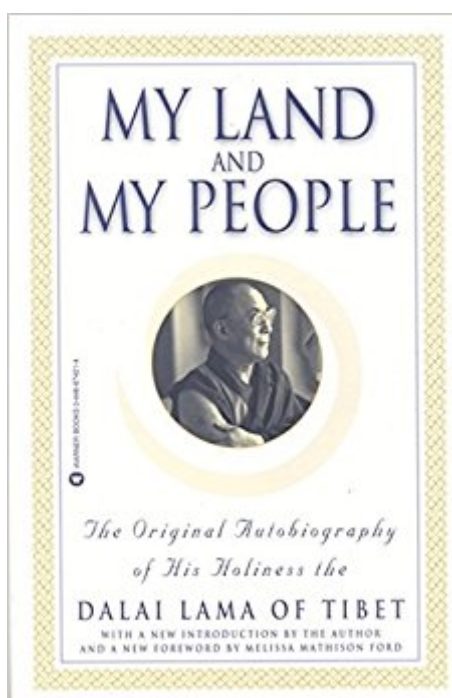


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My Land And My People: The Original Autobiography Of His Holiness The Dalai Lama Of Tibet



Synopsis

Schooled behind ancient palace walls to become the leader of Tibet, the Dalai Lama has become a spiritual leader to the world and a leading civil rights advocate. *My Land and My People* tells the story of his life.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"A narrative that gains in drama by the simplicity of its telling." -- *The New York Times Book Review*
"MY LAND AND MY PEOPLE is, without a doubt, one of the most moving memoirs I have ever read." -- *Stanley Gosh, Saturday Review*

Recognized at the age of two as the reincarnation of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso was brought to Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, and enthroned two years later as the fourteenth Dalai Lama. In 1959, following the Chinese suppression of the Tibetan national uprising, he was forced to seek asylum in India. As Tibet's leader-in-exile, he has worked tirelessly not only on behalf of the Tibetan people but as a voice for human rights worldwide. Awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989, His Holiness is today universally acknowledged as one of the world's preeminent spiritual leaders.

What's it like to be declared a god-king at 2 and have the keys to your country handed to you at 16 just when the Chinese have invaded? What's it like to actually have the maturity, compassion, and vision to handle the situation and lead much of your nation and culture into exile? What's it like to

express this story in a poignant manner devoid of bitter anger but full of wisdom? This work is truly one of the greatest autobiographies I have read, as it answers these questions in a manner that leaves no doubt of the unique inspirational nature of the individual who wrote it. If you wish to understand Tibetan Buddhism, Tibet, or just how to live a compassionate life with wisdom and dignity, this book is a must read.

In addition to being an eyewitness to 20th century history, the 14th Dalai Lama is a central figure in that history. His authorship of this book alone renders it a historical document of some significance. But beyond all that, this is a well written and captivating description of the life of Tibet and the lama before and after the revolution of 1949. It traces the events surrounding his birth, youth, education, rule, overthrow and exile without an excess of religious dogma or political polemics. First published in 1962 following his 1959 flight to India, this memoir remains a compelling and readable primary source.

Whether or not one can accept that HH The Dalai Lama is a god-king or reincarnation of an enlightened being, one must admit that his writings always seek to explore and encourage the very highest elements of the human spirit. This book is not a diatribe against China, though it does make a good case against China's actions in Tibet based upon international norms, but a very sad depiction of how very cruel people can be toward each other. Fortunately, fifty years after its writing, with no resolution in sight and atrocities still being committed in Tibet, one cannot help but be moved by the continued passionate engagement of this "simple Buddhist monk" (his own self description).

I was looking for more spirituality in this book...but the history lesson has been invaluable in my further understanding of Tibet's struggle against the Communist Chinese regime and the subtle oppressive negotiating techniques they employed.

