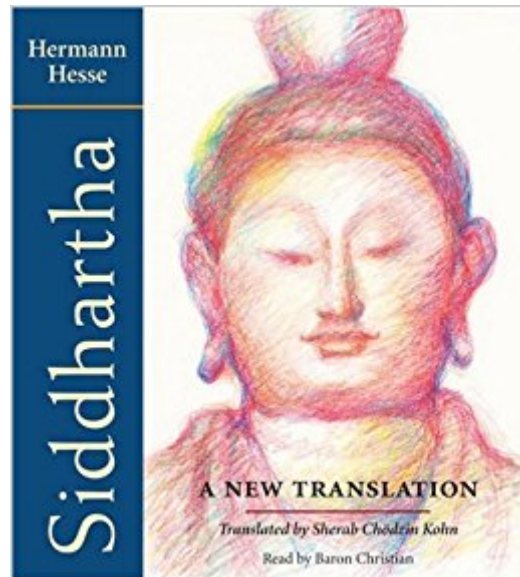




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# Siddhartha: A New Translation



## Synopsis

This classic of twentieth-century literature chronicles the spiritual evolution of a man living in India at the time of the Buddha—a journey of the spirit that has inspired generations of readers. Here is an audio edition of a fresh translation from Sherab Chodzin Kohn, a gifted translator and longtime student of Buddhism and Eastern philosophy. Kohn's flowing, poetic translation conveys the philosophical and spiritual nuances of Hermann Hesse's text, paying special attention to the qualities of meditative experience. 4 CDs, 5 hours, unabridged.

## Book Information

Audio CD

Publisher: Shambhala Audio; Unabridged edition (April 8, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1590305515

ISBN-13: 978-1590305515

Product Dimensions: 5.3 x 0.8 x 5.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 5 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 1,885 customer reviews

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## Customer Reviews

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 --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Siddhartha's life takes him on a journey toward enlightenment. Afire with youthful idealism, the Brahmin joins a group of ascetics, fasting and living without possessions. Meeting Gotama the Buddha, he comes to feel this is not the right path, though he also declines joining the Buddha's followers. He reenters the world, hoping to learn of his own nature, but instead slips gradually into hedonism and materialism. Surfeited and disgusted, he flees from his possessions to become a ferryman's apprentice, learning what lessons he can from the river itself. Herman Hesse's 1922 Bildungsroman parallels the life of Buddha and seems to argue that lessons of this sort cannot be taught but come from one's own struggle to find truth. Noted actor Derek Jacobi interprets this material wonderfully, and the package, despite abridging a Nobel prize winner's prose, can be highly recommended. A John Hiett, Iowa City P.L. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

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 Buddha or Buddhism.

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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