



Dalai Lama: Man, Monk, Mystic

Mayank Chhaya

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Written with the full cooperation of the Dalai Lama, this fascinating, up-to-date biography at once captures the public persona and enduring mystery behind one of the world's most important spiritual leaders.

In 1997, the Indian journalist Mayank Chhaya was authorized by the Dalai Lama to write about his life and times. The only authorized biographer who is not a Buddhist, Chhaya conducted more than a dozen personal interviews with the Dalai Lama in McLeod Ganj in India's Himalayan north, home to Tibet's government-in-exile. In *Dalai Lama: Man, Monk, Mystic* he presents an in-depth, insightful portrait of a figure of perennial interest to people all over the world.

Chhaya writes about Tibet and the Buddhist tradition from which the Dalai Lama emerged, helping readers understand the context that shaped his beliefs, politics, and ideals. Adding depth and nuance to his portrait, Chhaya depicts the Dalai Lama in the light of his life in exile and the various roles he has had to assume for his followers. He sheds light on the highly complex conflict between China and Tibet, and offers insights into the growing discontent among young Tibetans who are frustrated with the nonviolent approach to Chinese occupation that the Dalai Lama advocates.

A balanced, informative view of the Dalai Lama and his work, this biography is both a compelling profile of a remarkable spiritual leader and his mission, and an engaging look at how the current unrest in his country will affect its future.

Dalai Lama: Man, Monk, Mystic Details

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Sagnik Sengupta says

A very late addition to the shelf. But this book was probably one of my significant read. Though I haven't read "Freedom in Exile". But if any one wants to have a look at the difficult yet enlightening life of a Dalai Lama, this book should be in your reading list. Plus there's a added bonus of political dilemma he has faced.

A must read

Gunjan Juyal says

A good summary of the history of Tibetan Buddhism and how it came about in its present form and a third-party's (ie a non-believer in Buddhism) view on HH The 14th Dalai Lama.

Gives a good glimpse of the the Dalai Lama's personality, role and importance to the Tibetan cause. But quite a few times the analyses feels shallow and lacking an opinion or insight.

It's an easy and fun read and doesn't drag at all since it frequently switches from one topic to another. Sort of a fun-to-read Dalai-Lama-101 for me. :P

Jonathan says

This book is about the 14th Dalai Lama. Buddhists believe that each Dalai Lama is a reincarnation of Buddha. Due to China's forceful invasion of Tibet in 1959, the Dalai Lama has lived in India ever since. He has been a wonderful spokesperson for the Tibetan people, and he has always stressed nonviolent political methods. It seems unlikely that Tibet will ever regain its independence from China. The 6 million Tibetans are currently outnumbered by the 7 million Hans Chinese who have moved to Tibet. Yet, the Tibetans have a vibrant culture that they are striving very hard to maintain. This book does a great job in describing how a people strives to maintain their way of life, even after a powerful nation stole their land. A similar kind of story has happened numerous times throughout history. For some reason, Tibet's story just is not that popular in the West. I never really understood it, until I read this book. This book gave me a much greater understanding of the Dalai Lama, Tibet, and Buddhism.

Linda Beldava says

Pasaules diž?k? un taj? paš? laik? ar? vienk?rš?k?, pietic?g?k? un piezem?t?k? cilv?ka autoriz?ta biogr?fija. Dalailamas 14.reinkarn?cija - Tenzins Gjatso fascin? ar savu vienk?rš?bu un humora izj?tu. Biogr?fijas autors ir indiešu žurn?lists, kuram dota iesp?ja iel?koties Dalailamas ikdien? un aprakst?t to. Gr?mata ir ne tikai par Dalailamu, bet ?oti daudz ar? par Tibetu un t?s c??u par neatkar?bu no komunistisk?s ??nas. T? vien š?iet - par bezcer?go c??u. Dalailama jau vair?k k? 50 gadu dz?vo trimd? Indij? un uztur sarunas ar varask?ro ??nas vald?bu, vi?š grib pan?kt vismaz Tibetas autonomiju, ne vairs neatkar?bu

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Šo lasot jaut?jumu ir vair?k k? atbilžu - k?p?c k?dai valstij vajadz?ga k?da konkr?ta teritorija? K?p?c nevar likties mier?? K?p?c? K?p?c...?

Jo vair?k inform?cijas par Dalailamu, jo vair?k gribas v?l kaut ko no vi?a uzzin?t.

Par latviešu izdevuma gr?matas v?ku man b?tu ko teikt. Bet, k? saka - don't judge book by it's cover.

Maria Claudia says

Há algo confuso em como o livro está organizado que pode ter sido causado pela tradução para o português. O livro é uma elucidação do conflito entre o Tibete e a China. Traz a público os esforços promovidos pelo Dalai Lama para uma resolução pacífica e como em meio a isso ele acabou se tornando uma pessoa relevante para muitos no Ocidente.

Jean says

Because I had roommates from Taiwan at BYU, I had a more personal connection to Taiwan's struggle against China. I really didn't have a clue about Tibet and their fight to reclaim their land from China. Jon has been bringing up the Dalai Lama for years and I always thought he (the Dalai Lama not Jon) was some kind of wacko religious person. This book gave me a better understanding of the land of Tibet and its culture. I found it a little slow, and a bit wordy-rehashing ground already covered. Still, it has given me a much better understanding of the politics involved between China, Tibet, India, and the U.S. Now when I see the Tibetan monks on the news (as I do from time to time), I will have a little more sympathy for their cause.

