

The Private Life Of Chairman Mao

The Private Life Of Chairman Mao The private life of Chairman Mao has long been a subject of fascination and speculation. While he is predominantly remembered for his revolutionary leadership and pivotal role in shaping modern China, insights into his personal life reveal a complex and often contradictory figure. Understanding Mao Zedong's private life offers a more nuanced perspective on the man behind the political persona, shedding light on his relationships, habits, and personal beliefs. This article delves into the various facets of Mao's private life, exploring his family, relationships, personal interests, and lifestyle, providing a comprehensive overview for readers interested in the personal dimensions of one of the 20th century's most influential leaders.

Early Life and Family Background

Origins and Childhood Mao Zedong was born on December 26, 1893, in Shaoshan, a small village in Hunan Province, China. His family belonged to the peasant class, but they were relatively well-off compared to other villagers, owning farmland and some property. Mao's father, Mao Yuan-shi, was a stern and pragmatic man who worked as a farmer and local farmer leader, while his mother, Wen Shun-shui, was known for her kindness and diligence. Growing up in a modest household, Mao experienced the hardships of rural life early on. His childhood was marked by a mix of traditional Confucian values and exposure to revolutionary ideas later in his youth, which would influence his worldview profoundly.

Family Life and Children

Mao was married several times throughout his life, and his family life was often intertwined with his political career. His most notable marriages include:

- Yang Kaihui: Mao's second wife, a revolutionary herself, whom he married in 1920. She was executed by the Kuomintang in 1930.
- Jiang Qing: Mao's last wife, a former actress and prominent political figure, who became a leading member of the Gang of Four after Mao's death. He fathered several children, though many of their lives were shrouded in secrecy or tragedy. Mao's children included Mao Anying, Mao Anqing, and Mao Anlong, among others. Notably:

- Mao Anying, his eldest son, served as a military officer and died during the Korean War.
- Mao Anqing, his second son, suffered from health issues possibly related to exposure during wartime.

Despite his public persona, Mao was reportedly a devoted father and husband, though his political commitments often took precedence over family life.

2 Personal Relationships and Marriages

Mao's Romantic Life

Mao's romantic relationships were marked by a mix of political alliances and personal affection. His marriages often reflected his revolutionary ideals and strategic considerations.

Key Points of Mao's Marriages:

1. His first marriage was arranged in his youth, but it was short-lived and largely traditional.
2. Yang Kaihui was Mao's second wife and a committed revolutionary. Their relationship was reportedly based on mutual respect and shared ideals.
3. Jiang Qing, whom Mao married in 1939, was instrumental in his later years and played a significant political role. Their relationship was complex, blending personal affection with political partnership. Despite the revolutionary fervor, Mao was known to have had extramarital affairs, though details remain limited and often speculative.

Jiang Qing: The Controversial Wife

Jiang Qing was not only Mao's wife but also his confidante and political ally. Their relationship was characterized by mutual dependence, especially after Mao's health declined. Jiang Qing's influence in political matters was formidable, and she became a controversial figure post-Mao. Their personal bond was reportedly deep, though their relationship was also marked by political rivalry and tension.

Personal Interests, Beliefs, and Lifestyle

Mao's Hobbies and Personal Interests

Despite his intense political life, Mao had several personal

interests and hobbies that provided him with relaxation and personal fulfillment. Notable interests included:

- Poetry and Literature: Mao was an avid poet, especially interested in classical Chinese poetry. His poems often reflected his political ideals, personal feelings, and revolutionary fervor.
- Calligraphy: Mao was skilled in Chinese calligraphy, and his brushwork was highly regarded by some contemporaries.
- Chess and Traditional Games: He enjoyed playing Chinese chess (xiangqi) and other traditional games.

Religious and Philosophical Beliefs Mao's beliefs were complex. While officially atheist and critical of traditional religion, he incorporated elements of Chinese philosophy, particularly Confucianism and Daoism, into his worldview. He also drew heavily from Marxist-Leninist ideology, which shaped his policies and governance.

