



Broad and Alien is the World

Ciro Alegria

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A rich, unrivalled picture of the lives of Peru's Indian population.

Broad and Alien is the World Details

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From Reader Review Broad and Alien is the World for online ebook

Paul says

Es una novela del desarraigo, del dejar la tierra nativa por causas exteriores que te empujan a eso, cuando la injusticia se cierne sobre una comunidad para arrebatarle sus tradiciones y forma de vida.

Gran novela que muestra el problema del campesino andino y su visión de mundo contrapuesta a los intereses de los gamonales, casi señores feudales que abusaban de su poder y su dinero corrompiendo autoridades.

Es una de las mejores obras de la llamada literatura indigenista. Ganó el Concurso Latinoamericano de Novela convocado desde Estados Unidos por la prestigiosa Editorial Farrar & Rinehart.

Estephany León rodíguez says

A surprisingly realistic portrait of the (ever-present) social struggles in the midst of the Peruvian sierra.

Beruthiel says

un panorama muy ancho de la vida cotidiana y las penas de los indios del Peru

Jacob Kanev says

One of the few book recommendations my Granmother gave me. You MUST read this book, she said. And she was right.

Paola Frias says

Gran historia de la opresión de los campesinos.

Jennifer says

This book is the story of an Andean village in Peru in the early 1900's. The author does a wonderful job of depicting life, the different groups of people, their motives and their struggle. Very educational for one lacking background in the history of the area.

Philip Lane says

This is a patchwork quilt of a book. I got a good sense of the plight of the native South Americans who are in conflict with European landowners expanding their holdings. It isn't an edifying tale though and I felt that I didn't really get to know the characters very well. It seemed to me like a series of incidents and people telling stories about previous incidents. I was pleased to have read it though as it is an aspect of European imperialism that I haven't read much about before. Definitely worth tackling but not a 'great' novel.

Natalie says

Beautifully written depiction of the struggle of a people and the sad reality that is their never-ending oppression.

If only he could have found a more optimistic ending...

Dale Muckerman says

Good portrayal of a community of Peruvian Indians set in the first few decades of the twentieth century. The Indians just want to work the land, raise livestock, and live simple lives. However, the wealthy non-indigenous landowners use the law and violence to steal their ancestral community lands, and to force the Indians to work for them. Very good portrayal of the Indian way of life with insight into how the Indians think.

The book was pivotal when it was published in 1940 in making people aware of the plight of Peru's indigenous people. It is similar in many ways to the social and naturalistic novels of John Steinbeck and Emile Zola. Some parts of the novel are almost lyrical in the description of how the Indians live and think. Other parts are shockingly violent. The novel lacks a strong plot to hold it together, but it does manage to portray a wide range of things: work on a coco plantation, work gathering rubber in the jungle, life in the high mountains, bandits, an assortment of lawyers, methods for twisting the law, livestock round-ups in the mountains, etc. With the help of a good screenwriter to tighten up the story, this book would make a great movie. One weak point of the novel is that none of the women are portrayed with much depth.

Carlos says

Este libro fue deprimente pero es definitivamente un libro que tiene que ser leído por cada ser humano en esta tierra. Aunque Alegría cuenta una historia de la opresión del campesino peruano la historia repite el tema universal de la explotación de los pueblos indígenas a favor del "progreso". Esta obra muestra en todas sus facetas la explotación de unas gentes que tienen más derecho a la tierra que el resto de nosotros. Lo que me pareció fascinante de la forma en la que Alegría contó la historia es como él llega a mostrar la diversidad de pensamiento dentro de estas comunidades: la tensión entre saber que ellos están justificados en sublevarse y la absoluta seguridad de que tienen todas las de perder. A través de esta larga novela – que si soy honesto tengo que decir que definitivamente podría haber sido más corta – Alegría muestra las diferentes acciones que la comunidad toma para tratar de salvarse y la forma en que la "ley" usa todo su poder para

deshumanizarlos.

