

CHARLES UNIVERSITY IN PRAGUE

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Department of English Language and Literature



## BACHELOR THESIS

The Importance of Being Sage:

Religious and Philosophical Aspects in J.D. Salinger's Glass Stories

Prague 2014

Author: Kristýna Kolářová

Study subjects: English - Russian

Supervisor: Mgr. Jakub Ženíšek

## **Acknowledgement**

I would hereby like to thank Mgr. Jakub Ženíšek for his valuable advice, time, patience, and supervision during the compilation of this bachelor thesis.

## **Declaration**

I hereby declare that this bachelor thesis is completely my own work and that no other sources were used in the preparation of the thesis than those listed on the works cited page.

Prague, June 2014

.....

## **Abstract**

This bachelor thesis discusses the religious and philosophical questions with respect to the autobiographical elements contained in J.D. Salinger's Glass stories. An attempt to elucidate the death of Seymour Glass has been made on the basis of those questions. The thesis is divided into two parts, theoretical and practical. In the first part the persona of J.D Salinger, Zen Buddhism and Advaita Vedanta are presented along with the Glass family, whose members are shortly introduced. They appear overall in eight stories, namely "A Perfect Day for Bananafish" (1948), "Uncle Wiggily in Connecticut" (1948), "Down at the Dinghy" (1949), "Franny" (1955), "Raise High the Roof Beam, Carpenters" (1955), "Zooney" (1957), "Seymour: An Introduction" (1959) and "Hapworth 16, 1924" (1965). The second part focuses in particular on Seymour, Buddy, Zooney and Franny, about whom the most information is given. Salinger's criticism of the 1950s American society is reflected upon the characters via religious and philosophical elements, which penetrate all of the stories, and have not a little impact on each character.

### **Key Words**

J.D. Salinger, 1950s in American literature, philosophy, religion, Zen Buddhism, Advaita Vedanta, Seymour Glass

## **Anotace**

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá nábožensko-filozofickou problematikou s přihlédnutím k autobiografickým prvkům s ní spojených v povídkách amerického spisovatele J.D. Salingera zabývajících se rodinou Glassových. Na základě této problematiky se práce pokouší objasnit smrt Seymoura Glasse. Práce se dělí na teoretickou a praktickou část. V první části se seznamujeme s osobností J.D. Salingera, Zen Buddhismem, Advaita Vedantou a ve zkratce i s rodinou Glassových, jejíž členové se objevují v celkem osmi Salingerových povídkách. Jmenovitě jde o Den jako stvořený pro banánové rybičky (1948), Chudáček vrtáček z Connecticutu (1948), U dingy (1949), Franny (1955), Vzhůru, tesaři, do výše střechu zvedněte! (1955), Zooey (1957), Seymour: Úvod (1959) a Hapworth 16, 1924 (1965). Druhá část se pak zaměřuje zejména na Seymoura, Buddyho, Zooeyho a Franny, o kterých je toho známo nejvíce. V postavách se odráží Salingerova kritika americké společnosti 50. let 20. století prostřednictvím náboženských a filozofických prvků, které prostupují všechny povídky a nemálo ovlivňují jednotlivé postavy.

### **Klíčová slova**

J.D. Salinger, 50. léta v americké literatuře, filozofie, náboženství, Zen Buddhism, Advaita Vedanta, Seymour Glass

# Content

Introduction .....	1
1 Theoretical part .....	3
1.1 Introduction to the Theoretical part .....	3
1.2 J.D. Salinger.....	4
1.3 Zen Buddhism.....	7
1.4 Advaita Vedanta .....	9
1.4.1 Harmony of Religions .....	9
1.4.2 Reincarnation.....	10
1.4.3 Karma and Dharma.....	10
1.4.4 Mantra.....	11
1.5 Introducing the Glass family.....	12
2 Practical part.....	16
2.1 Introduction to the Practical part .....	16
2.2 Seymour and Buddy’s educational methods.....	17
2.2.1 Being a poet.....	21
2.2.2 Zooney’s advice.....	23
2.3 Seymour’s suicide.....	26
2.3.1 The explanation of Seymour’s death upon reading “A Perfect Day for Bananafish” as a separate story. ....	27
2.3.2 The explanation of Seymour’s death upon reading “A Perfect Day for Bananafish” in company with other stories.....	29
3 Conclusion.....	35
4 Recommended Works .....	37
5 Works Cited.....	38

## **Abbreviations**

*FZ - Franny and Zooey*

“Hapworth” – “Hapworth 19, 1924”

*NS - Nine Stories*

*RHRB - Raise High the Roof Beam, Carpenters, and Seymour: An Introduction*

“Raise High” – “Raise High the Roof Beam, Carpenters”

# Introduction

J.D. Salinger is best known as the author of the novel *The Catcher in the Rye*, in which he criticized contemporary society and presented his ideas of the world via the character of Holden Caulfield. However, less is known about Salinger's love of the character of Seymour Glass, who had been occupying Salinger's mind until the writer's death in 2010.

John Updike once said that "Salinger loves the Glasses more than God loves them" (Updike). It seems that in many ways the writer indeed treated them as his own family and from the moment he wrote "A Perfect Day for Bananafish" (1948), in which Seymour Glass appeared for the first time, Salinger started creating his new fictional family with nearly narcissistic manner. Everything that family embodied was also Salinger's harsh view of the world.

Salinger's death probably streamlined the process of publishing his entire oeuvre. The last published story, and also the last story in which Seymour Glass has appeared, was "Hapworth 16, 1924" published in *The New Yorker* magazine in 1965, but from that time as if Salinger's narratives and even Salinger himself have completely disappeared. Nevertheless, after the writer's death it appears that the world should await with eagerness the publishing of new stories which Salinger wrote from 1965 onwards and in which he focused mainly on the members of his beloved Glass family.

In 2008, J.D. Salinger created the J.D. Salinger Literary Trust (O'Neill 28) assigning over his entire right, title, and interest in and the copyrights of all his stories. The Trust provides a timetable for the release of certain works Salinger had written since 1965 (Shields and Salerno 674). *The Family Glass*, the intended name of the complete chronicle of the Glass family will be published, which will collect all of the existing Glass family stories together with five new stories.

The five new stories will be about Seymour Glass; the first four stories will explore the thirty years leading up to Seymour's suicide and his lifelong quest for God. In the first new story, Seymour and Buddy will be recruited at a party in 1926 for the children's quiz show *It's a Wise Child*. The last story will deal with Seymour's life after death. Told by Buddy Glass, the stories will be saturated in the teachings of the Vedanta religion. Also a guide book of the Vedanta religion will be published, with short stories and fables woven throughout the text. These works will begin to be published in irregular instalments starting between 2015 and 2020 (Shields and Salerno 574-575).

To pay a tribute to Salinger and remind the stories in which the Glass family has already appeared, the thesis predominantly focuses on Salinger's lifelong interest in Zen Buddhism and Advaita Vedanta, which influenced the very core of the Glass stories.

# 1 Theoretical part

## 1.1 Introduction to the Theoretical part

The stories which will be discussed further reveal much about J.D. Salinger's personality and view of the world, however to acquaint the reader with Salinger more in depth, for he himself asserted that a good story has to be autobiographical, the aim of the theoretical part is to introduce the writer's life, and on account of his biography the resemblance of Salinger's life stances on the background of the Glass family will be revealed in the analytical part of the thesis.

Alongside with the writers such as Aldous Huxley (*The Perennial Philosophy*) or Christopher Isherwood (*Vedanta for the Western World*), Salinger also concerned himself with Advaita Vedanta. As Zen Buddhism and Vedanta belong to the Eastern culture, there is a presumption that the reader is not familiar with these topics. Hence Zen and Vedanta will be introduced on the following pages in relation to Salinger's motifs and the way he uses them. Unfortunately, Zen and Vedanta are much more complex than the very little information which will be stated in here. However, for the purposes of understanding the references in the stories only a smattering of knowledge is required.

The subchapter concerning Zen Buddhism is written with the help of *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism* by Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki, who is mentioned in "Zooey", for Salinger himself was acquainted with Suzuki's work which "brought Zen closer to Western understanding" (Jung 9). In the subchapter dealing with Vedanta, the website of Vedanta Society of Western Washington serves as the main source of information, and also articles written by Subhamoy Das, a journalist and an expert on Hindu philosophy.

Finally, the Glass family members will be introduced in short. Since information about them, especially Seymour Glass, is very fragmentary, it is convenient for the further analysis to have prepared a sketch of the family as a whole.

## 1.2 J.D. Salinger

Being one of the most influential writers in the USA from the 1950s onwards, J.D. Salinger spent the most of his life in the centre of vogue. Unfortunately, it was the only thing he tried to avoid so desperately that he left New York, moved to a small town and stopped giving interviews. Together with his relish for Zen Buddhism and eating only organic food grown in his garden, which was not the way of life the Americans mainstream of the 1950s would aspire to, Salinger became an interesting phenomenon and the target for the fans obsessed by him. Besides, all the academic world started to analyse his writings after the publication of “Zooey”, which was actually the one particular group of people Salinger ridiculed the most (Alexander 194).

Jerome David Salinger was born on January 1, 1919 in Manhattan to Sol, who was a prosperous Jewish importer, yet not practicing Judaism, and Miriam Jillich, whose original name was Marie. She was of Scots-Irish descent, and changed her name in order to befriend Sol’s family, who respected Jewish traditions, with Sol’s father having been a rabbi and later a doctor. Salinger also had a sister called Doris, who had been born eight years before him. Salinger’s father, even though he had probably received an extremely limited education, was an intelligent, dynamic and an excellent public speaker (Alexander 33).

The Salingers having been originally living in Chicago moved to New York after Doris was born, and in 1932 Salinger enrolled a private preparatory school in New York, on West 64 Street. He became a reporter for the school newspaper but due to poor academic record, he left before completing his studies there. His father decided that Salinger needed a rougher upbringing so in 1934 he sent him into the Valley Forge Military Academy in Wayne, Pennsylvania (Shields and Salerno 36). Surprisingly, Salinger liked the school and the way that everything had an order and participated in various clubs, including a theatrical club in which he performed in many plays with the idea of becoming an actor. At the same time he also began to write and served as a literary editor of the school newspaper and yearbook.

