

## Topic Page: [Hesse, Hermann, 1877-1962](https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/hesse_hermann_1877_1962)

Summary Article: **Hesse, Hermann**

From *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*

German writer, a Swiss citizen from 1923. A conscientious objector in World War I and a pacifist opponent of Hitler, he published short stories, poetry, and novels, including *Peter Camenzind* (1904), *Siddhartha* (1922), and *Steppenwolf* (1927). Later works, such as *Das Glasperlenspiel/The Glass Bead Game* (1943), show the influence of Indian mysticism and Jungian psychoanalysis. Above all, Hesse was the prophet of individualism. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1946.

**Life** Hesse was born in Calw, Württemberg. He became a mechanic and a bookseller and continued his education by reading. He went to Switzerland and adopted Swiss nationality. In 1911 he made a protracted tour of India.

**Fiction** His early novels, with their vivid portrayal of natural scenery and small-town life, are reminiscent of Gottfried Keller. They are remarkable for their musical prose and sympathetic portrayal of childhood. *Siddhartha* contains many autobiographical hints. It describes a young man's revolt against the orthodox religious views of his father and his growing interest in Indian mysticism. *Steppenwolf* is a severe indictment of Western 20th-century urban life with its lack of real culture. It is a highly controversial work, full of psychoanalytic imagery. Other novels are *Unterm Rad/The Prodigy* (1905), *Gertrud* (1910), *Rosshalde* (1914), *Knulp* (1915), *Demian* (1919), and *Narziss und Goldmund* (1930). His poetical works include *Gedichte/Poems* (1922, 1928–37, 1942, and 1947) and *Trost der Nacht/Comfort of the Night* (1929).

**Other writing** His poetry, as musical as his prose, by turns sombre and idyllic, is also full of mystical imagery and is a modern echo of German Romanticism. He also wrote *Briefe/Letters* (1951), and essays (*Krieg und Frieden/War and Peace* (1946), and *Beschwörungen* (1955)).

### **APA**

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## Chicago

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## Harvard

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## MLA

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