulty image of the wolf and the man peering at him from a mirror. He does so, the images disappear, and Haller enters the magic realm. Once inside Haller encounters another mirror. This one does not merely mirror two aspects of Haller's personality, but reflects the countless images of his disintegrated soul. When this mirror disappears Haller begins to explore the various doors of the Magic Theater. The first one to attract him is inscribed, "Jolly Hunting Great Hunt in Automobiles." In the ensuing dream Haller's own libidinal nature is manifested in the decadent atmosphere of the age. The machines have declared war on humanity and
are destroying people everywhere. Haller realizes that this war has been caused by the dissatisfaction inherent in the age, that it is "a war in which everyone who lacked air to breathe and no longer found life exactly pleasing gave emphatic expression to his displeasure and strove to prepare the way for a general destruction of this iron-cast civilization of ours." Gustav, a schoolmate friend of Haller's who is now a professor of theology, joins the Steppenwolf and they avidly join in the war. They drive out into the country, climb a tree, and begin shooting down the drivers of automobiles. Ironically, the pacifistic Kalier draws immense satisfaction from these brutal slayings. They capture a pretty stenographer called Dora and take her up into the tree with them. They continue to murder passers-by and the dream ends as Haller kisses Dora's knee. Thus, Haller has encountered another manifestation of his libidinous nature, and at the same time, experienced the degradation and savagery inherent in the age.

The next door to attract Haller is entitled "Guidance in the Building up of the Personality—Success Guaranteed." As he enters this door, Haller sees a nameless chess player sitting before a large chessboard. The chess player holds a mirror before Haller that reflects his many selves. He takes several of the pieces of Haller's self and places them
on the ground near the board. He explains that the bourgeois notion that man is a unity is false, and he reminds Haller that he has a multitude of souls. He points out that the separation of the soul into its individual pieces is labeled by science as madness and schizomania, but actually, schizomania is the beginning of all art and fantasy. He adds that the manipulation of the separate parts is the art of life. Haller takes the pieces of his divided self, places them in his pocket and withdraws. Once again, he has gained further self-realization and at the same time observed the deficiencies characteristic of his age.

Haller intends to play the "game of life" at once, but another dazzling poster beckons to him: "Marvelous Taming of the Steppenwolf." Intrigued by the title, he steps into the booth. Before him is a stage surrounded by an iron rail. On stage is a malicious-looking animal tamer who resembles Haller, and a large, beautiful wolf. The man has the wolf completely under his power and makes him perform many cruel tasks. Then, suddenly, the roles are reversed and the wolf becomes the master. As Haller watches the man devour a lamb and rabbit, he flees the booth with disgust, remembering a war photo which had shown heaps of broken bodies rotting in the sun. Haller realizes that the blood-thirsty human libido is capable of tremendous savagery on both an individual and a cultural level.
Longing for a purer atmosphere, Haller remembers the notice that he had first seen upon entering the Magic Theater: "All Girls Are Yours." As he walks through this door he is young once again, and his blood is on fire with the flame of passion. He meets Rosa Kreisler, whom he had known as a youth. Then, he had refused to make known his love for her, but now, he greets her warmly. They clasp hands and share a wonderful evening together. A similar experience follows for each of the girls that Haller has ever loved. He realizes that he has merely taken full advantage of one of the aspects of his soul. Before, he had been restricted by his ego and his bourgeois morality. As he completes this glorious encounter with his past loves, he notes: "I was equipped, far gone in knowledge, wise, expert--ripe for Hermine." 24

Longing for the reunion with Hermine in which he is to reach ultimate reconciliation and self-realization, Haller shudders as he sees the sign "How One Kills for Love." He immediately recalls Hermine's earlier prediction. He searches for Hermine and Pablo but only finds another mirror. This time the glass merely reflects Haller as a tired old man. He speaks to his reflection and it explains that it is waiting for death. Haller suddenly hears music from Don Giovanni and he makes his second contact with the Immortals, this time

