

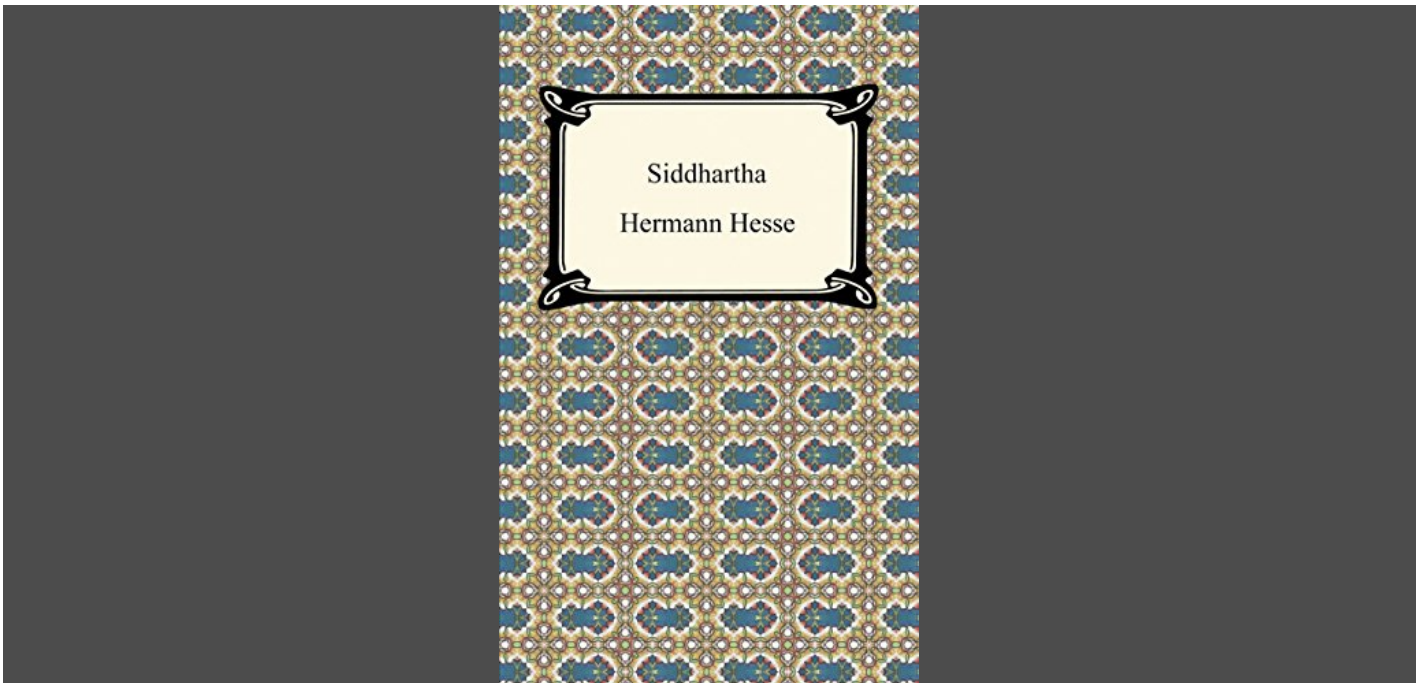
PDF | Siddhartha (with Biographical
Afterword)

by Hermann Hesse



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The title of this novel is a combination of two Sanskrit words, "siddha," which is defined as "achieved," and "artha" which is defined as "meaning" or "wealth." The word serves as the name for the principal character, a man on a spiritual journey of self-discovery during the time of the first Buddha. Siddhartha is the son of a wealthy Brahmin family who decides to leave his home in the hopes of gaining spiritual illumination. Siddhartha is joined by his best friend Govinda. The two renounce their earthly possessions, engage in ritual fasting and intense meditation and ultimately seek out and speak with Gautama, the original Buddha. Here the two go their separate ways, Govinda joining the order of the Buddha, Siddhartha traveling on in search of spiritual enlightenment. In order to complete this novel Hesse immersed himself in the sacred teachings of both Hindu and Buddhist scriptures and lived a semi-reclusive life in order to achieve his own spiritual enlightenment. Considered one of Hesse's most important works, "Siddhartha" remains to this day as one of his most popular. It is a work that deals with the quest that we all undertake in some way or another, to define our lives in an environment of conflicting dualities and ultimately find spiritual awareness. This edition includes a biographical afterword.

Amazon.com Review

In the shade of a banyan tree, a grizzled ferryman sits listening to the river. Some say he's a sage. He was once a wandering shramana and, briefly, like thousands of others, he followed Gotama the Buddha, enraptured by his sermons. But this man, Siddhartha, was not a follower of any but his own soul. Born the son of a Brahmin, Siddhartha was blessed in appearance, intelligence, and charisma. In order to find meaning in life, he discarded his promising future for the life of a wandering ascetic. Still, true happiness evaded him. Then a life of pleasure and titillation merely eroded away his spiritual gains until he was just like all the other "child people," dragged around by his desires. Like Hermann Hesse's other creations of struggling young men, *Siddhartha* has a good dose of European angst and stubborn individualism. His final epiphany challenges both the Buddhist and the Hindu ideals of enlightenment. Neither a practitioner nor a devotee, neither meditating nor reciting, Siddhartha comes to blend in with the world, resonating with the rhythms of nature, bending the reader's ear down to hear answers from the river. In this translation Sherab Chodzin Kohn captures the slow, spare lyricism of Siddhartha's search, putting her version on par with Hilda Rosner's standard edition. --Brian Bruya

Product Description

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