

Mao zedong: man, not god

[People](#), [Mao Zedong](#)



“ Mao Zedong: Man, not God” by Quan Yanchi was first published in 1992, book is translated to English from Chinese by Wang Wenjiong and edited by Gale Hadfield. The book is based on the recollections of Li Yinqiao, Mao's bodyguard for many years. Highlighting the book are photographs of Mao with his relatives and Li, published for the first time. This book can help anyone who is new to China or know just a little about this country to get more familiar with who Mao for Chinese is. They love him so much, and the main aim of author of the book is to show to reader hidden situations of his life.

The book is divided into 20 chapters by their theme. It ranges from Mao's relationship with different people to things that made him cry. Author was worried that not all of his questions will be answered by Li, despite Li is his friend. He thought some questions may embarrass Li, as they were about Mao's likes and dislikes, his fears. But to his fortune Li did his best trying to remember everything in details. Mao is well-known around the world as the greatest man China produced in this century. The author supports this impression and also tries to show that Mao was not like a robot, but ordinary human feelings are not alien to him.

He had some habits which characterize him as a person who doesn't really like changes. As he choose Li to be his bodyguard's commander, they spent about 15 years together and after Li left Mao didn't have any new bodyguard commander. There are lots of situations while Mao afield. During the war he shows himself as a good commander and great strategist. He is very principled, sometimes it almost costed him a life. There were only few

occasions when he refused his words and changed the order of things. But in some cases we should have thanked Li that Mao stayed alive.

He was so dogged, he didn't worry about his own safe, he was just following his desire or whim like as he said so he would do so no matter how it would finish. For me personally was very interesting chapter about things that make Mao cry. I didn't even expect that such a thing as Beijing Opera could make him cry so much. One of his favorite plays was “ The Story of the White Snake”. This tragic story never failed to move Mao to tears. This episode shows Mao not as Chairman or army leader, but more humane, as a small vulnerable child which starts to cry from emotions when he sees something perfect in its kind.

Tragedy took Mao inside the play, he was losing connection to the real world, he became a part of play, he didn't care about other people's opinion. Another episode is also very emotional. Mao used to have one bodyguard from each province, so about twice a year he was sending them back home for family reunion, but also they had to bring Mao information about what was going on in the country, especially in distant parts. He didn't want them to be spy or guerrilla, he wanted to know the situation. He was not indifferent to destiny of people in China.

Author keeps very detailed, he describes everything so vivid that reader gets an impression that he is sitting next to Mao, can hear his breathe, and feel the same disgust when Mao throws away a butt. Sometimes it can make you bored, but at all I find it necessary. Without all this details the text would be just retelling of history, only dry facts and would make you asleep within a minute. As the text is divided into chapters, Quan Yanchi starts each chapter

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with statement and after gives an example which supports the statement given in the beginning.

As there can be some confirmations he goes from one to another, doesn't mix them up, so even if you stop reading for sometime and then come back to book you will easily get back to the event described. Book leaves its sign on you, it is impossible that you will not change your opinion about Mao. He presented from very different point of view than we, foreigners, used to think about him. Mao is God for Chinese, but he totally deserve it. During his life he did lots of good to China and now its time for China pay him back.