24 Ibid., p. 203.
with Mozart. Mozart laughs the clear, ringing laugh of the Immortals and leads Haller into a theater box where they listen to the last act of Don Giovanni. Brahms and Wagner are also there, but they have not achieved full status as Immortals. They have to serve penance for the sins of their respective ages. If they have anything left over when the idiosyncrasies of their eras are shorn away, they can then achieve immortality. When Haller complains that they should not be responsible for the sins of their ages, Mozart mentions that neither can man help that Adam ate the apple. Mozart laughs aloud again when he sees the despair in Haller's face. He chides Haller in a long barrage of silly verse, and Haller angrily seizes him by his pigtail. The pigtail turns into a comet and pulls him into the outer reaches of the Immortal realm. In this icy atmosphere Haller feels the desire to laugh as shrilly and wildly as the Immortals, but he loses consciousness, later awakening in front of the mirror once more. Because he has acted instinctively and grabbed Mozart's pigtail, Haller almost succeeds in reaching the Immortal realm. His only remaining task is reunion with Hermine.

As he stares at his old and weary reflection in the mirror, he becomes disgusted once more and shatters the image with a kick. He walks slowly down the corridor, looking for other signs, but sees none. He stops at the last door and

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\[25\text{Ibid.}, \text{pp. 204-208.}\]
opens it. Inside he sees Hermine and Pablo asleep, lying side by side after love's play. He notices the round mark of a love bite beneath Hermine's left breast. In a jealous rage he plunges a knife into the spot. What Pablo had done physically, Haller could only do symbolically. As he stares at the dead body, Haller hears the faint sound of music, and Mozart enters the scene once more, this time in modern dress. Mozart assembles a radio and the sounds of Handel, somewhat distorted and screeching, emerge from the "devilish tin trumpet." Haller complains bitterly, but Mozart explains that even this monstrous machine of industrialization cannot hide the basic purity and original spirit of the music. He adds, "It can only demonstrate its own senseless mechanism, its insane meddling and marring." Then Mozart makes an analogy between the radio and life. He explains that just as the radio is able to distort music yet not totally obscure its essence, likewise does life distort the sublime picture-play of dreams and visions by attempting to forge them into its so-called "reality." That is why man must learn to laugh. He must discern the essence of life and laugh at the rest.

Mozart then berates Haller for killing Hermine and condemns him to be executed. The public prosecutor accuses Haller of misusing the Magic Theater by using it as a mechanism of suicide and showing himself to be devoid of humor. He then bars

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Ibid., p. 213.
Haller from the Magic Theater for twelve hours and orders him to be laughed out of court. Following the peal of Immortal laughter, Mozart speaks to Haller once again. He explains to Haller that he must learn to laugh. Mozart calls Haller a coward, reminding him that he is willing to die, but not to live. As he begins to come out of the trance, Haller realizes that Pablo has been Mozart all along. Pablo invites Haller back to his Magic Theater, but he reprimands him for having allowed his bourgeois jealousy to creep into the magic realm when he killed Hermine. Although he is exhausted and beaten, the old Steppenwolf is optimistic. He knows that he must traverse the hell of his soul many more times, but he also knows that someday he will learn how to laugh, for "Pablo was waiting for [him] and Mozart too." 27

Thus, in Steppenwolf, the role of dreams and visions has reached its second stage of evolutionary development. No longer serving as apocalyptic signposts, leading the protagonist from the real world to the ascetical realm of transcendence, dreams and visions have actually become the center of the action in the Magic Theater. Dreams and visions have also fulfilled their therapeutic function—they have shown the Steppenwolf the chaos within his own soul and suggested the solution for ultimate transcendence—to learn to laugh. They have cured his schizophrenia by revealing to him the

27Ibid., p. 213.
mary facets of his personality. And finally, they have taught him to discern the spiritual essence that lies beneath the stagnation of his sterile age—to laugh—to be.
CHAPTER V

WEB OF THE SOUL: THE ROLE OF DREAMS AND VISIONS IN NARCISSUS AND GOLDMUND

In Narcissus and Goldmund, published in 1929, Hesse retreats to the setting of the Middle Ages, where he depicts the dissonance between the intellectual and the artist. And just as he retreats into the past for his setting, he also regresses in his use of dreams and visions. The evolutionary development of dreams and visions that is apparent in Siddhartha and Steppenwolf breaks down, and the dichotomy between the mystical realm of dreams and visions and the real world is established once again. In Narcissus and Goldmund, however, dreams and visions do not serve as apocalyptic signposts, directing the protagonist toward his goal. Goldmund's dreams and visions merely reflect his unconscious mind. He does not take action because of his dreams, but rather, dreams as a consequence of his actions. Goldmund does, however, follow the call of the universal mother, and shortly before his death, he experiences a unifying vision of her infinite beauty. Thus dreams and visions offer valuable insights into this novel. By recording the development of Goldmund's unconscious mind, they provide insight into his
basic nature and make valuable comments on the nature of dreams and visions themselves in the process.