After graduation at Valley Forge in 1937 father wanted Salinger to join him in a meat-and-cheese importing business so Salinger travelled to Poland to learn the family business and after that went to Vienna in order to hone his German there. During that time Salinger wrote several stories and submitted them to various magazines for publication.

In the spring 1939, Salinger, with the intention of becoming a writer, enrolled in a short-story writing course at Columbia University taught by Whit Burnett, then editor of *Story*

magazine (Alexander 55). This seminar was one of the best writing seminars in the United States. Salinger was reticent at first, however, later he wrote three short stories by which Burnett was profoundly impressed. Thanks to Burnett's encouragement and help, Salinger had his first story published in *Story* magazine in 1940. The story was called "The Young Folks" and Salinger received his first salary. As the name says, it was about very young people, which foreshadowed the theme that would later become specific for him (Alexander 59).

Salinger longed to have his stories published in *The New Yorker* which was considered the best place for a writer to be published in terms of prestige. However, in *The New Yorker* they had rejected him several times so meanwhile he was sending his stories to other magazines in which they were published. Eventually in 1941 *The New Yorker* accepted his story called "The Slight Rebellion of Madison", the first story about Holden Caulfield. Unfortunately before it could be published, the Second World War broke out and suddenly this story of a personal rebellion Holden was going through seemed to be trivial and it did not seem appropriate to be put into *The New Yorker* so Salinger had to wait again (Alexander 77).

Salinger started dating a 16 year-old Oona O'Neill, the daughter of Eugene O'Neill. In 1941 he went to enlist the army but the military doctor rejected him for having health problems. Nevertheless, Salinger was determined to serve, feeling very patriotic, and eventually he was accepted for limited duty (Bloom 228). In 1942 Salinger enlisted the U.S. Army and attended Officers, First Sergeants, and Instructor School of the Signal Corps. During that year, Salinger corresponded with Oona, who stopped the romance soon after Salinger started to serve in the war and she became the wife of Charlie Chaplin.

On June 6 1944 Salinger participated in the Normandy invasion. He was a part of the counterintelligence quota, interrogating enemy prisoners and civilians. He had this job thanks to his knowledge of five languages and this was, luckily for him, not very dangerous (Shields and Salerno 163). In 1945 Salinger was discharged from the Army. In July, as Paul Alexander writes: "he was evaluated by doctors as being in good physical condition but suffering from what amounted to a nervous breakdown" (107) he was hospitalized in Germany. "Exposure to live combat over a prolonged period of time had left Salinger depressed, angry, and unable to cope with the routine nature of ordinary life" (Alexander 108). During the war Salinger befriended Hemingway, to whom he wrote that he "absolutely would not submit to a psychiatric evaluation" (Bloom 229). Still being in Germany, in autumn 1945 Salinger married Sylvia, who was French. She was a doctor, probably a psychologist and also a Nazi Party member whom he had previously arrested and interrogated. They had known each other

only for a brief time, maybe only a couple of weeks, when they married (Alexander 109). Salinger claimed that he and Sylvia had a telepathic connection. Occasionally, they even “knew at the same time when a particular event was about to take place” (Alexander 113). However, the marriage lasted only for a short time. Sylvia could not accustom to the life in New York, and they divorced.

After the divorce, Salinger started enjoying the nightlife in the company of aspiring writers and actors in Greenwich Village, and started to be interested in Zen Buddhism, which would become a central part in his life (Alexander 114). “A Perfect Day for Bananafish” (the original title was “A Fine Day for Bananafish”) was the first major work which *The New Yorker* accepted to publish in 1948 and later it became the opening piece in the collection of short stories called *Nine Stories* (Bloom 229). At that year he widened his interest in alternative religions, especially Advaita Vedanta philosophy after reading Swami Nikhilananda and Joseph Campbell’s translation of *The Gospels of Sri Ramakrishna* (Subhamoy, *Salinger and Hinduism*).

In 1951 *The Catcher in the Rye* was published. The novel was acclaimed by critics and was on *The New York Times* best-seller list for seven months. Salinger’s popularity grew fast after that and in order to escape publicity, Salinger moved to Cornish, New Hampshire (Bloom 230).

In 1955 Salinger married Claire Douglas, who dropped out of college because of him just four months before graduation. They had two children, Margaret and Matthew. However, the couple was not happy, for Claire had to undergo the isolation from society and even from her own husband, who often spent days and nights writing in his private cabin in the garden and did not want to be disturbed (Shields and Salerno 384). They divorced in 1967.

*The New Yorker* published “Franny” and “Raise High the Roof Beam, Carpenters” in 1955 (Bloom 231) with instant attention from the public and from that time Salinger published his stories exclusively in this magazine. In 1957 “Zooney” was published and as the plot was dealing with the character named Franny, after four years it was re-published as *Franny and Zooney* by Little, Brown with immediate success (Bloom 231). “Raise High the Roof Beam, Carpenters” and “Seymour: An Introduction” were published in book form in 1963.

In 1965 Salinger published for the last time, and it was a story “Hapworth 16, 1924” (Bloom 231) and from that time he did not publish any other work. He could not stand anybody from publishing business, for he was disgusted by their disregard of writer’s wishes and their ability to change the name of the story without asking Salinger for permission.

Eventually he even stopped his friendship with Burnett, the publisher who originally helped Salinger in his start (Alexander 223). Salinger had dropped giving interviews, for he wanted people to know him only through his work and did not like the increasing attention. Nevertheless, this approach towards media had exactly the opposite outcome. Many directors yearned for bringing Holden to big screens but Salinger did not provide them with the rights for doing so. He thought that they would ruin the story as it happened in the film *My Foolish Heart* based on his short story “Uncle Wiggily in Connecticut” (Alexander 141). He was stalked by reporters and enthusiastic fans in order to make an interview with him. In 1980 he gave his last interview to Betty Eppes who lied to him about the article claiming that it would be published only in a school magazine (Alexander 263). From that time his name has been heard only in connection with lawsuits, e.g. with Ian Hamilton, who wrote Salinger’s unauthorized biography using Salinger’s private letters in it (Alexander 279).

After the divorce with Claire, Salinger dated many young women and in 1988 married a young nurse named Colleen O’Neill. They were together until his death on January 27, 2010, at his home in Cornish (Shields and Salerno 602).

### **1.3 Zen Buddhism**

Zen Buddhism, as is obvious from its name, is a branch of Buddhism. The original Buddhism was divided into two types, Hinayana and Mahayana. With time Mahayana was introduced into China and then into Japan, where it further developed. In these two countries Buddhist leaders applied the principles of their faith to everyday life and the religious needs of the people. By this way the gap between the original form of Buddhism and its adaptations widened and as a result many schools were developed, among which also belongs the Zen which traces its origins into China (Suzuki 31).

Zen is not a religion in the way this meaning is commonly understood; for there is no God to be worshipped, no ceremonial rites and it neither acknowledges the soul (39). “Zen wants absolute freedom, even from God” (97). Zen is pre-eminently practical and its main idea is based on the simple and unsophisticated personal experience of life rather than talking about it. Therefore Zen is to be experienced in everyday life in the first place.

The aim of Zen is to retain the true meaning of the thing by not giving the name to it, especially when it is concerned with life itself. Suzuki says that “without this experience nothing relative to its profound working will ever be accurately and therefore efficiently

grasped” (33). Therefore even “making reference to a soul or to God, or to anything that interferes with or disturbs the ordinary course of living” (74) cannot be regarded as Zen.

The practical example of Zen could be this: “When Zen wants you to taste the sweetness of sugar, it will put the required article right into your mouth and no further words are said” (Suzuki 74). “The idea of Zen is to catch life as it flows” (Suzuki 75), therefore Zen likes short and brisk answers as it is in the master’s answer to the monk’s question: “You are such a wise and holy master; tell me how it is that dust ever accumulates in your yard.” The master’s reply is: “It comes from the outside.” (Suzuki 81).

Furthermore, one cannot use logic in Zen, for everything is equal with everything else. Thus things cannot be compared and if we tried to make any comparisons, we would fail like the stranger monk who comes to Joshu’s monastery and inquires Joshu: “I have for some time heard of your famous stone bridge, but I see no such thing here, only a plank.” And Joshu replies: “You see a plank and don’t see a stone bridge.” The monk asks: “Where then is the stone bridge?” and Joshu promptly answers: “You have just crossed it” (Suzuki 82).

Despite the fact that all the given examples do not appear to be complicated and one can say that they are only trivial dialogues about ordinary things, the opposite is true. To fully understand Zen, one has to practise it for a very long time and eventually we learn that spirituality is to be found even in everyday life. Suzuki explains that “it all depends on how you look at it” (82) so seeing the reality is only connected with one’s mind and the consciousness of space and time.

In the true Zen there is no space for meditation, for meditation is artificial. Therefore when a man meditates on a religious or philosophical subject and at the same time practises Zen, the meditation is only incidental (Suzuki 40-41).

Regarding philosophy, “in Zen there is no place for time-wasting philosophical discussion” (79). Nevertheless, philosophy is also concerned with life, therefore “when a philosopher comes to be enlightened, the Zen master is never loath to meet him on his own ground” (Suzuki 79).

When one eventually acquires an enlightenment, “a new viewpoint for looking into the essence of things” (Suzuki 88), then one reaches the state of *satori*. “Without it there is no Zen, for the life of Zen begins with the ‘opening of *satori*,’ which is “in contradiction to intellectual and logical understanding” (Suzuki 88).

To reach *satori*, which is the aim of Zen Buddhism, there is a “methodical training of the mind” (99) called *koan* exercise, and also *zazen* that means “sitting cross-legged in quietude and in deep contemplation” (Suzuki 99). Salinger’s liking for koans can be seen at

the very beginning of his *Nine Stories*: “We know the sound of two hands clapping. But what is the sound of one hand clapping?” (Salinger, *NS*) Suzuki says that *koan* “now denotes some anecdote of an ancient master, or a dialogue between a master and monks, or a statement or question put forward by a teacher” (102). *Zazen* is a kind of meditation but it differs from the classical one in a way that the reaching point in Zen is not trance, or ecstasy, for there must be *satori*, with its “awakening of a new sense which will review the old things from a hitherto undreamed-of angle of observation” (Suzuki 96).