We hear about the Dalai Lama in the news, but understanding his inner thoughts allows us to have a bit more understanding of why he is who he is today. If more World Leaders were like him, I believe that we would have less problems in the World

Sometimes it's easy to see Buddhism as a practice for demi gods. And I still feel that, but this book really grounded my ideas about Tibet, the Dalai Lama and the people of that land. By the end I saw

The Dalai Lama as human, An extraordinary human, but human nonetheless.

Great book. A lot of powerful history.

Since Dalai Lama is still a taboo in mainland china. His books are literally not available anywhere. When I visited Seattle in 2009, I had the chance to purchase one copy of *The Art of Happiness*. It's a printed book. There's a picture of Dalai Lama on the cover. It's hard to hide that in public. Therefore, I didn't finish that book till today. Thanks to Kindle, the book finally has a disguise. Nobody could guess what I was reading. I can read Dalai Lama's book in a place like Tian'anmen Square (It's a political joke which foreigners hardly understand.). Dalai Lama was not a daily topic in public propaganda. I can't remember the first time when I heard his name. But I bet it came with terms like "reactionaries" and "secessionists". When I have access to internet in late 1990s, I was somehow confused. Dalai Lama was not a bad figure overseas. He looks like an ordinary old man, a highly knowledgeable monk and nice guy. But why his name must be censored? I got no answer. I even didn't know he is a laureate of the Nobel Peace Prize until the 2008 Tibet unrest. This ignorance made me sad and angry. That's why most books I read on Kindle are biographies and memoirs. The book was first published in 1962. To me it's a biography rather than a political document. In this book I found something nobody told me before. For the very first time I read about the history before 1959 liberation (which was an invasion in Tibetan's eyes). According to this book, I learned the following. Tibetans were happy with feudalism system and the isolation. The Fourteenth Dalai Lama was not a good politician. Tibetan people love the Dalai Lama and are willing to protect His Holiness with lives. The Dalai Lama never officially claimed the independence before the exile just because he didn't think that was necessary. It's time to recall what I learned about Tibet in high school history class. Although I always got an F, I can't forget the fundamental things. Tibet had a semi-feudalism system before the 1959 liberation. The land lards were crucial. They even cut off human parts as a punishment. Tibetan people were poor. There was serious famine and almost every Tibetan peasant suffered. To ensure that level of authenticity, pictures were there as proofs. That's what textbooks taught us. As a teenager in such an educational system, I had no motivation to find out the true story. But I read something different in this book. On page 5, there's a description on Tibetan daily life. It wasn't as hard as I was instructed. On page 40, Dalai Lama introduced the monks got promotion. It was somehow democratic rather than hereditary. I think the problem comes with misunderstanding. Tibetans are religious people while communists are atheists. The high ranked communists might understand the values of Tibetans but

those soldiers might not. Different values can bring dramatic opinions to the same situation. Like what described on page 134, Chinese general send two low level officers to Dalai Lama asking His Holiness to attend a theatrical show. Under such a tension of unrest in March 1959, how could Tibetans believe this was not a conspiracy? There's one more thing I'd like to talk about different values. Since the communists are atheists. It's awkward to spread religion to normal people. I remember there's a ridiculous description on this topic in Peter Hessler's book *A River Town*. In the page 336, the school dean rejected the idea of teaching A Christmas Carol because "the communist party is very sensitive about spreading religion". It isn't hard to understand what Dalai Lama said on page 100. "The Chinese government said their people had religious freedom, but one could see that no future was planned for religious foundations. They were being starved to death and allowed to decay." The theory Dalai Lama talked about in the appendix are far too complicated to me. I'm made to an atheist. I have no intention to read and understand. But what I learned from this book is respect. Too many sad things happened because of misunderstanding, which usually comes after disrespect. But I won't say who is right and who is wrong. The current situation is far too complicated than what I expected. This is a blog post on the book. I'm just a person who loves biographies. It's ironic that I failed in almost every history examinations in high school. But my history teacher will be gratified that I finally started to read something on history :) If you'd like to spend some time to hear an intimate narrative story of a great spiritual leader, buy this book. You will have a chance to know the Dalai Lama more.

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