

Hermann Hesse and India.

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Hermann Hesse's way of thinking is based on a variety of ideas which only partly derive from Indian religion and philosophy. Nevertheless Hesse himself always pointed out that the ways of Indian thinking had strongly influenced his basic ideas and his work of art and they were as important as Christianity and Taoism to him.

Hesse's occupation with India, with its philosophy and culture can be divided into three different stages. In the first part of my speech I would like to explain and characterize these three stages. In the second part I would like to show that Hesse's novel "Siddhartha" can be considered as a summary of his preoccupation with Indian ideas and of his personal development.

On the first stage Hesse's confrontation with Indian culture was unreflected and pre-conscious. It started from his birth in 1877 and lasted until 1904, the year in which he moved to Gaienhofen and started a life as a professional writer. One can say that he inherited his interest in India and its tradition and culture. Hesse himself often pointed out that his grandfather, his mother and his father had lived in India for many years as missionaries, that they were able to speak different Indian languages and that they possessed many Indian things such as clothes and pictures. His grandfather, Dr. Hermann Gundert, had been a famous scholar who was preoccupied with the Sanskrit and is still well-known in India today. His mother told the little boy anecdotes of her time in India and his father enjoyed reading Buddhist prayers he himself had translated into English or German. The young boy was extremely sensitive and open to this and so this early confrontation led to a lifelong preoccupation with Indian religion.

Nevertheless conflicts with his parents were due to come. Although father and mother were open to a certain degree and respected Hinduism and Buddhism, they always pointed out that according to their point of view Christianity was the only real and true religion. They could not get rid of a certain narrow-mindedness in spite of their love for India. This was a source of confrontation because Hermann Hesse could not agree with this lack of acceptance even when he was young and when he got older his open-mindedness and tolerance towards all kinds of religion grew and he regarded them all as equal. He hated dogmatism of any kind.

It goes without saying that this extremely gifted and creative young man struggled for overcoming his own cultural preconditioning and that he led a successful fight against these boundaries within himself that were created by his family background, which can be regarded as some kind of "karma".

But this first stage was mainly pre-conscious. When Hesse left his parents he had no more contact with India and its philosophical and religious traditions for ten years. Only in 1904, when he was 27 years old and when he started studying the German philosopher Schopenhauer he found himself again in this Indian atmosphere, read translations of Bhagavadgita and since then never lost touch with this spiritual world. It was then when the second stage started which can be characterized as a time of intellectual confrontation with the Indian way of thinking, a time of spiritual quest.

This stage lasted until 1921. It was no accident that this phase started with the confrontation with Schopenhauer's ideas. At the turn of the century Schopenhauer and Nietzsche were fashionable authors and like the young Thomas Mann Hermann Hesse was much attracted by this intellectual world. Links between Schopenhauer's philosophy and Indian spirituality are obvious. Schopenhauer's epistemological maxim of the world being a mere reflection of our consciousness is strongly related to the Indian idea that our factual world is not real but mere appearance. This idea is a basis of Hinduism and Buddhism. And Schopenhauer's anthropological thesis of the "will" as an irrational force within man corresponds to the Buddhist conception of the "thirst" as a source of human suffering. In addition to that Schopenhauer's concept of salvation corresponds with the one based on Buddhism and Hinduism. According to Schopenhauer salvation can only be gained when selfishness and restrictedness are overcome by compassion and the discovery that all beings are brothers and sisters. This corresponds to the traditional "Tat tvam asi" of the Upanishads and the Buddhist idea of salvation by overcoming "Thirst" and egocentricity.

So it is quite obvious that Schopenhauer led Hesse to a new approach to the Holy Texts of India.

Another motivation for Hesse's new interest in a systematic occupation with the religious tradition of India was surely his former dislike of Christianity. He was bored and disgusted by its theory and practice and by his parent's narrow-mindedness. Therefore he was looking for a deeper and more personal spirituality and India offered this to him.

After this first but not too profound stage Hesse went on a trip to Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Sumatra, his so-called "Trip to India", which lasted from September 1911 to December 1911. He was accompanied by the painter Hans Sturzenegger who was his friend. There were several reasons for this voyage: His marriage to his first wife had entered a stage of crisis and ended up in divorce. But it was also an escape from Europe and its political development which drifted towards World War I and a European culture industry which he regarded as unbearable and disgusting. His voyage to India was not merely blind escape, it was a search for alternatives to personal, cultural and political misery. India seemed to offer this escape because it showed no traits of European decadence. His main impressions of this journey are collected in his "Remembrances of Asia"(1914).