Ellina says

I grew up in China. Upon reading this book, I always thought Tibet is part of China thru all history, Dalai Lama is the one trying to separate Tibet from China. Thru our education from China, Dalai is always the bad guy trying to break the peace between China and Tibet. But after reading this book, I actually learned about the background information regarding the ongoing conflict between China and Tibet, and Dalai is a true charismatic spiritual leader.

This Author offers a portrayal of the Dalai Lama as kindness, doesn't force other faiths to believe Tibetan Buddhism, has sense of humor, is interest in the sciences, is trying to bring peace by non-violence method. After reading this book, I wanted to know more about Dalai's teachings and his philosophy. This book it's a good book to learn about China-Tibet controversy.

Phanindra says

I picked up this book randomly from the library. I was trying to restart my reading habit and this book sustained my interest and helped me to make a good beginning! Though it is a biography of Dalai Lama, it has lot of details on the history of Tibet and the politics surrounding it. This is not out of place, as Tibet and Dalai Lama are inseparable. I enjoyed the historical aspects discussed in this book. Though the title sounds

heavy and serious, this book is actually quite an easy read. I recommend it.

Gabrielle says

This book not only was about the Dalai Lama but also about the politics of Tibet and China and it gave an unbiased view of some different possibilities of outcomes of the situation. I think the Dalai Lama's life and personality is quite interesting and I would recommend this to anyone who wants to learn more about him and the politics of the area. It also gives a nice historical background about Dalai Lamas and about the future of that position. If you are looking for a book about spirituality and Buddhism, this isn't the book for you.

Brenton says

Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama, is considered the 14th incarnation of Buddha. Since the 1959 Chinese invasion and annexation of Tibet, he has lived in exile in India. Historically, the Dalai Lama has been viewed as both the civic and religious leader of the Tibetans.

Mayank Chhaya, not a Buddhist himself, has written an engaging history of Sino-Tibetan relations, modern Buddhism, and an exiled monk who has attempted to preserve Tibetan cultural identity from afar. This is the authorized biography.

Stephannie says

This book was incredibly disappointing. It had relatively little to do with the Dalai Lama. The first 194 pages the reader suffers through is entirely on the political history of China and Tibet. In fact, his departure from Tibet covered less than a full page. This is followed by a few pages on His Holiness with a subsequent chapter where he is not mentioned until the very last sentence. The final chapters of the book are of the same political topics as the first 194 pages.

I somehow finished it, still waiting to read about the "Man, Monk, Mystic" but unfortunately it wasn't to be found anywhere in this book.

Dreadful.

Teresa says

I was torn between 2 and 3 stars on this one. I was expecting an in-depth biography of the 14th Dalai Lama, with a bit of bonus learning about Buddhism and about the Tibet/China situation and its history. What I got was a long (albeit repetitious and not necessarily in-depth) discussion of the Tibet/China situation and its history with a bit of bonus information about the Dalai Lama -- it felt like less than half of the book. One of my favorite features of the book was the inclusion of the Dalai Lama's recollections of his childhood; he does have some memories surrounding his selection as Dalai Lama and his early life in Lhasa. But I would have liked to learn a lot more about his life in Lhasa, his education, his relationship with his family after the move

to Lhasa, his development into maturity amidst constant deference and adulation from all those around him, and his escape to India.

Despite a heavy focus on China's seizure of Tibet and its aftermath, there is little description of the actual human rights violations that have taken place, little detail of everyday life for Tibetans (despite the continued arrival of refugees in India), and no mention of the Panchen Lama except in passing and in the most general of terms. I appreciate all the work the author put into the book, but I think it could have been a bit more focused and streamlined.

Oh, and one more thing: The trichotomy of man/monk/mystic was fairly contrived. The three are not that distinct, despite the author's efforts to make them seem so.

Lydia says

A good picture of an excellent man. This book barely scratches the surface and leaves you wanting to know more about the person. Alas, it does not fulfill this need, focusing instead on the historical and political aspects of the Dalai Lama's situation than any character picture. This is partially due to the man's status and general inaccessibility, but I still think a more complete picture is possible. Couple that with some stylistic challenges and noticeable grammar/spelling errors, and this book only gets 3 stars from me.

Salil says

To be very honest, i am a bit disappointed by the book. The reason i picked up this book was that i was quite curious to know about the Dalai Lama mostly as a person. But this 'biography' offers more about the tibet and the world politics surrounding it, the roles played by India, USA and not to forget China rather than the Dalai Lama himself. I think the only chapters which essentially describe a little about Dalai Lama as a man (monk and mystic) are chapter numbers 18 and 30, with 30 being probably the best chapter of the book (in my opinion).

Vandana says

You get many insights into the life of the revered His Holiness Dalai Lama.

How, from being a small kid, Tenzing Gyatso, to becoming the world famous 14th Dalai Lama, his journey has been beautifully captured and penned by Mayank Chhaya. I must say he has done extensive research, spanning over 7 long years, to come with this detailed book. A must read for People who follow the Dalai Lama or who feel for Tibetan people in exile/ refugees... Being uprooted from your place, your people, when you have to run for life, you leave a part of yourself behind and no matter wherever you reach, you always has a sense of incompleteness within. Feel for once what His Holiness has been feeling for the past 40 years and more.