Hesse sets the tone of the novel in the second chapter when he states, "Narcissus was analytical, a thinker, Goldmund, a dreamer with the soul of a child."\(^1\) Narcissus loves Goldmund the first day he arrives at the cloister, but he quickly discovers Goldmund's tendency to daydream through his lessons. Realizing that Goldmund will never be a scholar, Narcissus encourages him to seek his destiny in the outside world. Narcissus explains that men like Goldmund have "strong, delicate senses," that they are the "dreamers, poets, and lovers" of the world, who take their beings from their mothers.\(^2\) The word mother has a traumatic effect on Goldmund. He has for some reason suppressed all memory of his own mother and his childhood. He faints and sees a vision of the universal mother, who calls to him.\(^3\) During the time preceding his departure from the cloister, Goldmund has many dreams. Hesse uses these dreams to give the reader an insight into Goldmund's true nature.

During this period Goldmund often dreams of the universal mother. His unconscious mind is not restricted to the present; it knows no barriers. Hesse explains:

The adolescent would sink deeply into these dreams, into these many-threaded webs of soul-inhabited senses.

\(^1\)Herman Hesse, Narcissus and Goldmund, translated by Ursula Molinaro (New York, 1968), p. 17.

\(^2\)Ibid., p. 45.

\(^3\)Ibid., p. 59.
Enchantingly they resurrected not only the beloved past: childhood and mother love, the radiantly golden morning of life; but in them also the future swung, menacing, promising, beckoning, dangerous.  

Goldmund has ambivalent feelings about the Earth Mother, but he knows that she contains the mysteries of life in "the small dark circle, the tiny threatening abyss in her clear eye." Much of Goldmund's forgotten childhood reappears in these mother dreams. Occasionally his dreams take him back beyond his childhood into the primeval past:

Occasionally he'd dream of fish, black and silver, swimming toward him, cool and smooth. . .bearing joyous news of a more gracious, more beautiful reality. . .or he'd dream of swimming fish and flying birds. . .or he'd dream of a garden, a magic garden with fabulous trees, huge flowers, and deep blue-dark caves; the eyes of unknown animals sparkled in the grass; smooth muscled serpents slid along the branches; giant moist-glistening berries hung from vine or bush. . . .

These dreams depict the timeless world of the universal mother—a world that is inextricably bound up with Goldmund's own nature. In another dream he dreams of his namesake, Goldmund of Chrysostom, who speaks beautiful words with his golden mouth. The words are small swarms of birds that fly off into fluttering groups. The last image of this dream hints of Goldmund's inability to separate thoughts from images. In still another dream, Goldmund dreams that he is physically mature, but he sits on the floor like a child.

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4 Ibid., p. 59.  
5 Ibid., p. 60.  
6 Ibid., p. 60.  
7 Ibid., p. 61.
He begins to model clay figures—a horse, a bull, a tiny man and woman. The figures amuse him, and he gives them ridiculously large genitals. When he tires of the game and walks off, he feels a movement at his back. The figures come to life in giant proportion. They march past him, increasing in stature as they go. This dream further explains Goldmund's nature. Goldmund, the dreamer with the soul of a child, is playing the role of a god-like creator. He creates the creatures in his own image. He is not merely man, but woman, child, horse and bull, as well. The large genitals symbolize his own raw, instinctual nature. And his creations are not simply symbolic manifestations of his own nature. They also represent his artistic achievements. The fact that they march past him, continuing to grow in stature, suggests that Goldmund's works of art will transcend his own mortal fate. Goldmund continues to live in this dream world until he makes his departure from the world of Narcissus and Abbot Daniel.