He said that from the start the culture of China had made a lasting impression on him. He felt a deep affinity, but it was also mixed with a "feeling of competition and danger". He advised European readers to regard China as an "equal competitor who can become both friend or enemy, who can be enormously useful or dangerous".

His attitude towards the primitive people was completely different. He likes them at once but compares his love to a love felt by adults towards weaker and younger brothers and sisters, mixed with a feeling of guilt of a European who knows, that Europe has reacted as a thief, a conqueror and exploiter towards these people.

His third main impression, as one can easily expect, was the jungle. He went by boat and visited the important rivers, he chased butterflies, saw crocodiles, big cats, apes and monkeys, bush plants and he regards this as a return to the source of life.

But Hesse's main important impression was a human and a religious one. I would like to quote the most important parts of Hesse's recollections:

"In the end the human impression is the strongest. It is the religious link of all these millions of souls. The whole East breathes religion in a way the West breathes reason and technology. Occidental inner life seems to be primitive and exposed to chance if you compare it to the spirituality of the Asian which is protected, secure and trustful. This impression is outstanding because here you can see Eastern strength and Occidental misery and weakness and all doubts, troubles and hopes of our soul are confirmed. Everywhere we can see the supremacy of our technology and civilization and everywhere we can see that the religious people of the East enjoy something we are deeply lacking and therefore appreciate more than any superiority. It is quite clear that no import from the East can help us here and no returning to India or China and no escape to any religiousness organized by any church. But it is also quite obvious that salvation and continuance of our culture is only possible if we regain spiritual mastery in the art of living. I don't know whether religion is something that could be done away with, but I have never seen more clearly and relentlessly than among Asian people that religion or its substitute is something we are deeply lacking".

It is typical of Hesse's way of thinking that his prevailing impression was a religious one and that he considered the West to be inferior. This can be explained by the religious background of his family and by his quest for a new orientation for himself and for all Europeans. "Only authentic religiousness can lead to real superiority"- this claim is quite typical of Hesse's ideas. But it is also quite typical of him that he does not support the idea that Europeans should merely adopt Eastern religion. And this is also a characteristic trait of his life: he was quite sceptical towards any kind of religious doctrine of salvation, no matter whether it is based on Buddhism, Hinduism or Christianity. For him intellectual and spiritual development always leads into the future, into new and personally formulated ideas. That's the reason why Hesse never recommends either Buddhism or the membership in a traditional European church. Individualized and intellectual Europeans who have been formed by the ideas of Enlightenment cannot return to a naïve or primitive religiousness and he regards a flight back to Mother Church as a lack of personality and individualized and independent thinking.

Nevertheless eastern religion offers something more valuable to the European soul: a new spiritual revival. In his essay "Erinnerungen an Indien"(Reminiscences of India, 1917) Hesse points out this idea:

"Never can we old sons of the West return to primeval man and to naive innocence of the first people, but we can return to a fertile spiritual revival influenced by the chain of ideas starting with Lao-tse and leading to Jesus".

One way of achieving this is shown by Hesse's texts but - according to this view- every single person must find his own personal way.

Hesse regarded a second impression of India as most important- the impression of a unity of all human beings:

"But more beautiful than this was what we could see of the people. A Hindu's dreamy gait, a fragile Singhalese's tender sad and beautiful hazel

look, the dazzling white of an eyeball in a black Tamilkuli's eye, a noble Chinaman's smile. A beggar's stammering in a strange dialect, being understood without any words among ten different peoples and languages and everywhere the strange and happy feeling that all men are equal, are brothers and sisters, are companions. This old and little truism that there is only one mankind was the most important impression for me and after World War I it has become even more valuable".

The brotherhood of man with no respect to any ethnical or religious differences is a leitmotif in Hesse's texts after World War I and it is prevailing in texts such as Demian, Siddhartha, Der Steppenwolf, Die Morgenlandfahrt and Das Glasperlenspiel. Each of these texts formulates in its own way this basic experience. And it was more than mere personal fascination. He considered it to be a counterworld to nationalism, imperialism and World War I and II. Hesse's voyage to Indonesia finally turned him into the great humanist and cosmopolitan as he is known today.