3 Lifestyle and Daily Routine

Mao's lifestyle was austere, especially during the revolutionary years when he prioritized the collective over personal comfort. However, in his later years, especially during his leadership in Beijing, he enjoyed a more comfortable life, with a private residence, personal staff, and access to leisure. Daily routines often included:

- Reading and studying political texts
- Writing poetry and calligraphy
- Holding meetings and making political decisions
- Engaging in outdoor walks and exercises

Despite his public image as a revolutionary leader, Mao had moments of reflection and personal solitude that he valued highly.

Health and Personal Challenges

Mao's health declined significantly in his later years. He suffered from various ailments, including Parkinson's disease, respiratory issues, and other age-related problems. His health issues affected his personal life, with reports of pain and discomfort influencing his mood and decision-making.

Key health-related facts:

- Mao was known to have smoked cigars and drank alcohol, which may have contributed to his health problems.
- His health was a closely guarded secret, and he often concealed his ailments from the public.
- His declining health led to increased reliance on his inner circle and affected his personal interactions.

The Legacy of Mao's Private Life

Mao Zedong's private life has become a subject of historical scrutiny and debate. While his political achievements are well-documented, his personal relationships, habits, and beliefs reveal a more human side of a leader often portrayed solely as a revolutionary icon. Key takeaways about Mao's private life include:

- His deep attachment to poetry and traditional Chinese arts.
- His complex relationships with multiple wives and children.
- The influence of personal beliefs and philosophies on his leadership.
- The toll of health issues in his later years.

Understanding these personal dimensions helps provide a holistic view of Mao Zedong as both a revolutionary figure and a human being with personal passions, struggles, and relationships.

Conclusion

The private life of Chairman Mao offers valuable insights into the man behind the monumental political legacy. From his humble rural origins to his complex personal relationships and hobbies, Mao's personal life was marked by both dedication to his revolutionary ideals and moments of personal reflection. While much about his private life remains sealed in historical records and personal accounts, what is known underscores the multifaceted nature of a leader who profoundly shaped the 20th century. Exploring 4 Mao's personal side not only humanizes a towering figure in history but also enriches our understanding of the man who led China through tumultuous times, influencing generations to come.

Question/Answer

What is known about Mao Zedong's personal relationships and family life? Mao Zedong was married several times and had multiple children. His personal relationships, including his marriages to Yang Kaihui, He Zizhen, and Jiang Qing, have been studied to understand his private life, though details remain partly private and subject to historical interpretation. Did Mao Zedong have any secret affairs or extramarital relationships? While official records focus on Mao's political life, some biographers suggest he may have had extramarital affairs, but concrete evidence remains limited and often speculation. What was Mao Zedong's daily routine like in his personal life? Mao's daily routine reportedly involved reading, political work, and leisure activities such as playing chess. He was known to be a private person who valued solitude and reflection. How did Mao Zedong's

private life influence his political decisions? His personal beliefs, relationships, and family dynamics are believed to have shaped some of his political decisions, though he kept his personal life largely separate from his public leadership. Are there any known hobbies or interests Mao Zedong pursued privately? Mao was interested in poetry, calligraphy, and reading classical Chinese literature, which he practiced privately and often used as a means of personal expression. What is known about Mao Zedong's health and how it affected his private life? Mao's health declined in his later years, suffering from ailments like Parkinson's disease and other health issues, which reportedly impacted his personal life and daily activities. How private was Mao Zedong about his personal life during his leadership? Mao maintained a high level of privacy regarding his personal affairs, with most information about his private life only becoming available through later biographies and historical research. Did Mao Zedong have close personal friendships or confidants? Yes, Mao maintained close relationships with certain trusted aides and family members, who played significant roles in his personal and political life. What do biographers say about Mao Zedong's private life and its impact on his leadership style? Biographers suggest that Mao's private life, including his personal beliefs and relationships, influenced his leadership style, often shaping his approach to power, loyalty, and decision-making. Are there any controversial or lesser-known aspects of Mao Zedong's private life? Some lesser-known aspects include reports of his personal struggles, health issues, and complex family dynamics, which remain subjects of scholarly interest and debate.

