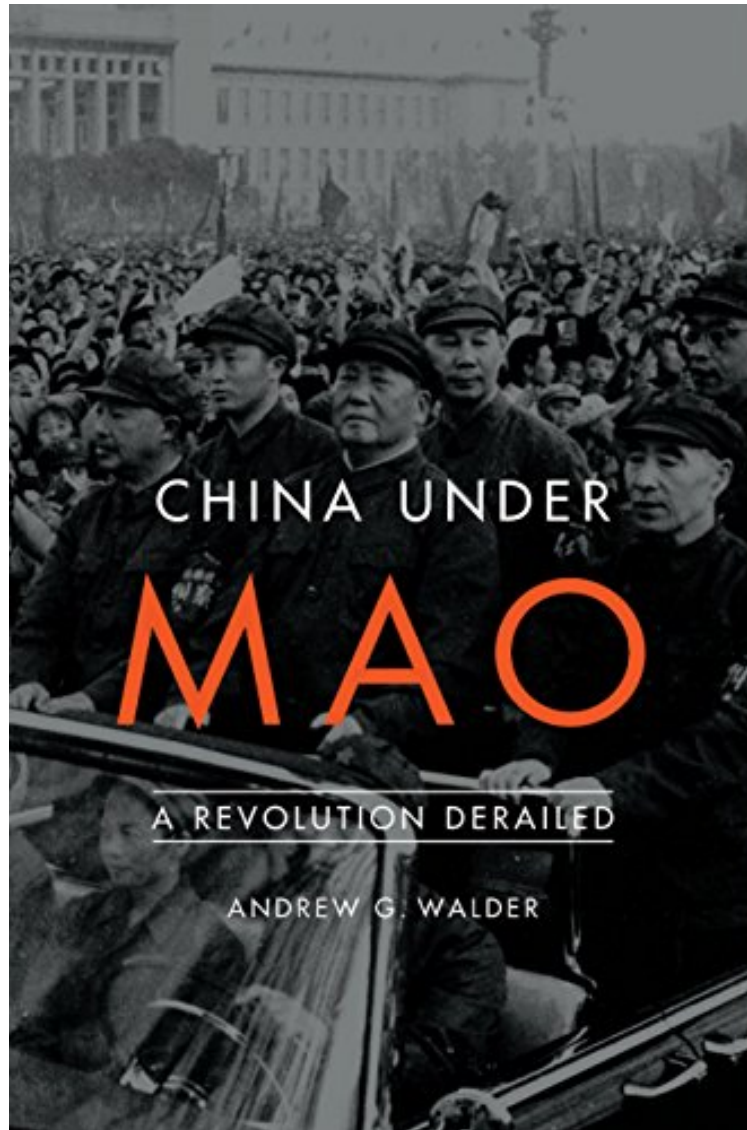


China Under Mao

Andrew G. Walder

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Andrew G. Walder : China Under Mao before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised China Under Mao:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. The one to read By Philip s glamann If you read one history of the Mao era, this should be it. The writing is clear, and Walder does a good job decoding the jargon and confusing events of the times. He's balanced where some other recent histories come off as shrill. The section on the Cultural Revolution is fascinating because it provides a good explanation of the bigger picture, yet still gives examples of what was happening at specific universities and high schools. For the first time I can say I have a decent understanding of what that bizarre event was about. Having checked out several other histories that cover the Mao period, I can say this

one is the best. Maybe one day it'll be available for a little cheaper so it can have a wider readership.5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. The man and the systemBy Andrew BatsonAn excellent and very clearly written analytical history of China under socialism. Although Mao features prominently (how could he not?), this is not a book about Mao per se. Walder instead focuses on understanding the economic and social systems that the Communist Party created under Mao's leadership, and of the problems those systems in turn created. The book contains, among its many interesting parts, an excellent account of the early days of Communist rule and the gradual transition to the planned economy. The discussion of how China fit into the development of other Communist states globally is fascinating, and the explanation of how the planned economy actually worked is also a model of clarity and concision. Overall, highly recommended for anyone seeking an understanding of pre-reform China--though like too many academic books it is massively overpriced. At a more normal price it would have a better chance of gathering the wider readership it deserves.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. and I love the book for the clarity of writingBy Tan Eng TeckI just completed a sociology course under this author, and I love the book for the clarity of writing. Many sociology books tend to use jargon or convoluted sentences to mask their ideas, but this is a book that will easily enlighten the reader on China's historical context. Only through understanding China's history, can we begin to understand the current government's obsession with stability at all costs.

China's Communist Party seized power in 1949 after a long guerrilla insurgency followed by full-scale war, but the revolution was just beginning. Andrew Walder narrates the rise and fall of the Maoist state from 1949 to 1976--an epoch of startling accomplishments and disastrous failures, steered by many forces but dominated above all by Mao Zedong.

Andrew Walders's account of Mao's time in power is detailed, sophisticated and powerful;Walder takes on many pieces of conventional wisdom about Mao's China and pulls them apart;What was it that led so much of China's population to follow Mao's orders, in effect to launch a civil war against his own party? There is still much more to understand about the bond between Mao and the wider population. As we try to understand that bond, there will be few better guides than Andrew Walders's book. Sober, measured, meticulous in every deadly detail, it is an essential assessment of one of the world's most important revolutions. (Rana Mitter Times Literary Supplement 2016-01-13)Walder convincingly shows that the effect of Maoist inequalities still distorts China today;In what will be a mind-opening book for many (and is a depressing reminder for others) Andrew Walder shows that in the decades after Mao, China began the long process of recovering from the damage of his misrule. (Jonathan Mirsky The Spectator 2015-08-22)Walders's argument is forthright and his assessment of Mao's legacy is unrelenting, and yet the abundance of detailed, well-researched descriptions of political campaigns, crackdowns, infighting, economic and demographic data, and everyday life of the Chinese people?combined with his masterful storytelling talent comparable to that of Jonathan Spence, another prominent Yale historian of China?makes the work a highly readable and excellent textbook of Mao's China with refreshing insights and a great deal of provocative ideas. (Liu Kang China International 2014-05-01)Perspicacious scholarship by the preeminent American historical sociologist working on the Peoples Republic of China. A balanced, critical account of events of baffling complexity, and a sophisticated analysis of uniquely solid empirical data. If reading is indeed the basics for all learning, then this is the book to read in order to learn why Mao in the end accomplished so little of what he had hoped to achieve after 1949 and why his legacy remains so controversial. (Michael Schoenhals, Lund University)This is a masterful synthesis of the literature on Mao Zedong's China and of Walders's own extensive sociological research. He combines Mao-centered political history with close attention to the organizational characteristics of the Communist Party, which explain its responsiveness to Mao Zedong's often disastrous initiatives. In the author's view, Mao was a rigidly dogmatic leader with extremely narrow and outdated ideas. The book is replete with similarly incisive judgments. These will no doubt provoke controversy, but in the end, they are likely to be accepted. (Thomas P. Bernstein, Columbia University)About the AuthorAndrew G. Walder is Denise O'Leary and Kent Thiry Professor of Sociology, and Senior Fellow at the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, Stanford University.