After his return to Europe he was still preoccupied with the Indian way of thinking. This was most important for him while he was working at his Indian novel Siddhartha (1919-1922). He read and reviewed texts that were published when India was quite in fashion in Europe, such as From the Brahmanas und Upanishads (1921) by Alfred Hillebrandt. These reviews are partly published today and reveal Hesse's special interest in these texts. For example he writes about the Upanishads: "Atman is their central idea, the idea of the ego and the self. The finding of the self and the difference between egotism and the self is the main idea of Indian teaching".

The conception of God within the self dominates Hesse's texts that belonged to his middle and late period. All his main works from Demian to Das Glasperlenspiel succumb to the fascinating power of this idea. Hinduist belief in a divine, immortal und unchangeable self (Atman) as the innermost of human psyche and as a link to "Brahman", the spirit of the universe, was also the belief of Hermann Hesse.

Hesse also read and reviewed Buddha's speeches which had been translated into German for the first time by Karl Eugen Neumann. For Hesse, not some new insight seemed to be the aim of Buddhist meditation but "...a shift in the level of consciousness, a technique which is aimed at achieving inner harmony by using both equally intuition and intellect". The Eastern way of thinking should provide a balance to the intellectual European approach. But nevertheless he did not want to do away with criticism towards Buddhism: "Those who read Buddha and turn into Buddhists may have found personal comfort, but instead of finding a way Buddha might show us they have escaped through a back door", he wrote at the end of his article. Hesse- as usual- preferred an individual and critical attitude towards Buddhism. This will also be revealed in his Siddhartha-novel.

In 1921 Hesse entered a stage in which his individual, creative and critical attitude towards the Indian way of thinking can clearly be seen in his texts. Hesse discovered a world of spirituality not linked to any specific time, culture or religion, not linked to India or Europe.

In his "Besuch aus Indien" (Visitor from India) it says:

"You can't open unripe fruit. More than half of my life I was preoccupied with Indian and Chinese studies or- in order to avoid the impression of being a mere scholar- I was used to breathe the scent of Indian and Chinese poetry and spirituality. But when I went to India eleven years ago I saw the

palm trees and the temples, I was able to smell the incense and the sandalwood, I ate mango and bananas but there was some kind of veil between me and all these things and among the Buddhist priests in Kandy I felt the same longing for the authentic spirit of India as that I had longed for when I had lived in Europe. I did not possess Indian spirit, I had not yet found it, I was still looking for it. This was the reason for my flight from Europe, too. I had almost hated its loud and piercing tastelessness, it's noisy fair-like character, its hasty restlessness, it's bowdy and foolish hedonism.

I did not reach India by ship or train. I had to find the magic bridges all by myself. I had to stop looking for my personal salvation from Europe there, I had to stop fighting the European part within my own heart, I had to unite the real Europe and the real India within myself and this lasted more and more years filled with suffering, unrest, war and desperation.

Then a new time started for me, a time when I no longer longed for the palm beach of Ceylon and the streets of Benares and when I no longer wanted to become a Buddhist or a Taoist or to have a saint or a magician as a teacher. This all had become unimportant. The difference between the adored East and the sick and suffering West was no longer important to me. I no longer wanted to force my way into Eastern wisdom and cult. I realized that thousand modern admirers of Lao-tse knew less about Tao than Goethe who had never come across the word "Tao". I knew that in both, in Europe and Asia, there was some timeless world of values, intellect and spirit and that it was right to participate in this world that was part of Europe and Asia, the Vedas and the Bible, Buddha and Goethe. It was here where my school of magicians started and it still goes on. This kind of learning goes on forever. But I had done away with my longing for India and my flight from Europe. And only then did Buddha and the Tao-te-king sound clear and familiar to me and only then did they no longer puzzle me".

This quotation is crucial to the understanding of Hesse's personality and his way of thinking. It marks a turning point in his development that started from World War I and his personal crisis and which came to an end when he had finished Siddhartha. It is some kind of revelation of a new anthropological insight into the soul of the Holy Books of India, China and Christianity. I wrote about this in my book The archetypical way to salvation. Hermann Hesse, C.G.Jung and the world-religions.