The Private Life Of Chairman Mao

5 The private life of Chairman Mao remains a subject of enduring fascination and intrigue, offering a complex portrait of one of the most influential yet enigmatic figures of the 20th century. While Mao Zedong's political ideology and revolutionary activities have been extensively documented, less attention has traditionally been paid to his personal life—an aspect that reveals much about his character, relationships, and the human side behind the legendary leader. This article aims to explore the multifaceted private life of Mao Zedong, examining his family background, personal relationships, habits, and private beliefs, through a detailed and analytical lens.

--- **Early Life and Family Background**

Origins and Childhood Mao Zedong was born on December 26, 1893, in Shaoshan, a small village in Hunan Province. His family belonged to the peasantry, and his father, Mao Yichang, was a farmer and a local village leader. Mao's childhood was marked by rural simplicity, hard labor, and traditional values. Growing up in a modest environment, Mao was exposed early on to the struggles and resilience of rural life, which later influenced his revolutionary ideology. Despite limited formal education, Mao was intellectually curious, reading classical Chinese texts and Western literature. His early exposure to local politics and social issues laid the foundation for his later revolutionary pursuits. Family life was conventional; Mao was the second of three children, and his relationship with family members was reportedly close but also marked by strict discipline.

Family Legacy and Influence Mao's family background played a significant role in shaping his worldview. His father's influence instilled a sense of discipline and a pragmatic approach to life. The rural environment fostered Mao's deep connection to Chinese peasantry, which he would later emphasize in his political ideology. However, family life was also punctuated by hardship—poverty, occasional illness, and the societal constraints of early 20th-century China.

--- **Personal Relationships and Marriages**

Marriages and Family Life Mao Zedong's personal relationships were integral to his private life, and he was married four times. Each marriage reflected different phases of his life and personality.

1. **Yang Kaihui (1920-1930):** Mao's first wife was a revolutionary and the daughter of a progressive scholar. Their marriage was rooted in shared political ideals. Yang was a supportive partner and actively involved in revolutionary activities. Their relationship was reportedly close, but her tragic death during the Chinese Civil War deeply affected Mao.
2. **He Zizhen (1930-1947):** Mao married He Zizhen, a fellow revolutionary, during the

Long March. Their marriage was marked by mutual dedication to the cause, though it was also strained by the hardships of wartime. He Zizhen accompanied Mao during many campaigns, and their relationship endured personal and political challenges. 3. Jiang Qing (1949-1968): Mao's most famous wife, Jiang Qing, was an actress before becoming a political figure. Their marriage was politically strategic, but they also shared a deep personal bond. Jiang Qing was a dominant influence in Mao's later years, especially during the Cultural Revolution. 4. Lin Jiamei (1978-1976): Mao's final marriage was to Jiang Qing's former assistant, Lin Jiamei, after Jiang Qing's fall from power. This marriage was less documented but suggests Mao's desire for companionship in his later years.

Children and Family Life Mao fathered several children, though details about his family life remain somewhat opaque due to political sensitivities. Children include:

- Mao Anqing: His son with Yang Kaihui, who survived the Cultural Revolution and became a translator.
- Mao Anlong: Another son, who died young.
- Mao Xinyu: His youngest son, who became a military officer and a professor.

Mao's children generally maintained a low profile, and Mao's relationships with them were complex—marked by love, expectation, and the burdens of his political legacy.

--- **The Human Side of Mao: Habits, Beliefs, and Personal Traits** Personality Traits and Habits Mao Zedong was known for his charismatic personality, sharp wit, and sometimes unpredictable temper. He had a penchant for reading and was an avid collector of books, particularly on military strategy, philosophy, and history. Habits and routines included:

- Early mornings dedicated to reading or writing.
- A fondness for traditional Chinese medicine and herbal remedies.
- An intense work ethic, often working late into the night.
- A preference for simple, rustic meals, reflecting his rural roots.