Thus, Goldmund's basic nature has been revealed through these early dreams. They picture him as a dreamy child of nature, whose roots are planted in the primeval slime of creation. He is ignorant of abstractions, unable to separate thought from images. The raw, instinctual urges dominate his being, but he has the power of creativity within him and the

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8 Ibid., p. 61.
heart and soul of an artist as well. It is conceivable to think of Goldmund’s early dreams as being apocalyptic since they contain many implications of his future life. He does respond to the call of the universal mother. He lives a life of the senses, and he becomes a creative artisan. But Goldmund’s situation is different from that of Sinclair and Siddhartha. They dream and consequently obey the apocalyptic messages of their dreams. Goldmund, however, does not leave the cloister because of his dreams, but rather, because Narcissus convinces him that it is the thing to do, and because the gypsy Lise provides the final impetus. And later, during his wanderings, Goldmund does not take actions because of his dreams, but rather, dreams as a consequence of his actions. Actually, then, dreams and visions have largely defined Goldmund’s innermost longings. His basic nature has been defined, and his worldly travels merely amplify our knowledge of it.

Lise, the gypsy, initiates Goldmund into the world of his universal mother. She is the first of the long series of characters who populate this dream-like world. Hesse perfectly depicts Goldmund’s entrance into this ambivalent, primate realm when he states, “He fell asleep and dreamed of animals and people, was a bear and devoured Lise amid caresses.”\(^9\) Lydia, the representation of the purer dimension

\(^9\)Ibid., p. 91.
of love, recognizes Goldmund's true nature. She describes his future:

You'll have no ordinary life, and it won't be easy. Oh, I hope you'll do well! I think you ought to become a poet, a man who has visions and dreams and knows how to describe them beautifully. Ah, you'll wander over the whole world and all women will love you, and yet you'll always remain alone.  

After he is forced to leave Lydia, he dreams of her and Julie and the knight with his sword. And after he kills Viktor, he often dreams of him.  

When Goldmund sees Master Niklaus' statue of the madonna, he recognizes the ambivalent expression of his mother image. And when he draws the charcoal painting for Master Niklaus, he remembers his dream of the clay models. In fact, he completes the entire drawing in a dream-like state of mind. The master's daughter Lisbeth fascinates Goldmund, and he wishes to create his own madonna that will portray her ambivalent expression. But then he begins to realize that the Earth Mother that he had dreamed of as a boy has changed during his journey. It has incorporated all of the women that he has met during his travels into its image. Shortly after this realization Goldmund has a vision of the universal mother, "leaning over the abyss of life, with a lost smile that is both beautiful and gruesome. She is looking at autumn leaves, at art, at decay." After having this

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10 Ibid., p. 116.  11 Ibid., p. 131.
vision he begins to contemplate the mysterious images of life. In explaining these images Hesse gives a beautiful description of dreams and the unconscious mind:

And one's nightly dreams were woven of the same unreal, magic stuff, a nothing that contained all the images in the world, an ocean in whose crystal the forms of all human beings, animals, angels, and demons lived as ever ready possibilities.14

Goldmund also wonders why so many perfect works of art fail to satisfy him. He finally realizes that they lack the most essential thing—mystery—and "that was what dreams and truly great works of art had in common: Mystery."15 And as he thinks once more of making a statue of the universal mother, he suddenly realizes that "art is a beautiful thing, but it is no goddess, no goal—not for him."16 "He is not to follow art, but only the call of his mother."17 So he leaves Master Niklaus and plunges back into the stream of the world.

He loves Lene, conquers the Black Death, is spurned by Rebekka, and is almost killed because of Agnes. But he eventually returns to his beloved Narcissus. And when he lies in the painful throes of death, he realizes that he is at last going to be united with the great Earth Mother. Goldmund smiles as he awaits death. He has not become learned, rich or famous. Yet, his life has not been unsuccessful, for he

14 Ibid., p. 133. 15 Ibid., p. 135. 16 Ibid., p. 136. 17 Ibid., p. 186.
has fulfilled his destiny—he has followed the call of his mother and at last, envisioned her pure, ambivalent being. And when he asks, "But how will you die when your time comes, Narcissus, since you have no mother?" Goldmund's words burn "like fire in his [Narcissus'] heart." 18

Thus, in Narcissus and Goldmund, Hesse uses dreams and visions to reveal the essence of Goldmund—the dreamy child of the primeval world whose raw, instinctual urges encompass the heart and soul of an artist. He also provides an understanding of dreams and the unconscious mind—those "many-threaded webs of soul-inhabited senses"—that "ocean in whose crystal forms of all human beings, animals, angels, and demons lived as ever ready possibilities." And finally, dreams and visions reveal the secret of Goldmund's ultimate success—that he follows the call of his mother and at last sees her beautiful, unifying vision.