The experience of a unity of Eastern and Western thinking is the basis of all texts that followed such turning point. This can be seen in his reflections on "Christmas"(1917):

"Jesus' teachings and Lao-tse's teachings, the Vedas and Goethe finally express the same humanity. There is only one message. There is only one religion. There is only one happiness. A thousand different ways expressing the same thought, a thousand different voices expressing nothing but one final and common call. God's voice can not be found on Sinai or in the Bible, the essence of love, beauty and holiness is not within Christianity, not within the ancient world, is not Goethe or Tolstoi- it's all within yourself, in you and in me, in each of us. That is the only final truth. It is the message of the heaven that is within ourselves".

This cannot be said more clearly and this attitude does not only reveal itself in Hesse's texts but also in the way he acted in everyday life.

These three main stages in Hesse's occupation with India- the unreflected stage, the stage of intellectual quest and the experience of the India within yourself- can also be found in the Indian novel "Siddhartha". Three different sources of the subject can be named: the legend of Buddha's life, psychoanalysis and Hesse's own confrontation with the religious tradition of India and China.

If you regard the novel from the biographical point of view it can be seen as Hesse's attempt to overcome his own intellectual and spiritual development up to the beginning of the 20 s. By writing the story of Siddhartha who is looking for personal salvation and by using certain elements of Buddha's life he tried to come to terms with his own development.

Like the young Hermann Hesse, Siddhartha starts out with some kind of a pre-conscious, unreflected stage. At the beginning Siddhartha's character like Hermann Hesse's is formed by convention and a lack of an independent spiritual approach towards religion. His problem is quite typical of young people whose intellectual education is more developed than their emotional maturity. They know more than they can emotionally cope with. Their intellects are more developed than their souls.

Intellectually Siddhartha knows that enlightenment is based on the coincidence of Atman and Brahman, but this knowledge is merely intellectual. It is not based on his own personal experience. This discrepancy between the lack of authentic experience and mere intellectual knowledge sets off Siddhartha's process of maturation.

In spite of his father's resistance he leaves his parents and together with his friend Govinda he starts out on a quest for enlightenment. Then the second stage of his development begins which relates to Hesse's second stage: Hesse's seeks to achieve spiritual and intellectual insight with the help of studies. Siddhartha's second stage helps him to get rid of tradition, his parents' conventions and authority but it does not lead to an individual approach towards spirituality. He becomes a member of a group of ascetics. But these efforts are doomed to failure. He hardly ever eats and finally looks like a skeleton but this does not lead him to any salvation. Asceticism appears not to lead to enlightenment. This was also true for Buddha whose ascetic attempts definitely led to no success. Hesse in his so-called Buddhistic phase made the same experience.

Modern psychoanalysis can explain why asceticism cannot lead to success. The experience of Enlightenment is not alone based on the intellectual capacity of man. Many aspects of the personality are involved in achieving this state. It is a holistic experience where not only intellectual but also emotional, irrational and affective parts of the personality have to form a unity and especially those subconscious parts cannot be activated by the will or the intellect.

Either those non-intellectual elements work on their own or they do not work at all. If you want to achieve this state of enlightenment with the help of your will or your intellect you are doomed to fail. This modern psychological insight- which was also well-known to Hesse- had been gained much earlier by all world religions. There is the Christian belief that authentic knowledge of God is a gift from God. Buddha says that all asceticism is in vain. Ascetic effort of will blocks human consciousness instead of preparing it to open up to the currents and movements of the subconscious. Siddhartha realizes that his intellectual and ascetic efforts of will are in vain. This experience leaves him with a critical attitude towards all kinds of doctrine. It is the same critical attitude that is typical of Hesse's philosophy. Intellect alone does not prepare man to achieve authentic enlightenment.

These philosophical doubts are typical of the next stage of Siddhartha's development- the stage he has a good look at the historical Buddha. Siddhartha is deeply impressed by Buddha's charisma but he does not want to become his disciple:

"Not for one moment did I doubt that you were the Buddha, that you have reached the highest goal ... You have done so by your own seeking, in your own way, through thought, through meditation, through knowledge, through enlightenment. You have learned nothing through teachings, nobody finds salvation through teachings. To nobody, O Illustrious One, can you communicate in words and teachings what happened to you in the hour of your enlightenment... That is why I am going on my own way- not to seek another and better doctrine, for I know there is none, but to leave all doctrines and all teachers and to reach my goal alone- or die".