Despite his revolutionary image, Mao was also known to enjoy leisure activities such as swimming, which he credited for his health and stamina.

Beliefs and Ideological Convictions Mao's private beliefs were deeply rooted in Marxist-Leninist principles, but he also retained a unique interpretation that emphasized Chinese culture and peasantry. His private writings reveal a man who was contemplative, sometimes introspective, and often conflicted about the violence and upheaval of his political campaigns. He maintained a belief in the transformative power of the masses and often expressed concern about maintaining ideological purity. His private notes and letters show moments of self-doubt, especially during periods of political turbulence.

--- **Private Life and the Secret World** Privacy and Security Mao's private life was guarded fiercely, both during his lifetime and posthumously. The Chinese government maintained strict control over personal information, and Mao's family life was often kept out of the public eye. He lived in various residences, including the Zhongnanhai compound in Beijing, which was a secure enclave for China's top leaders. Despite this, Mao was known to have a personal study where he spent hours reading and reflecting, often secluded from the political machinery.

Controversies and Rumors There are numerous rumors and stories about Mao's private life, some of which have been debated or discredited. These include allegations of extramarital affairs, extravagant personal habits, or indulgent behaviors. However, credible accounts suggest that Mao was generally austere and disciplined, with a focus on revolutionary ideals. Nonetheless, some biographers note that Mao's private life was not entirely devoid of personal struggles, including health issues, stress, and the psychological toll of leadership.

--- **Legacy and Reflection** Understanding the private life of Mao Zedong offers a nuanced perspective on a leader often viewed solely through his political actions. Behind the revolutionary icon was a man with personal relationships, habits, and inner conflicts that shaped his decisions and legacy. His family life, personal beliefs, and private moments reveal a complex individual who navigated the demands of leadership while grappling with his own humanity. In examining Mao's private life, historians and biographers gain a fuller understanding of the man behind the myth—a leader whose personal side was as profound and multifaceted as his public image.

--- In conclusion, Mao Zedong's private life was a

tapestry woven with personal love, ideological conviction, rural roots, and human vulnerabilities. While political history often overlooks these facets, they are essential to understanding the full scope of his character and legacy. Reflecting on his personal life enriches our comprehension of one of history's most influential figures, reminding us that even the most revolutionary leaders are ultimately human beings with private worlds, struggles, and relationships. Mao Zedong, Chinese Revolution, Cultural Revolution, Chinese Communist Party, Chinese history, Maoism, Great Leap Forward, Chinese politics, Red Guard, Chairman Mao The Private Life Of Chairman Mao 8 biography

Private Life Of Chairman MaoThe Secret Speeches of Chairman MaoThe Private Life of Chairman MaoMao's QuotationsPrivate Life of Chairman MaoCollected Writings of Chairman Mao - Politics and TacticsThe Private Life of Chairman MaoThe Private Life of Chairman MaoMao ZedongThe Little Red Book: Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tungMao ZedongQuotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung (The Little Red Book) & Other WorksCollected Writings of Chairman MaoQuotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tungMaoThe Thoughts of Chairman Mao Ts  -tungAutocracy and China's Rebel Founding EmperorsMao's Last RevolutionZhou EnlaiMao Zedong China's Revolution Zhisui Li Roderick MacFarquhar Zhisui Li Mao Tse-Tung Zhisui Li Mao Zedong Zhisui Li Li Zhi-Sui Jonathan Clements Mao Tse-tung Alan Lawrance Mao Zedong Mao Zedong Mao Zedong Philip Short Zedong Mao Anita M. Andrew Roderick MACFARQUHAR Michael Dillon Timothy Cheek Private Life Of Chairman Mao The Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao The Private Life of Chairman Mao Mao's Quotations Private Life of Chairman Mao Collected Writings of Chairman Mao - Politics and Tactics The Private Life of Chairman Mao The Private Life of Chairman Mao Mao Zedong The Little Red Book: Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung Mao Zedong Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung (The Little Red Book) & Other Works Collected Writings of Chairman Mao Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung Mao The Thoughts of Chairman Mao Ts  -tung Autocracy and China's Rebel Founding Emperors Mao's Last Revolution Zhou Enlai Mao Zedong China's Revolution Zhisui Li Roderick MacFarquhar Zhisui Li Mao Tse-Tung Zhisui Li Mao Zedong Zhisui Li Li Zhi-Sui Jonathan Clements Mao Tse-tung Alan Lawrance Mao Zedong Mao Zedong Mao Zedong Philip Short Zedong Mao Anita M. Andrew Roderick MACFARQUHAR Michael Dillon Timothy Cheek

