

Siddhartha Essay: Hindu and Buddhist Thought

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Hindu and Buddhist Thought in Siddhartha

Siddhartha, set in India, is subtitled an "Indic Poetic Work," and it clearly owes much to Indian religions. But the question of the exact nature of Hesse's debt to various aspects of Indian religion and philosophy in Siddhartha is quite complicated and deserves detailed discussion. This essay will discuss the elements of [Hindu](#) and Buddhist thought present in Siddhartha and make distinctions between them.

"Siddhartha is one of the names of the historical Gotama" (Noss 213), the life of Hesse's character, Siddhartha resembles that of his historical counterpart to some extent. Siddhartha is by no means a fictional life of Buddha, but it does contain numerous references to Buddha and his teachings.

"The basic teaching of Buddha is formulated in the Four [Noble Truths](#) and the Eightfold Path" (Gupta 17). Proceeding from the premise that suffering exists and that a release from it must be found, Buddha constructed his system. The First Noble Truth is the fact of suffering. The Second Truth is that suffering arises from human desire for something, and that this desire can never be satisfied. The Third Truth is that there is a way to achieve a

release from suffering. And the Fourth Truth prescribes the manner of overcoming suffering and attaining true knowledge.

The first two steps in the Eightfold Path, which leads to the cessation of suffering, are right understanding and right resolution; a person must first [discover](#) and experience the correctness of the Four Noble Truths (it is not sufficient to profess a superficial belief), and then resolve to follow the correct path. The next three steps likewise form a kind of unit: right speech, right behavior, an...

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