To sum up, after reaching *satori*, life will be altered. Everything will seem to be prettier and more transparent, and by this a man will be able to enjoy his life more (Suzuki 97-98). And if the reader is still thinking about the meaning of the “one hand clapping”, Suzuki fortunately proposes the answer which is: the hands of two people are mutually joined (106).

## **1.4 Advaita Vedanta**

Advaita Vedanta, as a non-dualistic experiential system, has occupied the dominant position in Indian philosophy from 7<sup>th</sup> century to the present. Being not the only school of Vedanta, as there are five other principal Hindu philosophies originated in the Vedas (Bhaskarananda, *Vedanta*), “its influence has been such that the very term ‘Vedanta’ is often made synonymous with it” (David 18).

The most fundamental teaching in Vedanta is that all that exists is innately divine, and the aim of life is to manifest it. “Divinity is equally present everywhere, but not equally manifest everywhere.” Concerning human beings, “divinity is most manifest in a spiritually illumined soul” (Bhaskarananda, *Vedanta*).

### **1.4.1 Harmony of Religions**

In Vedanta, like in Christianity, it is believed that when necessary, God “descends on earth and becomes part of history” (Bhaskarananda, *Vedanta*). This is, for instance, when atheism prevails and God comes to earth to revitalize religion and also to show people that the divinity is inherently present in each of them. In contrast to Christianity, Vedanta believes in

several divine incarnations “and there will be many more in the future as and when the need arises” (Bhaskarananda, *Vedanta*).

Similarly to Zen, Veda teaches the harmony of religions, as the Divine Truth is only one, despite being called by different names, and “this Truth can be reached through different spiritual paths” (Bhaskarananda, *Vedanta*).

Vedanta does not want to convert people to religion, for it believes in “inner spiritual transformation of individuals,” (Bhaskarananda, *Vedanta*) with the intention of helping people to become better people regardless of their religion. Even an “atheist can be accommodated by Vedanta to have personal spiritual fulfillment” (Bhaskarananda, *Vedanta*).

### **1.4.2 Reincarnation**

Swami Bhaskarananda says that in Vedanta there is a concept of reincarnation which provides a gradual spiritual evolution through the “various valuable experiences” acquired in different incarnations. It is related to the fact that people die with strong unfulfilled desires and their minds – while they are in the other world – strongly yearn for their fulfilment. Those unfulfilled desires can only be fulfilled on earth, so the desires eventually bring a person to earth, thus causing rebirth or incarnation. Sometimes there can be people who remember their past birth or births, and they are called *Jatismaras* (Bhaskarananda, *Reincarnation*).

W.A. Mozart is frequently referred to as an example of reincarnation, for the genius of a child prodigy like him cannot be satisfactorily explained only by the good genes. Therefore Mozart must have been incarnation of a highly accomplished musician, whose talent had been carried over at Mozart’s birth (Bhaskarananda, *Reincarnation*).

When the acme of spiritual progress is reached, which means the realization of God, people become resistant to all desires, because they no longer lack anything and the chain of repeated births and deaths is transcended. A person who has realized God is called a liberated soul (Bhaskarananda, *Reincarnation*).

### **1.4.3 Karma and Dharma**

Another principal term in Hindu philosophy is *karma*, which means ‘to act’. It is often misinterpreted as ‘destiny’, but *karma* is ‘the law of cause and effect’, which means that your present volitional actions affect your future birth. “*Karma* is the differentia that characterizes human being and distinguishes him from other creatures of the world” (Subhamoy, *Karma*).

In order to achieve good karma it is important to live life according to *dharma* or what is right.

*Dharma* is “anything that helps human being to reach God” (Subhamoy, *Dharma*) and to be on a dharmic path, one has to abide austerly, purity, compassion and intoxication. Thus the essence of dharma is to have a “certain ability, power and spiritual strength” (Subhamoy, *Dharma*). The strength of being dharmic is also a “unique combination of spiritual brilliance and physical prowess” (Subhamoy, *Dharma*).

The rules of *dharma* are, among others, patience, forgiveness, piety or self control, honesty, sanctity, reason, control of senses, knowledge or learning, truthfulness, absence of anger, non-violence, truth, non-coveting and purity of body and mind. For instance it is “one’s *dharma* to marry, raise a family, and provide for that family in whatever way is necessary.” When living life in accordance to *dharma*, it allows one to experience “peace, joy, strength and tranquillity within one’s self and makes life disciplined” (Subhamoy, *Dharma*).

#### **1.4.4 Mantra**

It is a repeated recitation ranging from a couple of syllables to several sentences, and it is used in meditation. According to Rajhans a speaker has to have a complete faith in the recitation, for it is primarily through faith accompanied by strong will that the speaker achieves one’s goals. Also there has to be a definite object in view and a strong will power to obtain the desired objective in order to achieve the goal (Rajhans).

In 19<sup>th</sup> century Advaita Vedanta was connected with Ramakrishna and his disciple, **Swami Vivekananda**, who introduced Advaita Vedanta to the West and established the Vedanta Society in the 1890s (Subhamoy, *Spiritual Genius*). According to him religion bears a resemblance to a flower, since the seed does not become the earth, or the air, or the water, even these are placed around it and “similar is the case with religion. The Christian is not to become a Hindu or a Buddhist, nor a Hindu or a Buddhist to become a Christian. But each must assimilate the spirit of the others and yet preserve his individuality and grow according to his own law of growth” (Subhamoy, *Vivekananda’s Speeches*).

## 1.5 Introducing the Glass family

The Glass family began to appear in Salinger's writings since 1948 with the publication of the short story called "A Perfect Day for Bananafish". According to Bishop the family name itself „implies both clear thinking and brittleness“ (53), which sounds appropriate if one considers the way the children think and act. As is mentioned in every convenient situation in almost each story, all the seven children are, to some degree, prodigies who performed on a radio quiz programme, called *It's a Wise Child* when they were little. Galloway points out that Salinger was surely aware of Telemachus' cryptic reply to Athena when she asked him about Odysseus: "It's a wise child that knows its own father," and that this catchy reference to *The Odyssey* features the "quest for identity," which is inherent with almost all of the Glass children (215).

Les and Bessie Glass, the parents, were once a famous vaudeville team. Les is Jewish and Bessie Irish, and they are descended from professional entertainers. They are ordinary, rather undereducated people so it is obvious that their children did not inherit their ingenious thoughts from them.

Seymour being the most gifted of the children can speak Chinese and Japanese from the age of eleven and at the absurdly early age of 18 he becomes a professor of English language at the University of New York. He is the most spiritual and artistic (has talent for writing poetry, especially *haiku*), and also extraordinarily sensitive, he starts to appear in the quiz show in the 1930s. He is the most popular in the show, but publicity and public displays does not do him good, for Buddy describes Seymour's look before going to the stage as somebody who is going to his own funeral. In ordinary life Seymour is highly impractical, since materialism is strange to him, he often neglects personal hygiene and never wears well-fitting suit. When playing sports, he either excels or vice versa. For all the characteristics Seymour embodies, he is a subject of psychological analysis in his childhood and it probably affects him negatively.

Seymour's character is directly or indirectly a part of five stories. Indirectly it is partly through Buddy's narrative voice and partly through what Eberhard Alsen calls 'shared references' (Seed 81); i.e. certain key events in the Glass history, most notably Seymour's suicide, which become common points of reference for the Glass novellas.

The first story in which Seymour appears is "A Perfect Day for Bananafish". The plot of the story is simple, starting with the phone call between Muriel (Seymour's wife) and her

mother. While Muriel is talking to her mother, trying to reassure her that Seymour has no more destructive urges, which he, apparently, started to have during his being a soldier in the Second World War in Europe. In the meantime, or shortly afterwards, Seymour is on the beach with a small girl called Sybil. Pushing Sybil out into the water on a rubber float, he explains to her the inherent fatalism of *Bananafish*. When he returns to the hotel room, he immediately shoots himself dead at the age of thirty-one.

Further, Seymour is mentioned in “*Zooey*”, and yet being dead, he is pivotal part of the story. He also appears in “*Hapworth 16, 1924*” (a fictive transcript of a letter written by Seymour in 1924 to his family from summer camp, edited and transcribed by Buddy), which offers a detailed picture of a truly extraordinary seven-year-old Seymour with incredible characteristics. There are similarities with Salinger’s childhood, for it is certain that in 1930 during the summer, Salinger attended Camp Wigwam in Harrison, Maine, where he was voted the “most popular actor” for 1930 (Bloom).

When reading “*Hapworth*” with a clear head, one simply cannot believe that such a persona is likely to exist. The most striking fact is his maturity concerning both intellectual and sexual side, and moreover his ability of clairvoyance, thanks to which he implies several times that he will not live long.

I for one do not look forward to being distracted by charming lusts of the body, quite day in and day out, for the few, blissful, remaining years allotted to me in this appearance. There is monumental work to be done in this appearance, of partially undisclosed nature, and I would cheerfully prefer to die an utter dog’s death rather than be distracted at crucial moments by a gorgeous, appealing plane or rolling contour of goodly flesh. My time is too limited, quite to my sadness and amusement. While I intend, to be sure, to work on this sensual problem without ceasing, it would be quite a little wind-fall if you, dear Les, as my dear father and hearty friend, would be a complete, shameless, open book with regard to your own pressing sensuality when you were our ages. (9)

Buddy, being the second oldest child and knowing Seymour very well, often figures as a narrator of the stories, e.g. “*Raise High*” and “*Seymour: An Introduction*”. In the former story, which resembles a situational comedy, Buddy recalls Seymour’s wedding at which only Buddy, as a representative of the Glass family, is present, for the groom runs away, and the wedding ceremony has to be cancelled. Updike describes “*Raise High*” as “the first and best of the Glass pieces: a magic and hilarious prose-poem with an enchanting end effect of

mysterious clarity” (Updike). In the latter there are snatches of Seymour’s journal, which Buddy has found already in “Raise High” and the main purpose of Buddy’s treatise is to do homage to Seymour, treating him almost as a saint.

