



Mandala

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News reaches Maharana Prince Jagat and his wife, Moti, that their only son, Jai, has been killed by the Chinese in a border skirmish. An inconsolable Moti sends Jagat out to bring the boy's spirit home. On the journey, the prince becomes involved with a beautiful and mysterious young American woman. Thus begins the fatal attraction between Eastern and Western ways, one bound by rigid custom, the other temptingly ripe with freethinking.

Mandala Details

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Author : Pearl S. Buck

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From Reader Review Mandala for online ebook

Debbie Brown says

I don't know what to say about this novel: a sensual and mystical plot. I liked how everything was resolved.

Cindy Lofgren says

Definitely did not work for me the way A Good Earth did. The language was choppy, but it was somewhat in Good Earth as well. But there was something about the stilted conversations that turned me off. Women played such a needy role in this book. Sympathies..? I don't know. I would say skip it.

Satitiwikan sunowo says

i read the indonesian translated version off course.....i read it a long time ago, got so interested with India culture as a setting. this novel is quite powerfull...i feel like i have known Jagat for a very long time....this novel revealing the human strenght until their weakness, but never waste any moments meaningless or let the moment loss its meaning.

Riley says

I've been reading a few books by Pearl S. Buck. Like everyone else, I know her from The Good Earth, but little else. This book is an interesting change of pace for her and is set in India, not China. It's good, and has Buck's typical tropes: the struggle of generations, the clash of families and the interplay of men and women.

Madhuri says

I have picked up this book in my phase of reading the very descriptive classics. I think in any other phase I might have found the book tedious, but in this one, I appreciate the bit of detail and the immense repetition. The book has a leitmotif, which is the difference between the Oriental and the Occidental. It describes this difference in fascination and adoration of each other. Each wants to be the other, adopt the other, without losing anything of itself. And this fascination is repeated in many different relationships. My only complaint is that all those relationships have been wound with the man-woman love, almost giving this adoration a mono-chrome, for so much richness could have been used to bring out a multitude of differences and could perhaps explain this eternal longing for the other-side. And yet, the building of the lake-palace and all the Victorian furniture of it, does go beyond the man-woman fascination.

Edy says

Tanya: apa sebabnya aku tak pernah menemukan kedamaian?

Orang bijak menjawab: Karena Nafsu

Tanya: Tapi aku Cuma bernafsu mendapatkan kedamaian...

Jawab: Hilangkan nafsu itu

Tanya: Kaua begitu, apa yang bisa mendatangkan rasa damai pada pikiran manusia?

Jawab: Cinta

Tanya: Cinta kepada siapa?

Jawab: Bisakah kausuruh lampu itu hanya menerangi sisi sebelah sini saja dan tidak menerangi sebelah sana?

Buat siapa api menyala kalau bukan buat semuanya.

Tanya: apakah kedamaian terletak dalam nyala?

Jawab: Apakah kedamaian mematikan api? Tidak.... kedamaian menanti di pusat api yang menyala...

Itu sepenggal kutipan dari dialog sang Maharaja Jagat dengan Brooke seorang wanita Amerika yang dicintainya dalam novel "Mandala" karya Pearl S. Buck.

Novel Mandala yang bersetting India jaman paska kemerdekaan mengisahkan pergulatan anak manusia dalam mengatasi perubahan jaman. Dari sistem monarki dan sistem kasta ke pemerintahan yang lebih demokratis, perubahan orientasi kaum bangsawan dari penguasa menjadi pengusaha, perubahan budaya dari paternalistik menjadi egaliter, perubahan dari model perjodohan ala Siti Nurbaya menjadi pernikahan yang lebih terbuka dan lain-lain. Pertemuan budaya Timur dan Barat, juga menumbuhkan intrik percintaan antar bangsa dan antar budaya. Dalam perubahan jaman tersebut kehidupan cinta juga mengalami ujian.....

Novel yang cukup menarik dari novelis yang secara intens mencoba merekatkan budaya barat dengan budaya timur yang penuh dengan filsafat dari Bhagavat Gita maupun kitab Upanishad... Salah satu kelemahan novel ini adalah akhir yang dipaksakan happy ending secara terburu-buru tanpa melalui proses refleksi dan kesadaran yang intens... Meski demikian untaian kata-kata yang sangat indah, alur mengalir jernih dan penuh nasihat spiritual penuh pembelajaran kehidupan menjadikan novel ini sangat layak dibaca oleh para pencari cinta....

