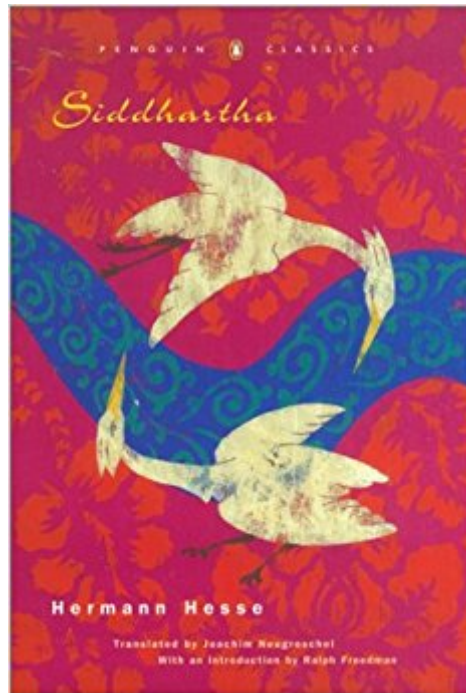




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# Siddhartha (Penguin Classics Deluxe Edition)



## Synopsis

A bold translation of Nobel Prize-winner Herman Hesse's most inspirational and beloved work in a Penguin Classics deluxe edition Hesse's famous and influential novel, *Siddhartha*, is perhaps the most important and compelling moral allegory our troubled century has produced. Integrating Eastern and Western spiritual traditions with psychoanalysis and philosophy, this strangely simple tale, written with a deep and moving empathy for humanity, has touched the lives of millions since its original publication in 1922. Set in India, *Siddhartha* is the story of a young Brahmin's search for ultimate reality after meeting with the Buddha. His quest takes him from a life of decadence to asceticism, through the illusory joys of sensual love with a beautiful courtesan, and of wealth and fame, to the painful struggles with his son and the ultimate wisdom of renunciation. This new translation by award-winning translator Joachim Neugroschel includes an introduction by Hesse biographer Ralph Freedman. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

## Book Information

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In the 1960s, especially in the United States, the novels of Hermann Hesse were widely embraced by young readers who found in his protagonists a reflection of their own search for meaning in a troubled world. Hesse's rich allusions to world mythologies, especially those of Asia, and his persistent theme of the individual striving for integrity in opposition to received opinions and mass culture appealed to a generation in upheaval and in search of renewed values. Born in southern Germany in 1877, Hesse came from a family of missionaries, scholars, and writers with strong ties to India. This early exposure to the philosophies and religions of Asia — filtered and interpreted by thinkers thoroughly steeped in the intellectual traditions and currents of modern Europe — provided Hesse with some of the most pervasive elements in his short stories and novels, especially Siddhartha (1922) and Journey to the East (1932). Hesse concentrated on writing poetry as a young man, but his first successful book was a novel, Peter Camenzind (1904). The income it brought permitted him to settle with his wife in rural Switzerland and write full-time. By the start of World War I in 1914, Hesse had produced several more novels and had begun to write the considerable number of book reviews and articles that made him a strong influence on the literary culture of his time. During the war, Hesse was actively involved in relief efforts. Depression, criticism for his pacifist views, and a series of personal crises — combined with what he referred to as the "war psychosis" — of his

times led Hesse to undergo psychoanalysis with J. B. Lang, a student of Carl Jung. Out of these years came *Demian* (1919), a novel whose main character is torn between the orderliness of bourgeois existence and the turbulent and enticing world of sensual experience. This dichotomy is prominent in Hesse's subsequent novels, including *Siddhartha* (1922), *Steppenwolf* (1927), and *Narcissus and Goldmund* (1930). Hesse worked on his magnum opus, *The Glass Bead Game* (1943), for twelve years. This novel was specifically cited when he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1946. Hesse died at his home in Switzerland in 1962. Calling his life a series of "crises and new beginnings," Hesse clearly saw his writing as a direct reflection of his personal development and his protagonists as representing stages in his own evolution. In the 1950s, Hesse described the dominant theme of his work: "From *Camenzind* to *Steppenwolf* and *Josef Knecht* [protagonist of *The Glass Bead Game*], they can all be interpreted as a defense (sometimes also as an SOS) of the personality, of the individual self." *Joachim Neugroschel* has won three PEN translation awards and the French-American translation prize. He has also translated Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice* and Sacher-Masoch's *Venus in Furs*, both for Penguin Classics. He lives in Brooklyn, New York. Ralph Freedman, Professor Emeritus of Comparative Literature at Princeton University, is acclaimed for his biographies *Hermann Hesse: Pilgrim of Crisis*, and *Life of a Poet: Rainer Maria Rilke*

*Siddhartha* is a great book. This edition, however, is perhaps the worst edition of any book that I have ever--ever--seen published. The number of typos, grammatical mistakes, syntax errors, and other errors is astounding. The publishing house, Simon & Brown, should be embarrassed and ashamed.