Buddy represents Salinger’s alter ego, for once he mentions that he is also an author of “Teddy” (Salinger’s other short story) and as Salinger, he studied at Columbia University. After that Buddy moved to Canada, where he has been leading a reclusive life without even having a telephone, and now he teaches at a girl’s college, and once a week reads a lecture on Zen literature. In spiritual training Buddy is closer to Seymour than any other member of the family, but he is clearly less psychotic than Seymour.

Beatrice alias Boo Boo is the third child in the Glass family, of whom there is not much to say. She shortly appears in “Down at the Dinghy” as Boo Boo Tannenbaum, the mother of a sensitive Lionel. Galloway says about her that “she is perhaps more down-to earth than any of the other children, preferring to be thought of as a ‘Tuckahoe homemaker’” (216) from the religious point of view, as she is not interested in any religion in particular. The only other encounter with Boo Boo is through the Sapphic scrawl, which she leaves on a bathroom mirror on the day of Seymour’s wedding, in which she orders Seymour to be happy with Muriel, his future wife.

After Boo Boo the twins, Walt and Waker, were born. They have never directly entered any of the Glass stories. Only Walt is referred-to as a “symbol of innocence and tenderness for the heroine of “Uncle Wiggily in Connecticut”, when she thinks of the innocence she has lost” (Galloway 216). He dies, rather ridiculously, after an explosion of a stove, which he is packing for his commanding officer during his tour in the Army of Occupation in Japan during the Second World War. The only thing to be said about Waker is that he becomes a monk of the Carthesian order.

Zooey, the second youngest child is a handsome actor and is gifted with an extraordinary verbal talent and photogenic memory, thus his cynical palavers, strewn with wit and irony, can be truly impressive. Zooey, at the age of twenty-five, appears in the story named after him, in which he is trying to help his younger sister Franny from a spiritual crisis.

Franny first appears in “Franny” and later in “Zooey”. In both stories she is a twenty-year-old college student. As Alexander points out, she was inspired by Salinger’s wife Claire (185) and “Franny” was meant as a wedding present for her (Galloway 214). Franny leaves school and plans to abandon her promising acting career because she thinks they are fraught with superficiality and phoniness. She takes interest in *The Way of The Pilgrim*. In “Franny” she is on the date with Lane Cotell, an egocentric student, who is interested only in making

impression on others. They have an argument and at the end of the story Franny faints. Interestingly, John Updike shrewdly pointed out in his essay “Anxious Days For The Glass Family” that the volume of *Franny and Zooey* presented two Frannies - one without a background, and one related to the Glass family. Moreover, David Seed states that “Franny” “as a separate novella gains a lot of force from the isolation of its protagonist from any kind of family context,” the lack of support from Franny’s family increases her vulnerability against Lane’s psychological bullying, and when accompanied by “Zooey,” Seed continues that “Franny’s existential isolation is lost” (Seed 79).

## 2 Practical part

### 2.1 Introduction to the Practical part

Religious beliefs and doctrine had a strong position in the United States in the 1950s and with time this was reinforced even more. Nevertheless, the religious thinking started to be promoted because of the Cold War in a way of distinguishing the USA as a democratic country from the USSR, where religious belief was officially forbidden. Hungerford says that in the USA Christian traditions slowly blended with Jewish in order to create a kind of “American religion” (3), which went hand in hand with the notion that all men were created equal. Will Herberg in his study of American religion states that in his survey he “found little evidence of specific, deeply held religious belief.” The faith was not in God, but rather in faith itself. That means people believed in “the virtue of belief, regardless of the content of that belief” (Hungerford 3). Herberg found that it was faith in ‘The American Way of Life,’ which was a system of beliefs that included “consumerism, optimism, self-confidence, and individualism.” At that time even sociologists and historians of religion saw the change as a “triumph of secularity” (Hungerford 6). According to Herberg, for the immigrant generations who “moved farther from the ways of their parents, rooted in the Old World of their origins,” the religion became a distinctive feature of social belonging (Hungerford 3).

Herberg’s idea could be applied to Salinger as he came from a Jewish family and grew up in the Jewish part of New York but Judaism played no role in his life. So as far as Salinger’s religious background is concerned, in his youth being a Jew meant for him only a social status but he did not identify with it the same way his ancestors did and in his writings there are only small hints of it, for instance in the story “Down at the Dinghy”.

However, he cannot be put among those who believed in the American way of life either, for his faith was influenced by Eastern way of thinking which at that time was not generally acknowledged as a part of a conventional American life.

His interest towards Eastern philosophy had to be developed in connection with a gloom he felt. For there is a close connection between the spirituality and the outer world. The reason why people in modern society tend towards non-materialistic thinking is their frustration caused by the materialistic world. In Salinger’s case the trigger behind it was the Second World War. Witnessing so closely the death of so many innocent people and seeing

no logical explanation behind those horrors he needed to find inner peace and tried to cope with the reality.

Influenced by Vedanta and Zen Buddhism Salinger realized the rottenness of the world and was not afraid to point it out in his prose. Moreover, as Hungerford puts it, Salinger was able to “alleviate the tension between specific doctrine and religious pluralism without giving in to secularism” (9).

In this part of the thesis Salinger’s religious and philosophical stances will be discussed on the background of the Glass stories. The purpose will be to show how the author utilized different religions and philosophies but as Hungerford states, there does not necessarily have to be a rivalry among them. On the contrary, Salinger profits from the traits they all have in common. Further, Seymour’s obscure death will be discussed in detail in here, as it is connected to religion. Since Seymour is the most important character in the Glass saga, it is appropriate to place the suicide investigation into a separate subchapter.

## **2.2 Seymour and Buddy’s educational methods**

The stories of the Glass family are focused mainly on the oldest and youngest children. It is undoubtedly because of a peculiar relation the four people have. Seymour and Buddy are already adults when Franny and Zooey are little, therefore Seymour would like to be the best tutor to them, and takes advantage of the previous attempts to be a teacher to his other siblings. He has already learnt that it is not necessary to provide Franny and Zooey with advice concerning the reading list. He is convinced that if children are interested in discovering the world, nobody can prevent it. Still, he would like to educate them according to Zen in the way leading towards no-knowing. He and Buddy hold a view that before the actual education which is given at school children should learn and understand thoughts and know lives of the most important people of all the religions who, according to the brothers, were those

who knew something or everything about this state of being. That is, we wanted you both to know who and what Jesus and Gautama and Lao-tse and Shankaracharya and Hui-neng and Sri Ramakrishna, etc., were before you knew too much or anything about Homer or Shakespeare or even Blake or Whitman, let alone George Washington and his cherry tree or the definition of a peninsula or how to parse a sentence. (Salinger, *FZ* 30)

This educational method embraces the ideas of both Advaita Vedanta and Zen Buddhism. In “Hapworth” Seymour introduces a long reading list in which he mentions *Raja-Yoga* and *Bhakti-Yoga* written by Vivekananda of India, and reveals his admiration towards Swami Vivekananda by saying: “He is one of the most exciting, original, and best equipped giants of this century I have ever run into...I would easily give ten years of my life, possibly more, if I could have shaken his hand...” (“Hapworth” 37). Vivekananda once said that “the Christian is not to become a Hindu or a Buddhist, nor a Hindu or a Buddhist to become a Christian. But each must assimilate the spirit of the others and yet preserve his individuality and grow according to his own law of growth” (Subhamoy, Vivekananda’s Speeches). Also Suzuki says that he is “firmly convinced that the Christian experiences are not after all different from those of the Buddhist. Terminology is all that divides us and stirs us up to a wasteful dissipation of energy (“Meister Eckhart” 8).

In his and Buddy’s room there is a white beaverboard panel nailed on the door and covered by tiny hand writing all over it. It contains the very best from the wisdom of the world literature from Ramakrishna, Kafka, Mu-Mon-Kwan, Ring Lardner, St. Francis de Sales, Tolstoy and others. When Zooey enters the room, he is wearing a white handkerchief on his hand, as if to “pay homage to the beaverboard panel of quotations” (Hungerford 11). To stress the syncretism, there is a quotation from Ramakrishna in which he explains his disciple the basis of worshipping God: “Do you think God does not know he is being worshipped in the images and pictures?” Ramakrishna asks. “If a worshipper should make a mistake, do you not think that God will know his intent?” (Salinger, *FZ* 78).

In Zen Buddhism the most important thing is to be detached. It means not to be limited by reason, but to see the true essence of things, thus disengage oneself from knowledge in a common meaning of that word. For no-knowledge could be understood as a certain kind of spiritual knowledge. This no-knowledge is more important, though it is being downtrodden in the world of reason burdened with materialism. This no-knowledge consists of virtues such as goodness, forgiveness, love, altruism, morality. In “Raise High” there is a Taoist tale, which Seymour narrated so that Franny could fall asleep. Although Franny was at that time a baby, later she asserts that she can remember it. The tale is about a man called Kao who does not distinguish between colour nor gender of horses, yet he is able to find the best horse for his master.

In making sure of the essential, he forgets the homely details; intent on the inward qualities, he loses sight of the external. He looks at the things he ought to look at, and neglects those that need not be looked at. So clever a judge of horses is Kao, that he has it in him to judge something better than horses. (Salinger, *RHRB* 4)

There is an intended parallel between Kao and Seymour when Buddy says: “Since the bridegroom’s permanent retirement from the scene, I haven’t been able to think of anybody whom I’d care to send out to look for horses in his stead” (6).

Salinger also used this idea of Zen-oriented education of no-knowledge in his story “Teddy”, in which the main hero in many ways resembles Seymour. Teddy says that the first thing which should be done with children is to “show them how to meditate” (Salinger, *NS* 80). Teddy is interested in teaching children who or what they are, not just what their names are.

I’d get them to empty out everything their parents and everybody ever told them. I make them empty that out. An elephant’s big only when it’s next to something else – a dog or a lady, for example. (Salinger, *NS* 81)

According to Teddy, this is pivotal in education, however at the same time he would not restrain them from learning “the real” characteristics of the nature as colours, names, categories; “they could do it, if they felt like it, later on when they were older. But I’d want them to begin with all the real ways of looking at things...” (Salinger, *NS* 81).