Carol says

It has been many years since I last read a Pearl Buck book. This one is set in India where my daughter is now doing volunteer work. Thus I have read several books recently that are about India. The book was published in 1970 and has the markings of a romance novel of that era (all ends well). The highlight for me was the section set on the mountains of Mussoorie at the Woodstock School. In 1995, my husband and I vacationed in India spending 5 days with college friends who were teaching at Woodstock. The acute winding road up the mountain was every bit how Buck described it - scary, scary, scary.

Kim says

great read. understated, with a nice feeling for India.

Becky Sidney says

I think I expected too much.

Binke says

unexpected ending! A good sketch of India and the clash between tradition and modernisation.

Claire says

No one is more surprised than me to find that I don't really like this book anymore. I've read this book many times growing up since I do love me some Pearl Buck, but this time through I couldn't remember why I liked it so much. Maybe it's because the main character commits adultery and now that I'm married it is more meaningful and really ticked me off. Maybe it's because Buck goes into way too much detail of the politics and war time details between China and India- BORING! Or maybe it's because I find the American girl a ding dong instead of the mysterious, sophisticated woman I used to see her as. Now I want to re-read The Goddess Abides by Pearl Buck to see what I think of that book now that I'm older and have a little more experience with real life.

Erin says

Interesting novel with cultural intrigue for me, as someone who has not yet been to India. As always, Pearl Buck writes beautifully.

Brooke as the wandering American, Jagat as Indian prince.

Some of my favorite quotes:

"Love can never be a sin. It can be only a blessing. Even if you're not loved in return...to love is a proof of life - indeed, it's the only proof, for once you can't love another human being, you're not alive."

"It is love itself that is important - the ability to love, no matter whom you love. For when you can no longer love anyone, you are no longer a living person. The heart dies if it loses the capacity to love."

"She understood now what her grandmother was trying to tell her, that she was following her sympathies, whatever and whoever they were, and thus following, she had found joy in living, instead of sorrow and loneliness."

"There is no end she thought because in India life never ends. It goes on into some other realm. And this, she thought, surprised, is modern truth, for if science teaches any precept, it is that there is no destruction but only change."

"Truth, she thought, truth is reality - about myself, about the world, and life, and past and present. Reality is what I want. I shall not rest in the pursuit."

"But it was her quality which compelled him, her total appeal which troubled him mind as well as body."

"Can you not understand that your own soul is the light of the godhead, and God is your own soul? Ah, you man! Where is your knowledge of life? It is so much easier to believe that things happen to you rather than to see how you yourselves compel them to happen! The animal part in man fights against recognizing the truth - that he himself is the creator of the conditions of life."

Brooke copies from a book:

"One asks: 'What is it that does not let me find peace?'"

"And one answers: 'Desire.'"

"One asks: 'But I desire only peace.'"

"And one answers: 'Give up even that desire.'"

"One asks: 'What then brings peace to the mind?'"

"And one answers: 'Love.'"

"One asks: 'Love of whom?'"

"And one answers: 'Can you ask this lamp to shed its light here and not there? For whom does the light burn if not for all?'"

"One asks: 'Does peace lie in burning?'"

"And one answers: 'Does it lie in extinguishing the light? No, peace waits in the core of the burning light.'"

Selma says

Perl Bak me opet osvojila svojim pripovijedanjem. Ovaj put je to priča o životu u Indiji, susretu istoka i zapada, njihovim razlikama i pokušaju da žive i prihvate jedni druge bez predrasuda. Priča o ljubavi koja se rodila isuviše kasno, o gubitku sa kojim se jedna porodica morala suočiti i njihovom pokušaju bijega od bola koji ne prolazi i mijenja sve.

Wendy Stelzer says

The ending is terrible.

Kassandra says

As others have pointed out, it's just not as good as East Wind: West Wind, The Pavilion of Women, The Good Earth, etc. But this little novel still has Buck all over it. It deals with the pains of antiquity meeting modernity and individuals from very different cultures forming attachments to one another. Unlike some other reviewers I did not find Jagat an unsympathetic character. To me, the novel is very much about the contradictions of culture, especially as they relate to fidelity and marriage. In ancient India, it was okay for bougie dudes to keep harems and visit prostitutes, nobody had to pretend to be ignorant - but all that noise was just that, noise, and the root of an ancient Indian bougie dude's life was his wife and children. Jagat is

struggling to understand what's going to work for him, his family, and culture in a rapidly changing world. Honestly, it's his American girlfriend Brooke that I found painfully boring and underdeveloped. To me, she was a rather sloppy invention on Buck's part that just didn't make a lot of sense. But the writing is beautiful and it's a nice exploration of the history of ideas. Worth the read, but if you're looking for a more classic Buck romance, skip this one and go to *East Wind: West Wind*.