A beautiful, haunting novel of spiritual growth and development. Hesse was a talented writer who explored some of the pulsing questions of life. His book on his experience in school, *Beneath the Wheel*, is one of my favorites. *Siddhartha* is probably the work to start with when reading Hesse (it's one of his most well-known), if not *Demian* or *Steppenwolf* before working up to *The Glassbead Game*. What makes this story so engaging (without sharing too much) is the way the ending reflects the beginning. This narrative arch marks this book as a masterwork and calls the reader to question long after reading.

In a burst of nostalgia, I bought this kindle edition of Hermann Hesse's Siddhartha. "Nostalgia" because we read it in 3rd semester (intermediate) German class quite long ago and, in fact, that's one book I kept because I knew it was a classic. I also bought Siddhartha in a burst of hope, because more recently I'd actually been able to read and appreciate some of Hesse's poetry my former housemate brought home from one of his jaunts to the downtown German language library. So I read Siddhartha. Again. As a designer and as a theologian, despite being very much into symbol, meaning, sign, and word, I still don't quite get the profound import of this book. I clearly remember my German Professor's "I am humanist" declarations; I also recall a friend telling me how much she'd enjoyed reading Siddhartha in English, and envied that I'd read it in German. I fully expected being a few years older would increase my appreciation, but it didn't. However, I'm still happy to own this digital edition, and I encourage you to read Siddhartha for yourself, in either a good translation or in Hermann Hesse's original German.

I received a copy of the then-current paperback edition of this book as a gift from a close friend in 1965, and have cherished it ever since. The edition you are reading about here is a larger-format reproduction of that edition. I gave it recently as a gift to a friend, and found it to be an excellent reading format. Hesse's writing style is simple and direct, and this is an easy read once the reader gets into the author's rhythm. Keep in mind this is a short novel, not intended as a literal history of The Bhudda or Bhuddism.

I bought a kindle version and a matching audible. Yes, I do agree that there are quite a few grammatical errors and typos. Instead of complaining, please be grateful to the translator(s). At the very least, we can read Siddhartha, otherwise. Could we imagine what we missed if Siddhartha was never translated into English in the first place? Let us look at the problems involved grammatical errors and typos from a different point of view. Without grammatical errors and typos, we perhaps read through the text, enjoy it, and then soon forget it. Yes, a good feeling about the book does linger in our mind, but the wisdom from the book probably does not retain in our heart longer than the moment we put the book back on our bookshelf. Because I re-read and re-read, I truly appreciate Hermann Hesse and the translator(s). Thank you so much for making Siddhartha available to the readers in the U.S. Maybe, this is the only way that the translator(s) can encourage the readers to re-read the book again and again. Everything comes with a price :) Please enjoy all moments of re-reading . . .

Not to be rude but I don't think many of us should be critiquing the writing of Hermann Hesse. Wasn't it Alexander Pope who said: "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread"? As to the book -- it really does have the potential to change your life. Really.

Informative and imaginative and pedantic telling of the life of Siddhartha. I love his use of the river and the water cycle to convey wisdom. I like the rebellious nature of Siddhartha, here. I like how inspired I am to consider a different perspective on the things I'm working on now. I read this book at age 15 and just finished it again at age 55. It spoke to me then and it fascinates me now. It's clearly fiction and not entirely based on any particular strain of Buddhism but it illuminates many Buddhist concepts in story form. As far as I know this is one of the earliest west meets east revelations written in fiction. It's worth the read!

I have read this book a number of times, and it always presents a different face. Of course the book doesn't change, but it reaches across time to speak to you in different voices. If you are on your own search for truth there isn't a better book to take with you. Education, asceticism, luxury, working for others - wherever you are in life, you can always "try a little bit harder to be a little bit better." Unfortunately, this version of Siddhartha contains huge amount of typographical errors. Missing articles (a, an, the) and goofs such as "out" instead of "our." If you've read Siddhartha before, you can stumble through this edition. If this is your first reading, SKIP this one and order the paperback. The errors don't effect the actual meaning of the story - much - but they are numerous enough to be annoying and a bit confusing.

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