This is perhaps the most impressive manifest of Hesse's individualism: In the face of the enlightened Buddha, Siddhartha reveals that he does not want to become a Buddhist but to become a Buddha himself. This confession can not lead back to any philosophy or intellectualism or to any religious community. There is only one way left for Siddhartha: The simple and naive life he has been eager to avoid up to now.

This kind of life is offered to him by the beautiful courtesan Kamala. Siddhartha falls in love with this spoiled demimondaine. He attracts her attention and starts courting her. Very quickly it is quite obvious to him that she only expects expensive gifts as the main demonstration of his love. She does not want to give her love to a poor beggar. These preconditions are Siddhartha's only reason to work for the merchant Kamaswami. Here he can earn the money he needs to satisfy Kamala's needs.

Now he is confronted with society, the so-called "world of the child people" and their childish needs. There are four stages of Siddhartha's life in this world which Hesse characterized with outstanding psychological insight. On the first stage Siddhartha still defines himself as a philosophical and religious person and distances himself from the world of merchants. He does not really take his daily work seriously, distances himself from the people he works with and only accepts his work as a means to get the money he needs to meet Kamala's demands. But this inner distance cannot be kept. On a second stage Siddhartha gets more and more attracted to a luxurious life and its comfort. Increasing wealth coincides with an alienation from his real self. He suffers from the mental, emotional and spiritual diseases that are typical of many rich people: a general dissatisfaction, lethargy and unlovingness. But this does not mark the last low of his secular career. There is a time when he finally becomes addicted to alcohol, sex, gambling and greed. The man who formerly longed for spiritual salvation has now turned into a rake who only still feels alive for a split second when he has to be worried about his astronomic stake at a game of dice. The man who once despised merchants and bourgeois people has finally turned into such a child himself and even more greedy, more unscrupulous and more wasteful than most of them. That is the third stage of his worldly life. But this makes him mature for a fourth stage which leads to a turning point that brings about a new way of existence. One day it happens that with the help of two dreams Siddhartha becomes aware that the only happiness in his life is his divine calling and that he has lost his ability to listen to his inner calling in his own heart. He is driven into despair and he suddenly leaves his family in order to commit suicide. Suddenly something strange happens: Just at the moment when he is standing on the bank of a river looking at his own reflection in the water, spitting at it and willing to die, he suddenly becomes aware of a change within himself:

"Then from a remote part of his soul, from the past of his tired life, he heard a sound. It was one word, one syllable, which without thinking he spoke instinctively, the ancient beginning and ending of all Brahmin prayers, the holy Om, which had the meaning of "the perfect One" or "perfection". At that moment, when the sound of Om reached Siddhartha's ears, his slumbering soul suddenly awakened and he recognized the folly of his action... "Om", he pronounced inwardly, and he was conscious of Brahman, of the indestructibility of life; he remembered all that he had forgotten, all that was divine."

Hesse describes a great psychological secret- unintentional and spontaneous spiritual rebirth. The same happened to the historic Buddha who was only able to experience enlightenment after he had given up looking for it. Siddhartha is only able to find his new self when he is definitely willing to give up his old one.

Siddhartha's experience of a rebirth and his way of life after this experience is parallel to the third stage of Hesse's preoccupation with India and its individual and creative way of experiencing and thinking. Siddhartha, the historical Buddha and Hermann Hesse they all have finally found what they were looking for. The first effect of this spiritual rebirth for Siddhartha is a universal love for all beings, which is also a characteristic trait of Jesus and Buddha. Looking back Siddhartha suddenly realizes that despair was a necessary step that enabled him to experience a total change within himself. A new light in his deepest despair endows him with a love for all beings.

He decides to stay on this river where he had such an important experience and where he gets to know the old ferryman Vasudeva better who soon becomes his friend. Vasudeva hardly ever speaks and he says about himself that he can only listen and be religious. At the beginning Siddhartha considers him to be a fool, but later he realizes that Vasudeva is a wise man. Being a ferryman has a symbolic meaning. Not only does he help people to reach the other side of the river, but he also helps them to reach another side of their soul, not with the help of words, but with the help of his charismatic personality. He is the archetype of the old wise man. He conveys Hesse's Taoistic belief that wisdom cannot be put into words. "Wisdom is not communicable. Wisdom sounds like foolishness if you want to convey it with the help of words," Siddhartha later says to his friend Govinda who even as an old man still believes in the power of a real doctrine. This is what Vasudeva taught Siddhartha.