for the first time here is the extraordinary true story of one of the most powerful men and ruthless dictators who ever lived mao zedong had control over more people for a longer period than any other leader in history in this intimate biography we learn not only about the imperial grandeur of his life in a country racked by poverty and the vicious infighting at his court but also about his extraordinary personal habits that equal those of deceased korean supreme leader kim jong il another infamous and idiosyncratic dictator equally deified and worshipped by his followers mao s teeth turned black because he would only brush them with tea he hardly ever bathed but then received krushchev in his swimming pool where he obliged the soviet president to join him li s revealing account also chronicles mao s voracious sexual appetite that led to the seduction of thousands of peasant women because he believed in the mythical healing power of sex zhisui li spent more time with mao than perhaps any other person he witnessed first hand the catastrophic events that mao s dotage and paranoia sparked in a country that revered him as a demi god the private life of chairman mao is a landmark biography as fascinating as it is important to the understanding of modern china and a must buy for fans of wild swans

in 1957 and 1958 chairman mao zedong led china into two major experiments the hundred flowers policy of encouraging literary and political free expression and the economic great leap forward each was a disaster repression followed the first when it became clear that intellectuals would criticize the communist party itself famine followed the second during two crucial years when the movements were being initiated however mao addressed various party groups behind closed doors to explain the new policies and exhort compliance recorded at the time and collected for limited circulation in the 1960s by his admirers among the red guards the speeches question and answer sessions and letters here translated have never before been published in china or the west these new candid materials revise our understanding of how the policies developed and reveal not only the extent of mao s power but the startling flights his untethered thought could take introductory essays by roderick macfarquhar benjamin schwartz eugene wu merle goldman and timothy cheek provide a context for evaluating and interpreting the nineteen texts translated in this volume

herinneringen van de lijfarts van de chinese leider aan de jaren 1954 1976

quotations from chairman mao tse tung is a book of statements from speeches and writings by mao zedong formerly romanized as mao tse tung the former chairman of the communist party of china published from 1964 to about 1976 and widely distributed during the cultural revolution the most popular versions were printed in small sizes that could be easily carried and were bound in bright red covers thus commonly becoming known internationally as the little red book this edition from radical reprints returns quotations back to its original 4 x6 pocketbook size with all 427 quotations in english the black panther party considered quotations to be a kind of bible it was essential reading quotations has a mythical quality to it most cannot agree if it is the second most printed book in history or if it barely cracked past a billion regardless quotations was so popular among chinese workers because of its accessibility this edition serves to make this book accessible again in its original pocketbook format

mao zedong is regarded as one of the most influential and controversial figures in modern world history after conquering the country he ruled the people s republic of china from its establishment as a communist state in 1949 until his death in 1976 brilliant and ruthless his legacy includes guerrilla warfare tactics violent cultural revolutions and enduring communist propaganda he was named one of the 100 most influential figures of the 20th century by time magazine the first volume in this special collection contains six important lectures and essays by chairman mao basic tactics on correcting mistaken ideas in the party the chinese revolution and the chinese communist party the role of the chinese communist party the orientation of the youth movement win the masses

the most revealing book ever published on mao perhaps on any dictator in history professor andrew j nathan columbia university from 1954 until mao zedong s death twenty two years later dr li zhisui was the chinese ruler s personal physician which put him in daily and increasingly intimate contact with mao and his inner circle in the private life of chairman mao dr li vividly reconstructs his extraordinary experience at the center of mao s decadent imperial court dr li clarifies numerous long standing puzzles such as the true nature of mao s feelings toward the united states and the soviet union he describes mao s deliberate rudeness toward khrushchev and reveals the actual catalyst of nixon s historic visit here are also surprising details of mao s personal depravity we see him dependent on barbiturates and refusing to wash dress or brush his teeth and the sexual politics of his court to millions of chinese mao was more god than man but for dr li he was all too human dr li s

