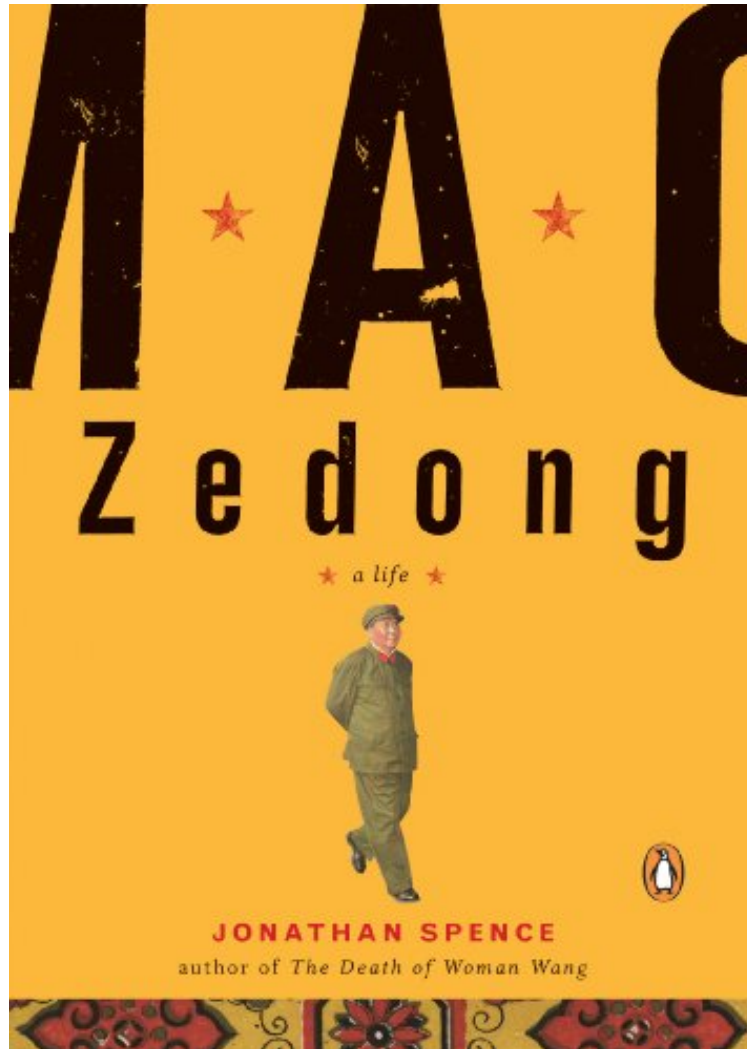


[Ebook pdf] Mao Zedong: A Life

Mao Zedong: A Life

Von Jonathan D. Spence

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Von Jonathan D. Spence : Mao Zedong: A Life before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Mao Zedong: A Life:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. very interestingVon Yowell written and educating about the life in China from the war against Japan to the civil war, and the communist time. Highly recommended if you want to learn about China through a story,0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Informative and concise, but unsatisfyingVon Richard E. HegnerJonathan Spence's biography of Mao was my first experience with the new Penguin Lives series, and I was unsure what to expect. Certainly, one cannot expect too much from a biography of one of the major political figures of the 20th century that

offers only 178 pages of text and 10 pages of endnotes. But I was game to try it, since I knew very little about Mao and gathered I would learn a lot in a relatively short time from this biography. Spence certainly succeeds in compressing most of the major events of Mao's life into this thin volume, and concisely reviews much of Mao's political thought and how it evolved. He also does a good job of mining source materials, particularly some of Mao's more obscure writing and poetry. But my major frustration in reading this book was a feeling that I never learned much about Mao as an individual human being, except that he came from obscure bourgeois peasant roots, that he was "married" at least four times and had at least ten children with whom he had rather distant relationships, and that as the years passed, he became more and more of a megalomaniac. I would also fault the book for giving minimal attention to the history of the times and to Mao's principal comrades in arms. (For example, Zhou Enlai does not appear until the final quarter of the book and gets minimal mention at that. The Long March gets only 2-3 pages.) Also somewhat curious is that the book lacks an index. All of that said, however, this is a remarkably informative book given its length. I should emphasize that the text on each page measures lightly under 6 x 4 inches, too--so not only is it a short book, but also a small book. I put the book down eager to learn more about Mao, which I suppose does commend it to other readers who know as little as I did before I read it.

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Overrated Mao Zedong
Von Ein Kunde
I felt this book--more a monograph than a biography--was a bit too cursory to really get at the heart of Mao. The war years are covered in just a few pages, and the period of Mao's reign is covered in much the same fashion. I found myself wanting to know a lot more. Considering the relative importance of Mao's reign compared with his early life, it's a little strange so much time is spent in these early years. After reading the book, I still don't get a clear picture of how Mao was able to parlay himself into the leading figure in communist party and then how he was able to keep so much power to himself later on. In short, it was a fair introduction, but it lacked depth and balance.

Kurzbeschreibung
Spence draws upon his extensive knowledge of Chinese politics and culture to create an illuminating picture of Mao. . . . Superb. (Chicago Tribune)
From humble origins in the provinces, Mao Zedong rose to absolute power, unifying with an iron fist a vast country torn apart by years of weak leadership, colonialism, and war. This sharply drawn and insightful account brings to life this modern-day emperor and the tumultuous era that he did so much to shape.
Jonathan Spence captures Mao in all his paradoxical grandeur and sheds light on the radical transformation he unleashed that still reverberates in China today.
deFrom humble beginnings in rural Hunan, Mao Zedong became the "Great Helmsman" of Communist China. By the time he died in 1976, he had profoundly changed the course of history. His increasingly erratic whims and graspings at a wild utopia destabilized his immense achievements, and he was ultimately responsible for the deaths of perhaps 60 million people. Jonathan Spence brings great erudition to the story of this flawed colossus. He is particularly enlightening on Mao's early years--it is nearly two-thirds through the book before Mao stands on the walls of the Forbidden City in October 1949 and declares the establishment of the People's Republic of China. The young revolutionary's infamous willfulness is soon apparent, yet Spence rounds out his character by, for example, quoting a poem to his beloved first wife and mentioning the profit he made from an early capitalist venture, a bookstore. Mao Zedong is excellent biography--and more. China was convulsed for nearly a century by almost constant war and revolution, and Spence uses the life of the man at the heart of so many historic events to elucidate the whole momentous epoch. In his many writings, Spence has proved a master at making complex themes easy to understand, and this compact book provides yet another example of his skills. --John Stevenson.com
From humble beginnings in rural Hunan, Mao Zedong became the "Great Helmsman" of Communist China. By the time he died in 1976, he had profoundly changed the course of history. His increasingly erratic whims and graspings at a wild utopia destabilized his immense achievements, and he was ultimately responsible for the deaths of perhaps 60 million people. Jonathan Spence brings great erudition to the story of this flawed colossus. He is particularly enlightening on Mao's early years--it is nearly two-thirds through the book before Mao stands on the walls of the Forbidden City in October 1949 and declares the establishment of the People's Republic of China. The young revolutionary's infamous willfulness is soon apparent, yet Spence rounds out his character by, for example, quoting a poem to his beloved first wife and mentioning the profit he made from an early capitalist venture, a bookstore. Mao Zedong is excellent biography--and more. China was convulsed for nearly a century by almost constant war and revolution, and Spence uses the life of the man at the heart of so many historic events to elucidate the whole momentous epoch. In his many writings, Spence has proved a master at making complex themes easy to understand, and this compact book provides yet another example of his skills. --John Stevenson