18 Ibid., p. 315.
CHAPTER VI

THE RETURN TO ASCETICISM: THE ROLE OF DREAMS AND VISIONS IN THE GLASS BEAD GAME

In Hesse’s last novel, The Glass Bead Game, which was published in 1943, the role of dreams and visions resumes the evolutionary development that had characterized the major novels through Steppenwolf. Although this development had been temporarily abandoned in Narcissus and Goldmund, in this final novel the realm of dreams and visions succeeds in completely replacing the real world. In The Glass Bead Game the Magic Theater is replaced by the ethereal kingdom of Castalia. The ascetical realm has finally superseded the sensual, real world altogether. Castalia exists as a cultural institution, but it is an utopian society divorced from the real world. Thus, the need for dreams and visions is largely vitiated. The Castalians are, so to speak, the Immortals, inhabitants of a seemingly timeless spiritual realm where there is virtually no disharmony of self, and where ascetical existence is its own apocalypse. This artistically-sterile realm of Castalia, therefore, has no need of dreams and visions, and they play a negligible role in the text of Joseph Knecht’s biography. They do, however, emerge in "Joseph Knecht’s Posthumous Writings," which were written during
Knecht's years of independent study. One of the poems, "A Dream," and a prolonged vision in "The Indian Life," make valuable comments concerning Hesse's concept of the role of dreams and visions in man's destiny.

In the first chapter of *The Glass Bead Game*, when the Music Master visits young Joseph Knecht, Hesse reveals that the realm of dreams and visions has become a tangible reality:

The ideal world, which hitherto his young soul had known only by hearsay and in wild dreams, had suddenly taken on visible liniments for him. . . . This world, he now saw, it was here and was active. . . . and a call had come from that world even to him, the insignificant Latin pupil.1

Thus, young Knecht is chosen for the elite Order of future Castalians. Hesse summarizes Knecht's early progress:

"Thus, beginning within and growing toward the meeting and confirmation of self and world, the vocation of Joseph Knecht developed in perfect purity."2 The utopian quality of *The Glass Bead Game* becomes quite obvious, then, when such a passage is compared to the corresponding struggles for self-realization and happiness of Sinclair, Siddhartha, and the Steppenwolf.

Knecht experiences one of the few dreams mentioned in *The Glass Bead Game* during his visit to the Music Master

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2Ibid., p. 59.
directly preceding his entrance into the special Castalian schools. While the Music Master plays the piano, he instructs Knecht to meditate—to try to form a visual image of the music in his mind. An image appears but he soon loses it. After the session of meditation he attempts to draw the fleeting image that he has seen, but he is unsuccessful.

That night Knecht has a dream:

He dreamed that he was once again on that height above the woods, where he had rested with his classmate, and saw dear Eschholz spread out below him. And as he looked down, the quadrangle of the school building contracted into an oval and then spread out to a circle, a garland, and the garland began turning slowly; it turned with increasing speed, until at last it was whirling madly and burst, flying apart into twinkling stars.3

Eschholz represents Knecht's past life which is metamorphosed into the swirling image that Knecht had envisioned during meditation. Thus, this apocalyptic dream prefigures Knecht's entrance into the ascetical Castalian realm. His past life coalesces with his visionary image of the future. The final disintegration of the image suggests the self-destructive nature of Castalia and prefigures Knecht's death.

Knecht relates this dream to the Music Master and asks him if dreams are important. When the Music Master answers that everything is important, he, once again, suggests the utopian nature of Castalia.