Concerning Franny’s negative stance towards academic environment, it is in a way surprising that Seymour becomes a professor of English Literature. It can be explained by the fact that he wants to be a kind of professor who does not go with the mass. That way he can spread the good thoughts among more people, not only his siblings.

Seymour’s milieu does appear absurd to the reader, for Seymour and Buddy try to live “by ethical standards in an indifferent, often nihilistic world” (Galloway 205). However, they do not seem to know it at first, and once when they realise the absurdity, it results in Seymour’s suicide. Unfortunately, the impact the brothers’ educational methods on Franny and Zooey is not positive at all. It can be seen in Zooey’s monologue to his mother in which he realizes that what he and Franny do is absurd.

We’re *freaks*, the two of us, Franny and I. I’m a twenty-five-year-old freak and she’s a twenty-year-old freak, and both those bastards are responsible...The symptoms are a little more delayed in Franny’s case than mine, but she’s a freak, too, and don’t you forget it. I swear to you, I could murder them both without even

batting an eyelash. The great teachers. The great emancipators. My God. I can't even sit down to lunch with a man any more and hold up my end of a decent conversation. I either get so bored or so goddam preachy that if the son of a bitch had any sense, he'd break his chair over my head. (Salinger, *FZ*, 46-47)

It appears that it is Franny who lives through a spiritual crisis caused by Seymour's peculiar style of upbringing. However, Zooey feels the same way as Franny when he tells Franny: "we're not bothered by exactly the same things, but by the same kind of things, I think, and for the same reasons" (Salinger, *FZ* 63). However, he is not resigning as Franny is, who is not eating anything and saying the Jesus Prayer incessantly. He realizes the possible consequences if he resigned from life as Seymour did, and he feels that Franny is slowly coming to the same end.

He knows that the reason behind Franny's condition is not anything which could be resolved by psychoanalysts. Moreover, he hates them for their rough handling of Seymour when he was a little boy and he partly blames them for his death. In the following extract he also recites 'normal' factors of American life in the mid-'50s:

If you can't, or won't, think of Seymour, then you go right ahead and call in some ignorant psychoanalyst. You just do that. You just call in some analyst who's experienced in adjusting people to the joys of television, and Life magazine every Wednesday, and European travel, and the H-Bomb, and Presidential elections, and the front page of the Times, and the responsibilities of the Westport and Oyster Bay Parent-Teacher Association, and God knows what else that's gloriously normal—you just do that, and I swear to you, in not more than a year Franny'll either be in a nut ward or she'll be wandering off into some goddam desert with a burning cross in her hands. (Salinger, *FZ* 48)

At the same time he knows that it is not only a matter of something psychological, but also religious as he is aware of the impact which their brothers had on him and Franny. Bessie tries to contact Buddy, for he would know how to help her but she cannot reach him so the role of an adviser falls on Zooey. In order to help his sister, Zooey reads the old letter from Buddy again, and tries to find a solution to Franny's problem and his, too. Now it is convenient to look at the concrete things Zooey and Franny both abhor.

### 2.2.1 Being a poet

Interestingly, there is a similarity of Seymour's wife with Franny's date. For both Muriel and Lane are representatives of the falsely sophisticated world. Their only concern is what other people would think about them. When on a date with Lane, Franny expresses her harsh opinions on people at school and the way of life they lead. She reveals her dissatisfaction by dissecting the junior faculty member. According to her, he is too conventional and act as other people do, which is highlighted by her usage of Wally Campbell's name in plural. Franny's reaction at Wally, when she finds out they should attend his cocktail party later on, is following:

I don't mean there's anything horrible about him or anything like that. It's just that for four solid years I've kept seeing Wally Campbells wherever I go. I know when they're going to be charming, I know when they're going to start telling you some really nasty gossip about some girl that lives in your dorm... It's everybody, I mean. Everything everybody does is so – I don't know – not wrong, or even mean, or even stupid necessarily. But just so tiny and meaningless and – sad-making. And the worst part is, if you go bohemian or something crazy like that, you're conforming just as much as everybody else, only in a different way" (Salinger, FZ 14)

She continues to say that she abhors people who care only about their own interests.

All I know is I'm losing my mind. I'm just sick of ego, ego, ego. My own and everybody else's. I'm sick of everybody that wants to *get* somewhere, do something distinguished and all, be somebody interesting. It's disgusting – it is, it *is*. I don't care what anybody says. (Salinger, FZ 16)

She also draws a bead on academic environment, but Lane does not share the same idea and opposes: "You've got two of the best men in the country in your goddam English Department. Manlius. Esposito. God, I wish we had them *here*. At least, they're poets, for Chrissake" (Salinger, FZ 10). Lane is shocked by her reply which is unusual and for him too philosophical:

They're not. That's partly what's so awful. I mean they're not *real* poets. They're just people that write poems that get published and anthologized all over the place, but they're not *poets*...If you're a poet, you do something beautiful. I mean you're supposed to *leave* something beautiful after you get off the page and everything. The ones you're talking about don't leave a single, solitary thing beautiful. (Salinger, *FZ* 10)

Franny sees in *beauty* something extraordinary, and almost divine, thus not possessed by everybody.

Alice Sperduti in "The Divine Nature of Poetry in Antiquity" says that very early in Greek there was established an idea that poetry is of divine origin, and that "divinity stems from the poet's direct relationship with gods." Thus poets are "light, sacred, and winged" (209) creatures. Throughout the centuries the meaning of divinity disappeared, however a poet still bears a connotation of a person who is extraordinary sophisticated, which is projected into his writings. Similarly William Wordsworth in his "Preface" to *Lyrical Ballads* expressed that a poet is a man "endowed with more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness, who has a greater knowledge of human nature, and a more comprehensive soul, than are supposed to be common among mankind."

When talking about poets, Franny actually has a clear picture in her head. She sees her brother, Seymour, who represents a true poet, as Buddy says in "Seymour: An Introduction". Thus Seymour is regarded by him as a *mukta*, that is a person who is enlightened, thus as close to the divinity as one can be. This definition of a poet is not necessarily connected only to writing poems, or writing as such. It is about a state of mind and the divinity within a person. Therefore not everyone can be a poet, for they have to create or see poetry in things. In contrast to that, poetry is contained in everything. Seymour pities Muriel's mother as "a person deprived, for life, of any understanding or taste for the main current of poetry that flows through things, all things" (Salinger, *RHRB* 45).

Buddy and Zooey are also very demanding when it comes to beauty in art, which can be seen in Buddy's letter to Zooey where Buddy expresses his opinion on Zooey's acting:

And if you go into the theatre, will you have any illusions about that? Have you ever seen a really beautiful production of, say, *The Cherry Orchard*? Don't say you have. Nobody has. You may have seen "inspired" productions, "competent" productions, but never anything beautiful. Never one where Chekhov's talent is matched, nuance for nuance, idiosyncrasy for idiosyncrasy, by every soul onstage.

You worry hell out of me, Zooney. Forgive the pessimism, if not the sonority. But I know how much you demand from a thing, you little bastard. And I've had the hellish experience of sitting next to you at the theatre. I can so clearly see you demanding something from the performing arts that just isn't residual there. For heaven's sake, be careful. (Salinger, *FZ* 29)

Returning back to the poetry, it should be stressed that Seymour writes a poetry and he is considered by Buddy a talented poet. However, Seymour does not wish his poetry to be published. He thinks that it is too Eastern (he writes *haiku*) and at the time of America being in war, the poetry should be, according to him, patriotic and contain gratitude towards the States, which Seymour's poetry does not.

This could be understood also as an allusion to Salinger's own writing. Since his stories with the Glass family contain too many Eastern motifs, and maybe this is also why he stopped publishing, for "Seymour: An Introduction" was not critically acclaimed and "Hapworth" was received even worse. Hamilton says that American poetry was at that time "based in the academies" and continues that "cerebral complexity and an attachment to traditional forms were still the principal requirements and T.S. Eliot was the model. A poet of the Salinger/Raymond Ford disposition would certainly have felt himself to be out of the fashionable mainstream" (143). It implies that Franny's accusation of academicism was also Salinger's.

### **2.2.2 Zooney's advice**

Franny has not always held a view that it is so much difficult to become a poet, and Lane wonders when she started to disregard her professors, for it has not been so long when she had even admired them. The answer is *The Way of The Pilgrim*, a green book she incessantly carries with her. It is a Russian Orthodox religion classic, in which the pilgrim takes very seriously the Bible's injunction to pray without ceasing. Franny is obsessed with the prayer which becomes for her a kind of mantra. She found the book in Seymour and Buddy's room but she tells Lane, when he asks about it, that she has borrowed it from a library. The aim of the prayer is to reach an enlightenment. Since enlightenment stems from a human's soul rather than from reason that inherently includes excessive academicism. Therefore when she talks about her professors, she accuses them of it.

Something *happens* after a while. I don't know what, but something happens, and the words get synchronized with the person's heartbeats, and then you're actually praying without ceasing. (Salinger, *FZ* 20)

Franny thinks that it is enough when one says the prayer repeatedly, even without believing in it the prayer becomes self-active anyway, and one is magically endowed with a vision of truth and holiness.

However, Zoey explains to her that she has to understand what she is praying for at first, she has to know Jesus, who he really was in order to understand the meaning of the prayer. Otherwise it does not come into her heart. It is in accordance with Zen which shuns abstractions, representations, and figures of speech, thus no real value is attached to such words as God. It is only a word and as such is not conducive to the real understanding of Zen (Suzuki 76). Besides, fulfilment can only be won by her willingness to strive to love and participate as fully and sincerely as she can in the world. She has to take responsibility for others, and also for the way she acts in the world. Only then, the Jesus Prayer can be truly uttered and understood.

Zoey nags at Franny that she cannot recognize and value the act of love and saintliness in the soup of broth which is incessantly offered to her by her loving mother Bessie, and he adds that she would not, for sure, recognize Jesus himself were he standing in front of her.

