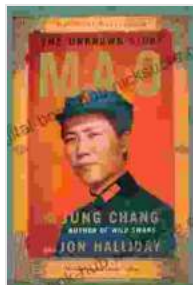


# Mao: The Unknown Story by Jung Chang: A Critical Analysis



Jung Chang's 2005 biography, *Mao: The Unknown Story*, is a controversial and widely acclaimed account of the life of Mao Zedong, the founder of the People's Republic of China. Chang draws on extensive research, including

interviews with Mao's family and former associates, to paint a complex and nuanced portrait of the man who led China through a period of immense social and political upheaval.



### **Mao: The Unknown Story** by Jung Chang

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

- Language : English
- File size : 12597 KB
- Text-to-Speech : Enabled
- Screen Reader : Supported
- Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
- Word Wise : Enabled
- Print length : 1252 pages



Chang's book has been praised for its scholarship and for providing a fresh perspective on one of the most important figures of the twentieth century. However, it has also been criticized for its negative portrayal of Mao and for allegedly exaggerating the extent of his crimes.

In this article, we will take a critical look at *Mao: The Unknown Story*. We will examine the book's strengths and weaknesses, and we will assess its overall contribution to our understanding of Mao Zedong.

### **The Evidence**

Chang's book is based on a wide range of sources, including interviews with Mao's family and former associates, as well as archival research. Chang has also made use of previously unpublished documents, including Mao's personal diaries.

The evidence that Chang presents is often damning. She shows that Mao was a ruthless dictator who was responsible for the deaths of millions of people. She also documents Mao's personal life, including his numerous affairs and his addiction to drugs.

However, some critics have questioned the reliability of Chang's evidence. They argue that she has relied too heavily on the testimony of Mao's enemies and that she has not given enough weight to the evidence that supports a more positive view of Mao.

### **The Interpretation**

Chang's interpretation of the evidence is often critical of Mao. She argues that Mao was a power-hungry tyrant who was motivated by a desire for personal glory. She also faults Mao for his economic policies, which she believes led to widespread poverty and famine.

However, some critics have argued that Chang's interpretation is too one-sided. They argue that she has ignored the positive aspects of Mao's legacy, such as his role in leading China to independence and his efforts to improve the lives of the poor.

### **The Impact**

*Mao: The Unknown Story* has had a significant impact on our understanding of Mao Zedong. The book has helped to dispel the myth of Mao as a benevolent father figure and has shown him to be a complex and flawed individual.

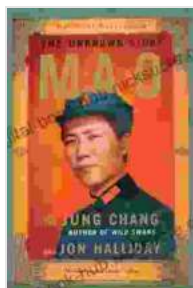
Chang's book has also been influential in shaping public opinion about China. The book's negative portrayal of Mao has helped to fuel a growing

disillusionment with the Chinese government.

*Mao: The Unknown Story* is a valuable and important contribution to our understanding of Mao Zedong and the history of China. The book provides a wealth of new information about Mao's life and personality, and it offers a fresh perspective on his legacy.

However, it is important to read the book with a critical eye. Chang's interpretation of the evidence is often biased, and she has not always given a fair hearing to her critics.

Overall, *Mao: The Unknown Story* is a complex and controversial book that deserves to be read by anyone who is interested in Chinese history.



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