The first significant vision recorded in *The Glass Bead Game* appears to Knecht directly following his appointment as

3Ibid., p. 80.
Kagister Ludi. In this vision Knecht recalls his first meeting with the Music Master. As he recalls the many acts of kindness of the old man, he sees two principal scenes "which emerged from the stream and lingered, two pictures or symbols, two parables." In the first of these, the Music Master serves as a guide for young Knecht. As they walk along the path of life the Music Master becomes older, "more tranquil and venerable, visibly approaching an ideal of timeless wisdom and dignity." Knecht, however, remains a mere boy and feels a certain degree of ambivalence because of the situation. The second scene recreates Knecht’s and the Music Master’s first meeting in the piano room. In an atmosphere of timelessness, the events of that day are repeated over and over again, the roles of Knecht and the Music Master often being reversed. Knecht realizes that this ambivalent, meaningful and meaningless cycle of master and pupil is emblematic of Castalia and, in fact, of the game of life in general. The first part of the vision is apocalyptic in that it suggests Knecht’s ultimate failure to find complete unity of spirit in Castalia. This vision has a strengthening and comforting effect on Knecht and gives him the confidence necessary to assume the office of Kagister Ludi.

No other significant mention of dreams and visions occurs in the text of Joseph Knecht’s biography, and they only

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Tbid., pp. 219-221.
become important again in "Joseph Knecht's Posthumous Writ-
ings." One of the poems entitled "A Dream" makes a valuable
comment on Hesse's concept of the role of dreams and visions
in man's destiny. In this dream-poem Knecht is a guest at a
monastery. When all the monks go to pray, he slips into the
library. He begins to observe the titles of a few of the
volumes such as "The Squaring of the Circle—Final Stage;"
or "How Adam also Ate of the Other Tree." He realizes that
he is in the library of Paradise, the place where all of his
questions about life can be answered. Hesse writes:

Here was the inner meaning, here the key
To poetry, to wisdom, and to science.
Magic and erudition in alliance
Opened the door to every mystery.
These books provided pledges of all power
To him who came here at this magic hour.

Knecht places one of the books on a nearby lectern. As he
looks at the pages, he undergoes a strange experience:

At once I soared aloft to starry spaces
Of the soul, and with the zodiac turned,
Where all the revelations of all races,
Whatever intuition has divined,
Millennial experience of all nations,
Harmoniously met in new relations,
Old insights with new symbols recombined,
So that in minutes or in hours as I read
I traced once more the whole path of mankind,
And all that men have ever done and said
Disclosed its inner meaning to my mind.

Knecht is dazzled by these sights, but as he turns away his
eyes, he sees an old man standing in the library. This old

5Ibid., pp. 437-439.  6Ibid., p. 438.
7Ibid., p. 438.
man begins to change the titles of the books. He wipes his finger across the spines of the books, silently erasing the former titles, and inscribing new titles in their place. Knecht is amused by the behavior of the old man, but unable to see a rational explanation for his actions, he returns to his book. Yet, he finds that he can no longer read the signs or see the rows of images:

The world of symbols I had barely entered
That had stirred me to such transports of bliss,
In which a universe of meaning centered,
Seemed to dissolve and rush away, careen
And reel and shake in feverish contractions,
And fade out, leaving nothing to be seen
But empty parchment with a hoary sheen. 8

Then the old man brushes Knecht's shoulder. He takes Knecht's book and erases the former title and begins to write,

New promises and problems, novel inquiries,
New formulas for ancient mysteries. 9

Finally, the old man takes Knecht's book and disappears from sight. "A Dream" gives a valuable insight into Hesse's concept of the role of dreams and visions in man's destiny. The library of Paradise symbolizes the role of dreams and visions throughout man's history. Only in dreams and visions has man been able to find the answer to life's problems. The individual volumes of the library symbolize the timeless, primordial images that inhabit the realm of dreams and visions. The old man who begins to change the titles is, symbolically, Father Time with the modern ideologies superimposed upon him.

8 Ibid., p. 439. 9 Ibid., p. 439.
He is existential man, destroying the Romantic Tradition—empirical man, replacing literature with technical jargon and formulae—psychological man, defiling the sanctity of the world of dreams and visions. The fact that Knecht can no longer read his book after the old man touches it indicates that Hesse cannot fit into the nihilistic modern age. And finally, the fact that the old man takes Knecht’s book and disappears, suggests that The Glass Bead Game will be Hesse’s last romantic attempt to find transcendence in an existential age. The prolonged vision in "The Indian Life" confirms this notion.