Rebekah says

Translation is excellent of a somewhat depression account of the total destruction of a community in Peru. The characters are very endearing and throughout the novel the reader wan

Vasha7 says

This novel, set in the early decades of the twentieth century, charts part of the long, bitter struggle of the Indians of the community of Rumi to keep their lands and their independence. It begins with them happily cultivating and herding, but unaware of what's happening outside their highlands; then -- by legal fiction, political maneuvering, economic finagles, dirty tricks, and outright violence -- the large landowners, police, and politicians attempt to take the Indians' land and, more importantly, enslave the Indians themselves by forced conscription or hereditary debt-bondage. It's a painful story, as it charts the defeats and sufferings of the community; it can't end very well, but one positive development is the people's increasing awareness of their real situation and understanding of the way things work in their country; they're hardly better able to resist the overwhelming force ranged against them than before, but it's better not to have to struggle blindly.

The novel is distinguished by passages of wonderful lyricism as Ciro Alegría celebrates agriculture and the love of the land. This is what's worth starving, struggling, and dying for; all the attempts to earn a living by those who leave the land just emphasize that nothing brings happiness but cultivation, working one's own community lands. The story is told from the point of view of a number of the members of the community. On the whole, Alegría succeeds in both distinguishing them as individual characters and avoiding romanticizing them: he does have a few ill-advised generalizations about "the soul" of "the Indian of the mountains", but mostly his characters are people, with occasional mystical thoughts and more commonly practical concerns. (There are a couple of passages where stand-ins for the author appear, in the form of folklorists and artists who take an interest in the Indians, with a sympathetic though faintly patronizing attitude -- this is certainly an improvement over the outright contempt that nearly all the other white people express; Alegría may be satirizing himself a bit.)

The novel loses focus somewhat in the scenes that are set away from the highlands of Rumi; the author wanted to describe all the suffering in the entire country, and crams in too much narration and too many rapid events. Yet these things are important, as brought into focus through Benito Castro, the one man who managed to return to Rumi after leaving, traveling through the entire country, and learning to read. It's only fitting that Benito, with his wide new understanding, becomes mayor; in the beginning, the mayor was Rosendo Maqui, who understood the old way of life very deeply.

The one great flaw in the novel is its attitude toward women. None of the important point-of-view characters are women, and none (however minor) plays a positive, active role; females are hindrances, victims, objects of lust, or embodiments of the "life force" ("Which is better, the earth or woman?" is a question that's raised and can't really be answered because there is not much difference between them.)

Whatever criticisms I may have of this novel, they don't diminish my opinion that it's remarkable, memorable, and a real achievement.

Alvaro Alcocer Sotil says

Novela que cuenta la lucha y diferencias entre terratenientes y pobladores de un pueblo de la sierra.
Denuncia las diferencias de clases y la injusticia social.

Cinthia says

La misma reseña en español e inglés.
Same review spanish and english.

Esta novela es fantástica!! no es solo un relato bien trabajado y logrado de la realidad indígena en latinoamérica ,sino también del carácter firme y verdadero de los seres humanos que luchan por obtener paz y justicia, todo sin dejar la maravilla de la literatura y de los cuentos entrelazados, de cada pequeño detalle que al final, en la conclusión máxima llegamos a comprender completamente y nos desgarra el alma!!
MARAVILLOSO!!

This novel is fantastic!! it's not just the well tell and work story of the indigenous reality in latinamerica, but also of the firm and true caracter of human beings that fight for peace and justice, all of that wihtout leaving the marvel of literature and of the interlaced stories, of every little detail, that in the end at the maximum conclusion we manage to understand completely and it tears our souls apart!!!
MARVELOUS!!

José Trujillo says

Excelente novela que muestra la historia oculta de los campesinos peruanos y su lucha por sobrevivir. La leí en el colegio y se me quedó grabado que hay dos Perús, uno oficial, el de la historia, y otro que no hubieramos visto si no fuera por novelas como ésta.