intimate account of this lecherous paranoid tyrant callously indifferent to the suffering of his people will forever alter our view of chairman mao and of china under his rule praise for the private life of chairman mao from now on no one will be able to pretend to understand chairman mao's place in history without reference to this revealing account professor lucian pye massachusetts institute of technology dr li does for mao what the physician lord moran's memoir did for winston churchill turns him into a human being here is mao unveiled eccentric demanding suspicious unregretful lascivious and unfailingly fascinating our view of mao will never be the same again ross terrill author of china in our time an extraordinarily intimate portrait of mao dr li portrays mao's imperial court as a place of boundless decadence licentiousness selfishness relentless toadying and cutthroat political intrigue richard bernstein the new york times one of the most provocative books on mao to appear since the publication of edgar snow's red star over china paul g pickowicz the wall street journal

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quotations from chairman mao tse tung is a book of statements from speeches and writings by mao zedong mao tse tung the former chairman of the communist party of china published from 1964 to about 1976 and widely distributed during the cultural revolution the most popular versions were printed in small sizes that could be easily carried and were bound in bright red covers becoming commonly known in the west as the little red book quotations from chairman mao tse tung was originally compiled by an office of the PLA Daily People's Liberation Army Daily as an inspirational political and military document the initial publication covered 23 topics with 200 selected quotations by the chairman of the Chinese Communist Party and was entitled 200 quotations from chairman mao it was first given to delegates of a conference on 5 January 1964 who were asked to comment on it in response to the views of the deputies and compilers of the book the work was expanded to address 25 topics with 267 quotations and the title was changed simply to quotations from chairman mao tse tung

one of a series this contains a biographical essay a chronology a survey of manuscript resources an annotated bibliography of historical and biographic works on mao and his place in history speeches and writings by mao a summary of newspaper coverage and a bibliography of newspapers

quotations from chairman mao tse tung the little red book comprises 427 quotations divided thematically into 33 chapters it is also called thoughts of chairman mao by many Chinese people the quotations range in length from a sentence to a few short paragraphs and borrow heavily from a group of about two dozen documents in the four volumes of mao's selected works in the book's latter half a strong empiricist tendency evidences itself in mao's thought by May 1967 bookstores in 117 countries and territories around the world from the original edition with Hou Bo's photographs the official photographer of mao zedong enriched by two other works of mao and Lin Biao's epigraph from the 1966 French edition with a fault

mao zedong also known as mao tse tung is regarded as one of the most controversial figures in modern world history having conquered the country he ruled the People's Republic of China from its establishment as a communist state in 1949 until the time of his death in 1976 brilliant and ruthless his legacy includes guerrilla warfare tactics violent cultural revolutions and enduring communist propaganda he was named one of the 100 most influential figures of the 20th century by Time magazine the third volume in this special collection contains five important lectures and essays by

chairman mao part 1 on policy part 2 on practice part 3 on contradiction part 4 on new democracy
part 5 on the correct handling of contradictions among the people

quotations from chairman mao tse tung mao zedong is a book of selected statements from speeches and writings by mao the former chairman of the communist party of china published from 1964 to about 1976 and widely distributed during the cultural revolution the most popular versions were printed in small sizes that could be easily carried and were bound in bright red covers becoming commonly known in the west as the little red book quotations from chairman mao tse tung was originally compiled by an office of the pla daily people s liberation army daily as an inspirational political and military document the initial publication covered 23 topics with 200 selected quotations by the chairman of the chinese communist party and was entitled 200 quotations from chairman mao it was first given to delegates of a conference on 5 january 1964 who were asked to comment on it in response to the views of the deputies and compilers of the book the work was expanded to address 25 topics with 267 quotations and the title was changed simply to quotations from chairman mao tse tung the first draw of which approximately 50 to 60 000 copies were printed was not for sale but was to provide guidance to members of the people s liberation army in 1967 the book had already been translated into more than 36 languages and over 720 million copies had been printed the little red book is illustrated by hou bo photographs while it is trapped in a laogai re education camps contents lin bio s epigraphhou bo s photographs biographical note