But he has not reached the end of his long journey. His former love Kamala has turned into an old woman looking for salvation. She meets Siddhartha on the bank of the river and dies in his arms. She leaves their son to him, and new complications start. Siddhartha- the enlightened man- is now confronted with the problem of being a father. But this is also positive for his personal development. Up to this moment Siddhartha's love was universal, but it was also free and non-committal. Now he learns to love one real person in a responsible and total way. The calmness of his inner life is endangered, but this inner life has also become richer. But there is one big problem: His son does not want to be loved and protected by him. Siddhartha wants to help him avoiding all the errors and dangers he had experienced in his own life, but his son refuses his advice, rebels against his father and one day leaves him in a rush.

Siddhartha is desperate. He follows him to the near town and realizes pretty late how foolish his behaviour is. He himself had to leave his father too in order to find his own individual destiny. And deep in his soul he knows that living through his own errors had been necessary to reach maturity. Then he gains the last new insight he

finally needs in order to find peace- the insight that suffering must be integrated in life:

"Within Siddhartha there slowly grew and ripened the knowledge of what wisdom really was and the goal of his long seeking. It was nothing but a preparation of the soul, a capacity, a secret art of thinking, feeling and breathing thoughts of unity at every moment of life... And when he felt the wound smarting, he whispered the word Om, filled himself with Om".

This element is typical of Christianity and of Buddhism as well. Buddha himself renounced the bliss of Nirwana in order to become a teacher of salvation. Hesse integrates the notion of suffering into his philosophy and perhaps makes it acceptable by doing so.

Now the novel could end. But Hesse added a little episode to sum up the main essence of his work. Siddhartha and Govinda meet again. They are old men now. Together they had once left in order to find insight and salvation. Govinda has become a Buddhist, but in contrast to Siddhartha he is still looking for truth and salvation.. Govinda urges Siddhartha to talk about the truth he has found. And Siddhartha talks about the insight he has gained: about the relativity of all truth, about the insufficiency of words, about the unreality of time, about the perfection of all being, about the meaning of love- but then he realizes that his friend cannot understand him or can only understand him in an intellectual way. Govinda has never experienced the reality of his words and he cannot experience it now. Wisdom cannot be taught, truth can only be experience and this cannot be brought about intentionally. That is why Siddhartha asks his friend to kiss him. And obviously this kiss is more successful than words: Govinda is puzzled but because he loves his friend and he has some strange intuition, he kisses Siddhartha on his forehead. This kiss is the symbol of unintentional self abandon, dedication and devotion of the ego to completeness, to the union of the universe, to the divine and this kiss suddenly brings about the unexpected experience of enlightenment the old man has looked for in vain:

"Although surprised, Govinda was compelled by a great love and presentiment to obey him; he leaned close to him and touched his forehead with his lips. As he did this, something wonderful happened to him...He no longer saw the face of his friend Siddhartha. Instead he saw other faces, many faces, a long series, a continuous stream of faces- hundreds, thousands, which all continually changed and renewed themselves and which were all Siddhartha. He saw the face of a fish, of a newly born child, of a murderer...and over them all there was continually something thin, unreal and yet existing and this mask was Siddhartha's smiling face which Govinda touched with his lips at that moment. And Govinda saw that this mask-like smile, this smile of unity over the flowing forms, this smile of simultaneousness over the thousands of births and deaths- this smile of Siddhartha- was exactly the same as the calm, delicate, impenetrable, perhaps gracious, perhaps mocking, wise, thousand-fold smile of Gotama, the Buddha... Wounded by a divine arrow which gave him pleasure, deeply enchanted and exalted, Govinda stood yet a while bending over Siddhartha's peaceful face. Govinda bowed low. Incontrollable tears trickled down his old face. He was overwhelmed by a feeling of great love, of the most humble veneration. He bowed low, right down to the ground, in front of the man sitting there motionless, whose smile reminded him of everything that he had ever loved in his life, of everything that had ever been of value and holy in his life."

With Siddhartha's help Govinda is able to experience the unintentional salvation beyond words and doctrines. With the help of love Govinda can feel enlightenment he has been looking for in vain up to now. Not words and doctrines, but love and devotion lead to salvation. This was also Hesse's main experience at the end of his long preoccupation with Indian spirit. Perhaps this could be a message for us, too.

(English by Regina Baumann)