You don't even have sense enough to drink when somebody brings you a cup of consecrated chicken soup-which is the only kind of chicken soup Bessie ever brings to anybody around this madhouse. (Salinger, *FZ* 85)

The point is that people should learn to see the true essence of things, to value even the most ordinary objects no matter how unimportant they seem to be. The same idea is in Zen, that everything is equal to everything else, and people when look at it should not think about it, for the reason flattens the reality. Also a monk has to "eat up all that is served to him" (Suzuki 22).

Another important message is that people should know themselves very well, to know their accomplishments and also shortcomings. Franny is an amateur actor, and she wants to stop playing, for she thinks that otherwise she would be egoistic if she continued.

I'm not afraid to compete. It's just the opposite. Don't you see that? I'm afraid I will compete—that's what scares me. That's why I quit the Theatre Department. Just because I'm so horribly conditioned to accept everybody else's values, and just because I like applause and people to rave about me, doesn't make it right. (Salinger, *FZ* 16)

However, if she should consider acting as a divine thing and through acting or simply something she is good at, she can take advantage of the talent she is gifted with. Therefore the only religious thing Zooey advises Franny to do is to act for God. Even if a play, a serial or a film one performs in, was for Broadway, or it was a part of a radio show, there would be no difference. For the aim is to not making differences and act as if they all were God himself. And it is the same way when it comes to everything that one does, all the time it has to be done without attention towards oneself, but selfishly towards other people.

Zooey points back to an advice that Seymour gave him about performing on the radio show. Seymour told Zooey to shine his shoes before entering the studio of a *Wise Child* show, but Zooey resisted: “I was furious. The studio audience were all morons, the announcer was a moron, the sponsors were morons, and I just damn well wasn't going to shine my shoes for them, I told Seymour” (Salinger, *FZ* 87). Seymour then said to him to shine the shoes for the Fat Lady and Zooey tells Franny: “He never did tell me who the Fat Lady was, but I shined my shoes for the Fat Lady every time I ever went on the air again...” (Salinger, *FZ* 87). He continues with explaining:

There isn't anyone out there who isn't Seymour's Fat Lady. That includes your Professor Tupper, buddy. And all his goddam cousins by the dozens. There isn't anyone anywhere who isn't Seymour's Fat Lady. Don't you know that? Don't you know that goddam secret yet? And don't you know – listen to me now – don't you know who that Fat Lady really is?...It's Christ Himself, buddy. (Salinger, *FZ* 88)

Franny comes to realize what Zooey tells her and it is as an immediate grasp of reality without intellectualization, the same one which is described in Zen.

Buddy gives a warning at the beginning to “Zooney” that what is to follow is not a mystical story but a love story. Pointing out that Nick Carraway in *The Great Gatsby* recognizes his cardinal virtue as honesty, the narrator says,

Mine, I think, is that I know the difference between a mystical story and a love story. I say that my current offering isn't a mystical story, or a religiously mystifying story, at all. I say it's a compound, or multiple, love story, pure and complicated (Salinger, *FZ* 3).

One believes after reading “Zooney” that Salinger is only playing with the reader, for one incessantly encounters God and the Jesus Prayer. And if it is a love story, then only in terms of an expression of a family love, which can be seen in Bessie's concern about her daughter, and even in Zooney's bantering towards his mother, which is a kind of routine, and it is very often on the verge with what is still acceptable, but Bessie knows that it is the way Zooney expresses his love and she is used to it. It is a love story in a way that love is present all around us, and at the same time it is a religious story, for religion without love cannot exist.

### **2.3 Seymour's suicide**

Seymour's character can be confusing from many aspects. Firstly, Salinger himself does not help to elucidate Seymour's obscure death. In “A Perfect Day for Bananafish”, in which Seymour commits suicide, there is no explanation of it. In “Raise High” Buddy recalls Seymour's wedding day, Seymour's decision to postpone the wedding as his joy caused him to be incompetent to make such a significant act, and draws a grotesque picture of wedding guests and their discontent about the situation. In “Seymour: An Introduction” Buddy talks about fragments from Seymour's life in such a way that Seymour is put on the pedestal. In “Franny” he is not mentioned at all, however he is still present, for what his younger sister experiences is connected to him. Finally, in “Zooney” the cause of Franny's depression is revealed, but to be at the same time the reason of Seymour's death is discovered, however, the reader has to be perceptive enough and has to have sufficient knowledge of religious connotations. However, it is still highly problematic unless one is so open-minded and disengages themselves from narrow-minded thinking in order to believe absolutely everything what has been written about Seymour.

As to elucidate Seymour's abilities and by that to cause an awe-effect in heads of those who still have not adopted meanings of all the references Salinger has made about Seymour, "Hapworth" was created to present Seymour as a seven-year-old prodigy. This, indeed, caused an awe-effect however positive or negative it was. For it did not brought only positive reactions to Salinger's creativity, but it also made many people ask what was going to be next, since this was already on the top of credibility, and it was supposed to be an absolute nonsense.

Many critics saw Salinger's inability to take advantage from his talent. They thought that the stories were too much religious, dull and unnecessarily long as Updike pointed out about "Zooney" that it "is just too long; there are too many cigarettes, too many goddams, too much verbal ado about not quite enough" (Updike). He also criticised that Salinger loved the family "too exclusively." Further he said that "their invention has become a hermitage for him" (Updike), in which a reference to Salinger's own life was probably involved. Many times Salinger was accused of being narcissist and sentimental (Bishop 11), and these attacks showed that Salinger had lost the critical detachment necessary to view his characters, especially Seymour.

Nevertheless, some people argued that "the creation of the Glass family as a whole enables Salinger to use a variety of narrative methods which he might otherwise not have had available to him (Seed 69). This is also assumed in this thesis, therefore Salinger is viewed in here as a writer who had the necessary amount of detachment and sanity to elaborate the Glass mythology in every detail, which will be, hopefully, fully revealed after all the pieces of the Glass stories will be published, and by this the reason behind Seymour's suicide will be ultimately elucidated.

### **2.3.1 The explanation of Seymour's death upon reading "A Perfect Day for Bananafish" as a separate story.**

Immediately after the war, when Seymour's character appeared for the first time in "A Perfect Day for Bananafish" (1948), the reasons behind Seymour's suicide could have been understood as an answer to the Second World War. It seems reasonable, since the story deals with a man whose personality is seriously damaged by his war experience and thus his suicide at the very end of the story is without question a negative reaction to the war, with Seymour being a representative of all the soldiers who have suffered from shell-shock.

Nevertheless, on account of reading the rest of the stories, in which the intriguing background of the Glass family is revealed, one cannot avoid the question of the other cause of Seymour's suicide, since it is not only the war experience to be behind it, but the issue also includes his complex personality with its inherent spirituality, which involves a rigorous study of religious books from an early age, therethrough Seymour earns to be called a prodigy.

Hence it is surprising that Paul Alexander in his *Salinger, A Biography* (1999) neither takes into account the religious aspects of the stories, nor does he mention the religion in the context with Seymour's suicide. He only points out that "the story is successful because it captures what it is like to be a soldier so emotionally damaged by the war he can no longer function in ordinary society" (126).

One can only speculate if at the time of writing the story, Seymour's character was meant to represent an ex-soldier with damaged psyche, and this one-dimensional aspect of the character was not intended to be further developed. Later, Salinger could have realized that the character should be further developed and so he was. Since Salinger took part in combat during the Second World War as well as Seymour did, Salinger's own mental condition impaired by the war is projected into Seymour. At least from the extract below it appears that initially Salinger wanted the reader to regard him as a war victim, and in the story there is no direct clue left that it should be on the contrary. In the extract Muriel's mother is expressing Dr. Sivetski's opinion on Seymour's condition:

Well. In the first place, he said it was a perfect crime the Army released him from the hospital - my word of honor. He very definitely told your father there's a chance - a very great chance, he said that Seymour may completely lose control of himself. My word of honor." (Salinger, *NS* 4)

However, there is a possibility that the image of Seymour Glass had already been fully developed at the time Salinger was writing "A Perfect Day for Bananafish". It is a more than interesting thought to let the pivotal character die at the beginning, thus all the other stories can unwind around Seymour's character without his being present. Also Bishop says that "Salinger creates an aura of extra-human qualities around Seymour, whose influence and teaching have an immeasurable effect upon his siblings" (74).

### 2.3.2 The explanation of Seymour's death upon reading "A Perfect Day for Bananafish" in company with other stories

After reading all the stories in which Seymour appeared directly or indirectly, there still remains uncertainty regarding the reasons for his suicide. Galloway, Bishop, O'Hearn and many others agree on one thing; the story of bananafish told by Seymour to a little Sybil functions as an allegory to Seymour's spiritual dilemma. David Galloway further suggests that the reason of the suicide can be explained through this story. Here follows the story:

"This is a perfect day for bananafish."

"I don't see any," Sybil said.

"That's understandable. Their habits are very peculiar." He kept pushing the float.

The water was not quite up to his chest. "They lead a very tragic life," he said.

"You know what they do, Sybil?"

She shook her head.

"Well, they swim into a hole where there's a lot of bananas. They're very ordinary looking fish when they swim in. But once they get in, they behave like pigs. Why, I've known some bananafish to swim into a banana hole and eat as many as seventy-eight bananas." He edged the float and its passenger a foot closer to the horizon. "Naturally, after that they're so fat they can't get out of the hole again. Can't fit through the door."

"Not too far out," Sybil said. "What happens to them?"

"What happens to who?"

"The bananafish."

"Oh, you mean after they eat so many bananas they can't get out of the banana hole?"

"Yes," said Sybil.

"Well, I hate to tell you, Sybil. They die."

"Why?" asked Sybil.