one of the great figures of the twentieth century chairman mao looms irrepressibly over the economic rise of china mao zedong was the leader of a revolution a communist who lifted hundreds of millions out of poverty an aggressive and distrustful leader and a man responsible for more civilian deaths than perhaps any other historical figure now four decades after mao s death acclaimed biographer philip short presents a fully updated and revised edition of his ground breaking and masterly biography vivid uncompromising and unflinching short presents in one volume the man behind the propaganda his family his beliefs and his horrors in doing so he shows us both the human being mao was and the monster he became

what kind of ruler was mao zedong utilizing a rich mix of analysis and new translations this book examines other imperial predecessors and the elements linking mao and ming taizu the fourteenth century peasant rebel who founded the ming dynasty as well as critiques of western and chinese scholarship the book then presents translations with commentary of prc scholars on taizu and mao showing the evolution in chinese thought toward both rulers from the cultural revolution to the deng xiaoping reform era

the cultural revolution was a watershed event in the history of the people s republic of china the defining decade of half a century of communist rule before 1966 china was a typical communist state with a command economy and a powerful party able to keep the population under control but during the cultural revolution in a move unprecedented in any communist country mao unleashed the red guards against the party tens of thousands of officials were humiliated tortured and even killed order had to be restored by the military whose methods were often equally brutal in a masterly book roderick macfarquhar and michael schoenhals explain why mao launched the cultural revolution and show his machiavellian role in masterminding it which chinese publications conceal in often horrifying detail they document the hobbesian state that ensued the movement veered out of control and terror paralyzed the country power struggles raged among lin biao zhou enlai deng xiaoping and

jiang qing mao s wife and leader of the gang of four while mao often played one against the other after mao s death in reaction to the killing and the chaos deng xiaoping led china into a reform era in which capitalism flourishes and the party has lost its former authority in its invaluable critical analysis of chairman mao and its brilliant portrait of a culture in turmoil mao s last revolution offers the most authoritative and compelling account to date of this seminal event in the history of china

enigmatic eminence grise the power behind the throne these phrases sum up zhou enlai s long and varied but always pivotal political career in the chinese communist party from the 1920s to 1970s born in 1898 zhou witnessed several of the most important events in china s modern history and was a close associate of both the nationalist leader Chiang Kai Shek and communist leader Mao Zedong whom he served under as china s first premier from 1949 until 1976 zhou was also a major ally of Deng Xiaoping a source for example of major influence on his four modernizations in agriculture industry science and technology and the military he was thus the prime architect of china s drive towards superpower status and one of the key determinants of china s central role in the modern world zhou does not conform readily to any of the stereotypes of communist leaders chinese or otherwise cultivated and urbane he was a sympathetic and intellectual character who was well liked by non communists foreigners and his staff he was one of the most complex figures in the politics of contemporary china and certainly one of the most interesting although his influence was never all that obvious in this book Michael Dillon restores him to his rightful place in history and analyses the role of a man who was a genuine statesman rather than just a political operator

whether one views Mao Zedong as a hero or a villain the great helmsman was undoubtedly a pivotal figure in the history of twentieth century china a man whose life and writings provide a fascinating window on the chinese experience from the 1920s onward part mao biography part historical overview of the turbulent story of china s communist revolutions the introductory essay traces the history of twentieth century china from Mao s early career up to the chinese communist party s victory in 1949 through three decades of revolution to Mao s death in 1976 the second half of the volume offers a selection of Mao s writings including such seminal pieces as on new democracy and selections from the Little Red Book and writings about Mao and his legacy by both his contemporaries and modern scholars

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Introduction

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