In "The Indian Life," the last of the three "Lives" in The Glass Bead Game, Prince Dasa murders Nala, his step-brother, for stealing his beautiful wife Pravati. He is forced to go into hiding, and he returns to the hut of an old yogi-like hermit whom he had met as a child. He becomes the yogi’s apprentice and remains with him in the forest. The yogi, however, seems to pay little attention to Dasa and rarely ever speaks as much as a single word to him. Becoming impatient, Dasa questions the old yogi concerning the secret of peace and tranquility. The old man shakes with a soundless laughter that is reminiscent of the Immortals in Steppenwolf and says "Maya! Maya!" (illusion—the veil that covers reality). Disappointed at the terse, confusing answer

10 Ibid., pp. 520-558.  
11 Ibid., p. 536.
of the yogi, Dasa determines to leave the hut, the yogi, and the meditative life, and to return to the real world. But before leaving, he asks the yogi to teach him more about Maya. The old yogi sends him to the spring to fill a gourd with fresh water. As Dasa crouches by the spring and drinks, he experiences a prolonged vision. As the vision begins, Dasa hears Pravati's beautiful voice calling to him. They embrace and kiss, and she explains that his name has been cleared and he is to become the new Rajah. He is installed as Rajah and later, he and Pravati have a son whom they name Havana. When he has to leave his small son during an invasion of the kingdom, Dasa realizes how much he loves the boy. His actions during this invasion lead to war, and eventually, to estrangement from his wife. Pravati becomes involved with Vishwanitra, and the war becomes worse for Dasa. Dasa is eventually taken prisoner and his son is slain. He longs for death to release him from his pain and misery. Finally, Dasa awakens from this prolonged vision and realizes that it had not been reality at all, but merely a dream. He also realizes that he has learned about Maya—"...Maya, the whole lovely and frightful, delicious and desperate kaleidoscope of life with its searing delights, its searing griefs."\(^2\) Thus, Dasa decides to shun the appeal of the world of Maya and to stay with the old yogi, living an austere, meditative existence. Early in *The Glass Bead Game* Hesse suggests that

\(^2\)Ibid., p. 556.
Knecht's "Lives" might possibly be the most valuable part of the book, and this suggestion seems particularly significant in connection with Dasa's permanent retreat into ascetism. Joseph Knecht joins the outer world—and dies in the process. Dasa, however, remains in the ascetical realm and The Glass Bead Game concludes: "He never again left the forest." Could it be that Hesse was thinking of his own inability to fit into the modern, existential world? Could the forest have been Hesse's Hontagnola?

Thus, as The Glass Bead Game ends, the evolutionary development of the role of dreams and visions seems to have made a complete cycle, returning to the transcendental vision that had characterized the ending of Demian and Siddhartha. Hesse makes one last attempt to replace the real world with the realm of dreams and visions in the ethereal kingdom of Castalia. But the attempt fails. Joseph Knecht cannot survive in the sterile atmosphere of Castalia, yet when he attempts to become part of both realms, he dies—suggesting that death is the ultimate apocalypse. But Hesse, the romanticist, cannot accept this existential decree. He has tried with all the strength of his being, but he cannot exclude the faint hope of a realm of Immortals floating somewhere in that ethereal realm of dreams and visions between the unconscious and conscious mind.

\[13\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 115.} \quad 14\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 558.}\]
EPILGUE

A systematic study of the role of dreams and visions in Hermann Hesse's major novels has been necessary to show the significance of this neglected area of Hesse scholarship. It has revealed the evolutionary development of dreams and visions that characterized Hesse's enduring attempt to reconcile the conflicting realms of nature and spirit. In Demian and Siddhartha apocalyptic dreams led Sinclair and Siddhartha from the real world to the ultimate mystical vision of transcendence. Total reconciliation was denied Harry Haller in Steppenwolf, but he gained partial self-realization in the quasi-realistic, fantasy-world of the Magic Theater. In Narcissus and Goldmund Hesse regressed to his original use of dreams and visions, this time comparing the mysterious realm of dreams and art, and seeking resolution therein. In his final novel, The Glass Bead Game, Hesse completely replaced the sensual, real world with the tenuous realm of Castalia. But realizing that such an utopian institution could never survive, he ultimately abandoned forever the hope of successfully integrating the conflicting realms of nature and spirit. And-dreamer that he was, he returned to the mystical, ethereal realm of dreams and visions that had marked the culmination of his earlier works.
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