"Well, they get banana fever. It's a terrible disease." (8)

David Galloway says that the hole, into which bananafish swim represents Seymour's inability to cope with life, but it also, and more importantly, depicts that "mysticism is not a solution to man's dilemma" (211). When accepting Galloway's assumption, it is also possible to state that Seymour fights with the normalcy of the people and the materialistic life they lead. He truly wants to assimilate to the way other people live and have the same happy life as

they do. He longs for good *karma* with the view of pleasant future life. One way to make it happen is to get married, for in Vedanta the marriage means that *dharma* is being observed. It is “one’s *dharma* to marry, raise a family and provide for that family in whatever way is necessary” (Subhamoy, *Dharma*). Therefore Seymour marries Muriel. He truly loves her, for she resembles an undebauched child. Even though intellectually she is not at the level of his siblings, not to mention himself. He writes in his diary: “How I worship her simplicity, her terrible honesty. How I rely on it” (Salinger, *RHRB* 85), and he wishes to attain the harmony with society which she represents. Being in marriage he should experience peace, joy, strength and tranquillity within himself and it should make his life disciplined. However, it does not.

Seymour was born with the power of remembering his past lives and being a clairvoyant. In “Hapworth” Seymour, as first person narrator, says that he has been already losing some of his clairvoyant powers and predicts that he will live “as long as a well-preserved telephone pole, a generous matter of some thirty years or more...Buddy has even longer to go” (30). He also mentions that his mother’s cyst is not malignant, and advises his parents of a favourable period during which to consider terminating their vaudeville career. In addition to this, he foresees the meeting which will lead to the children’s appearance on *It’s a Wise Child*, and says that Seymour foresees Buddy as a grey-haired man writing on his typewriter. So Seymour can see into both past and future, which makes his suicide as something he predicts long before it actually happens.

To his siblings Seymour stands as a kind of Christ. Besides, Buddy says in “Raise High” that Seymour is *mukta*. Seymour, indeed, intends to achieve *satori*, for he does *koan* exercises. However, Seymour cannot be called *mukta*, for he does not achieve *satori*. If he did, his life would change and he would be able to enjoy his life. Further, his life is filled with erratic spiritual experiences. As an instance can be pointed out that the scars from touching certain people remain on his hands. “Like the bananafish, however, he has become so glutted with this experience that he can no longer participate in the real world outside himself,” as Galloway says (212), so he rejects the mystic experience, which only alienates him from reality.

Through Zen Buddhism and Advaita Vedanta Seymour discovers that people should be educated in order to be sage, not knowing. He and Buddy apply this method on their youngest siblings. However, it does not in success, as can be seen in *Franny and Zooey*. Although Seymour tries to achieve *satori* and live an ordinary life, he discovers that these two things are not mutually compatible. Seymour literally begs Buddy to approach Zen on a

purely Western, intellectual level, which indicates that he was acutely aware of its dangers perhaps even of the incompatibility of true Zen with Western culture. That means he knows that if Buddy wanted to practice Zen and wanted to achieve *satori*, it might be dangerous for Buddy. At the same time Seymour cannot live without leading a spiritual life and believing in something. Galloway proposes an idea that the only solution to save at least his youngest siblings from the over spirituality is to commit suicide.

Seymour is at least partly exonerated for making ‘freaks’ of Franny and Zooey when we note that it was his death (and its admission of failure) which saved the youngest Glass children; in a metaphorical sense in no way foreign to Salinger’s intention, Seymour (who could, in fact, *see more* than his contemporaries) died that Franny and Zooey might live, and it is in this sense of his almost ritualistic death, rather than in the deluding mysticism of his life, that one seizes on the essence of this character’s saintliness. (Galloway 227)

By Seymour’s suicide Franny and Zooey would, hopefully, realise that it is still possible to divert the course Seymour and Buddy gave their lives, and they would continue to live happily. Fortunately for Franny, Zooey does realize the act of Seymour’s sacrifice and he forgives him, as Buddy writes in his letter to Zooey: “There are times when I think you’ve forgiven S. more completely than any of us have“ (Salinger, *FZ* 31).

Also J.A. Bishop agrees that Seymour cannot be called *mukta*, otherwise he would not committed suicide. However, he divides on the matter why he committed suicide. He does not propose that the reason was to sacrifice himself so that his youngest brother and sister could continue. He suggests that the suicide was an act of leaving behind the life, in which he could not accomplish what he intended, that is to achieve *satori*. The obstruction in his way lies in his inability to success “in conquering his sensuality.” He realises that “to throw away the shackles of physicality in order to attain pure consciousness in his present existence is impossible” (Bishop 101). In “Hapworth” Seymour repeatedly says that he has to resist temptation in order not to be distract from his religious path.

I for one do not look forward to being distracted by charming lusts of the body, quite day in and day out, for the few, blissful, remaining years allotted to me in this appearance. There is monumental work to be done in this appearance, of partially undisclosed nature, and I would cheerfully prefer to die an utter dog’s death rather than be distracted at crucial moments by a gorgeous, appealing plane or rolling

contour of goodly flesh. My time is too limited, quite to my sadness and amusement. While I intend, to be sure, to work on this sensual problem without ceasing, it would be quite a little wind-fall if you, dear Les, as my dear father and hearty friend, would be a complete, shameless, open book with regard to your own pressing sensuality when you were our ages. (Salinger, "Hapworth" 9)

Bishop thinks that a thirty-one-year-old Seymour in "A Perfect Day for Bananafish" does not differ so much from a seven-year-old Seymour in "Hapworth", for he has not succeeded in conquering his sensuality when marrying Muriel (101). However, this contradicts *dharma* in a way that a marriage is divine. By Seymour's death, there will be another life waiting for him, or rather his new incarnation.

He may have believed that suicide would simply accelerate his progress toward the next incarnation, and the death is most satisfactorily understood in the light of a god-lover's intense desire to reach his goal. In this sense the suicide would neither be sinful nor the ultimate expression of failure, but merely signify the ending of one appearance to begin another. However, Seymour himself noted that weaknesses may only be corrected by "dogged effort"; he knew that God permits nobody to take a short cut. (Bishop 99)

In his conclusion Bishop says the death could be understood because there was a higher concern behind it. Seymour is aware of the fact that he cannot manage his weaknesses but if he left this appearance now with the desire of fulfilling his goals, then the next life would be offered for him, so that he could achieve *satori* in his next appearance.

Another explanation of Seymour's death is given by Heila O'Hearn. She mentions Bishop's point of view, and states that she agrees that "the suicide signifies neither sinfulness nor an expression of failure" (97). However, she disagrees with Bishop's thesis that "Seymour's suicide is meant to suggest his intense desire to reach his goal" (97). Instead, she regards "the suicide as an action of a man who has completed what he had to do in his present appearance" (97-98). She points out that in "Hapworth" there can be seen "the incredible amount of work confronting Seymour" (98). And she also states that Seymour's spiritual progress as a poet can be seen concretely from the time he was seven years old up until his death. The term 'poet' has been already explained in the previous chapter. As we have learned, it does not include only writing poetry. Buddy claims that Seymour wrote 184 poems and says about them: "I wouldn't unreservedly recommend the last thirty or thirty-five poems

to any living soul who hasn't died at least twice in his lifetime, preferably slowly" (Salinger, *RHRB* 120)

Thus Seymour's progress can be seen in "Hapworth", the style it is written in is verbose and experimental. In "Seymour: An Introduction", Seymour's later poetry is described by Buddy as bare and ungarnished. Seymour refined his poetry stylistically to the shape of a double haiku, on which Buddy comments that it is a remarkable feat for somebody who cannot stop talking. Finally, his last poem about a doll, which Seymour had written immediately before he died, can be viewed as "a progress in refinement, since it is only a three-line haiku" (O'Hearn 98). In Zen it is more appreciated to say less than more, for Zen is based on simple and unsophisticated personal experience of life rather than talking about it. Therefore a perfect *haiku* can express the experience almost as if it was reader's own experience, and with minimum words, since the words change the initial meaning. "The poet should...enter into the object so that the poem forms itself when the poet and object become one" (Von Sturmer).

The little girl on the plane  
Who turned her doll's head around  
To look at me. (Salinger, *FZ* 30)

When examining all these stances towards Seymour's suicide, we see that there is truth in each of them. However, Galloway's contribution seem to be the most credible. To support this thesis, here is an extract from "Hapworth":

I have left this troublesome instability uncorrected in my previous two appearances, to my folly and disgust; it will not be corrected by friendly, cheerful prayer. It can only be corrected by dogged effort on my part, thank God; I cannot honorably or intimately pray to some charming, divine weakling to step in and clean my mess up after me; the very prospect turns my stomach. However, the human tongue could all too easily be the cause of my utter degrading in this appearance, unless I get a move on. I have been trying like hell since our arrival to leave a wide margin for human ill-will, fear, jealousy, and gnawing dislike of the uncommonplace. Do not read this rash remark out loud to the twins or possibly let it fall on Boo Boo's ears prematurely, but I admit, with maddening tears coursing down my unstable face, that I do not in my heart hold out unlimited hope for the human tongue as we know it to-day. ("Hapworth" 16)

In contrast to Bishop's statement that there is no progress in Seymour's life, from the extract above it is clear that the progress will be present in Seymour's life. There is shown Seymour's determination to change himself and accomplishes it as a poet, as O'Hearn points out. In the passage below it is also mentioned: "the human tongue could all too easily be the cause of my utter degrading in this appearance, unless I get a move on." There can be seen his worry and also the prediction that he will be unable to cope with the outside world.

When Galloway's view, that Seymour tries to achieve *satori* and live an ordinary life, but he discovers that these two things are not mutually compatible, is combined with O'Hearn's, that Seymour eventually accomplishes to become a poet, the death appears even more striking. For Seymour almost reaches his goal, however his struggle is painful enough that he resigns.

In Seymour's attempts to assimilate into a 'normal' life there can be found a similarity with Salinger's life, for Salinger's half-Jewish, half-Irish middle-class family lived on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, which was associated with a numerous groups of Jewish people living there, but at the time Salinger was thirteen years old, the family moved to the Upper East Side. By this his life became closer to the life of people living in this part of New York (Alexander 36). Salinger as a person and also as a writer was "drawn to the urbane, affluent lifestyle" (Alexander 29) of the higher social class, called WASP. However, disillusion came into Salinger's as well as Seymour's life, for Salinger was forgotten by Oona O'Neill and Seymour, even though he married Muriel, he discovered that these kind of people were too shallow and differed too much from him that he simply could not merge in.

For Salinger, Seymour represents a divine incarnation, which descends on earth to revitalize religion. Even though it is not accomplished, the meaning of Seymour's act is considerable, since to be moral and feel love towards everybody, and everything in a universe in which God is dead (or, at least, in which historical preconceptions of God frequently seem invalid) is venerable. Therefore the problems of the Glass family, which cover topics such as love and morality, are timeless.

### 3 Conclusion

The Glass stories show us that spiritualism has its place even in a seemingly common and consumer oriented society. Seymour Glass features as a link element of the stories and we discover how the sensitive and most spiritually advanced member of the Glass family, who strives to find his place in the world, influences his siblings.

Seymour could easily lead a long life, being famous and having enough money. Thanks to his genius, it would not be difficult for him to achieve it. However, he uses his talent not for materialistic purposes in which he does not find gratification, but for his own rise on the way to the enlightenment. Seymour and also Salinger leave the prevailing idea of the ideal normal life and endeavour to bring enlightenment to the world. Salinger created this character so as to remind us that there are more important values in one's life than money and the opinion of other people. Moreover, he succeeded in doing this with a playful approach towards the reader.

Via Zen Buddhism Salinger saw that the key towards better understanding of the world lies in the way people are educated. His approach includes no-knowledge and detachment, which is based on moral values rather than rationality and non-stereotyped view of the world. This makes one an unbiased observer.

In the way *poet* is treated in the stories, Salinger expresses his disfavour for stiff approach towards this word based in academies. He widens the meaning of the word and by this he makes it more god-like.

Further, in his writings Salinger aimed at realization of one's accomplishments, for it is pivotal to know oneself at first and the talent which is given from God, in order to know how one can contribute to society. This is shown in Franny's decision to stop playing, even though it is the only thing she is good at. Having done that, she can play a role as a mediator between God and audience.

Seymour and his siblings strive to assimilate to the world, which seems to be normal for their parents and apparently for everybody else. By marrying Muriel, who is a representative of a petty bourgeoisie, Seymour wants to get accustomed to the normal life and at the same time succeed in achieving *satori*. However, he discovers that these two things are mutually incompatible, for the normal life restrains him from finishing his religious way. Seymour sacrifices himself in order to save Franny and Zooey, since he realizes that his radical teaching methods are likely to do more harm than good. The right time for Seymour's

methods has not come yet. Thus the individuals cannot live a life according to Eastern methods unless they also change other people's way of thinking.

The Salinger's message lies in the treatment of morals and love. Although they are part of religious questions, the way Salinger treated them reminds us that these values transcend the religious topic and should be present in our lives regardless of our beliefs.

## 4 Recommended Works

Before elaborating this thesis, I had done some research with the purpose to find out any thesis in the milieu of the Czech universities dealing with the theme of the Glass family. I concluded with one result, a thesis which works with the character of Seymour Glass.

It is a bachelor thesis called *Analysis of Seymour Glass* (2012) by Hana Moravčíková. Moravčíková focuses on the character of Seymour Glass with the aim to investigate and explain the cause of his suicide. She states that there are three possible reasons: shell shock, over-sensibility, and resemblance with The Lost Generation. Moravčíková says that “when the three elements interconnect in the mind of one man, it is understandable that he is not able to deal with all of them” (36). Taking into account the conclusion of this thesis, I can agree with it only partly. Seymour’s over sensibility is indeed pivotal for the development of his character, and what really happens during the war must have a strong impact on him. However, Moravčíková does not sufficiently discuss the full impact of religion and philosophy on him, for they influence his sensible personality so greatly that this is the reason of his committing suicide.

For further reading I would like to recommend the book by Eberhard Alsen, who for the first time looked at the Glass stories as one composite novel in his *Salinger's Glass Stories As a Composite Novel* (1983). Unfortunately, I have not been able to get access to the book for further study.

On the other hand, I have gathered information from *A Study of the Religious Dimensions in the Fiction of J. D. Salinger* (1976) by John Anthony Bishop, and from Galloway’s “The Love Ethic,” which very much contributes to the explanation of the Glass family’s problems. The essay can be found either in *The Absurd Hero in American Fiction: Updike, Styron, Bellow, Salinger* (1981), or in *Bloom’s Modern Critical Views: J.D. Salinger* (2008), in which “Keeping it in the Family: The Novellas of J.D. Salinger” by David Seed is also to be found.

Further, I would like to recommend Heila O’Hearn’s *The Development of Seymour Glass as a Figure of Hope in the Fiction of J.D. Salinger* (1982), in which very interesting points can be found, and for more detailed information concerning Advaita Vedanta and Zen Buddhism in connection with Salinger, I would propose to read Sam P. Ranchan’s *An Adventure in Vedanta: J.D. Salinger's the Glass Family* (1990), Gerald Rosen’s *Zen in the Art of J.D. Salinger* (1977).

## 5 Works Cited

- Alexander, Paul. *Salinger, A Biography*. New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 1999. Print.
- Bhaskarananda, Swami. *What Is Vedanta?* Vedanta Society of Western Washington. Web. 5 June 2014. <<http://www.vedanta-seattle.org/what-is-vedanta/>>
- . *Hindu Concept of Reincarnation*. Vedanta Society of Western Washington. Web 5 June. <<http://www.vedanta-seattle.org/articles/hindu-concept-of-reincarnation/>>
- Bishop, J. "A Study of the Religious Dimensions in the Fiction of J. D. Salinger." *Open Access Dissertations and Theses*. Paper 4810. 1976. Web. 14 May 2014. <<http://digitalcommons.mcmaster.ca/opendissertations/4810/>>
- David, Leesa S. *Advaita Vedanta and Zen Buddhism: Deconstructive Modes of Spiritual Inquiry*. London: Continuum International Publishing, 2010. Web. 7 June 2014. <<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/cuni/docDetail.action?docID=10387227/>>
- Galoway, David. "The Love Ethic." *The Absurd Hero in American Fiction:: Updike, Styron, Bellow, Salinger*. 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. ed. Austin: University of Texas, 1981. Print.
- Hamilton, Ian. *In search of J.D. Salinger*. 1<sup>st</sup> publ. London: Bloomsbury, 1998. Print.
- Hungerford, A. *Postmodern belief: American Literature and Religion since 1960*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010. Web. 7 June 2014. <<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/cuni/docDetail.action?docID=10395110/>>
- Jung, C.G. "Foreword." *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991. Print.
- Moravčíková, Hana. *Analysis of Seymour Glass*. Praha: Univerzita Karlova v Praze, 2012. Web. 9 December 2013. <<https://is.cuni.cz/webapps/zzp/detail/111404/>>
- O'Hearn, Sheila, "The Development of Seymour Glass as a Figure of Hope in the Fiction of J.D. Salinger." *Open Access Dissertations and Theses*. Paper 106. 1982. Web. 14 May 2014. <<http://digitalcommons.mcmaster.ca/opendissertations/106/>>
- O'Neill, Kate. "Copyright Law and the Management of J.D. Salinger's Literary Estate." *Cardozo AELJ No.1 2013*. Web. 7 June 2014. <<http://www.cardozoaelj.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/ONeill-COPYRIGHT-LAW-AND-THE-MANAGEMENT-OF-J.D.-SALINGER%E2%80%99S-LITERARY-ESTATE.pdf/>>
- Rajhans, Gyan. *The Power of Mantra Chanting*. About.com. Web. 8 June 2014. <<http://hinduism.about.com/od/prayersmantras/a/mantrachanting.htm/>>
- Salinger, J.D. *Franny and Zooey*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1991.

- . "Hapworth 19, 1924." *The New Yorker*. 19 June 1965. pp. 32-113. Web. 29 March 2014.
- . *Nine Stories*. New York: Back Bay Books, 2001.
- . *Raise High the Roof Beam, Carpenters, and Seymour: An Introduction*. London: Penguin Group, 1994. Print.
- Seed, David. "Keeping it in the Family: The Novellas of J.D. Salinger." *Bloom's Modern Critical Views: J.D. Salinger*. New Ed. New York: Chelsea House Pub, 2008. Print.
- Shields, David and Shane Salerno. *Salinger*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2013. Print.
- Sperduti, Alice. "The Divine Nature of Poetry in Antiquity." *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association*, Vol. 81. 1950. pp. 209-240. Web. 16 June 2014. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/283581/>>
- Von Sturmer, Richard. Haiku&Zen. Poetry Society.org. Web. 16 June 2014. <<http://www.poetrysociety.org.nz/node/113/>>
- Subhamoy Das. JD Salinger and Hinduism: The Religious Affiliation of the author of The Catcher in the Rye. About.com. Web. 5 June 2014. <<http://hinduism.about.com/od/artculture/a/salinger.htm/>>
- . The Spiritual Genius of Swami Vivekananda. About.com. Web. 5 June 2014. <<http://hinduism.about.com/od/vivekananda/p/vivekananda.htm/>>
- . Swami Vivekananda's Speeches. About.com. Web. 5 June 2014. <[http://hinduism.about.com/od/vivekananda/a/vivekananda\\_speeches\\_2.htm/](http://hinduism.about.com/od/vivekananda/a/vivekananda_speeches_2.htm/)>
- . *What is Dharma? About the Path of Righteousness*. About.com. Web. 8 June 2014. <<http://hinduism.about.com/od/basics/a/dharma.htm/>>
- . *What Is Karma? The Law of Cause and Effect*. About.com. Web. 6 June 2014. <<http://hinduism.about.com/od/basics/a/karma.htm/>>
- Suzuki, D.T. *An introduction to Zen Buddhism*. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991. Print.
- . "Meister Eckhart and Buddhism." *Mysticism: Christian and Buddhist*. New York: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1957.
- Updike, John. "Anxious Days For The Glass Family." *The New York Times*, 17 September 1961. Web. 26 May 2014. <<http://www.nytimes.com/books/98/09/13/specials/salinger-franny01.html/>>
- Wordsworth, William. "Preface to *Lyrical Ballads, with Pastoral and Other Poems*." Rpt. in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. Vol. 2. Gen. ed. Stephen Greenblatt. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Norton, 2006. 263-274. Print.