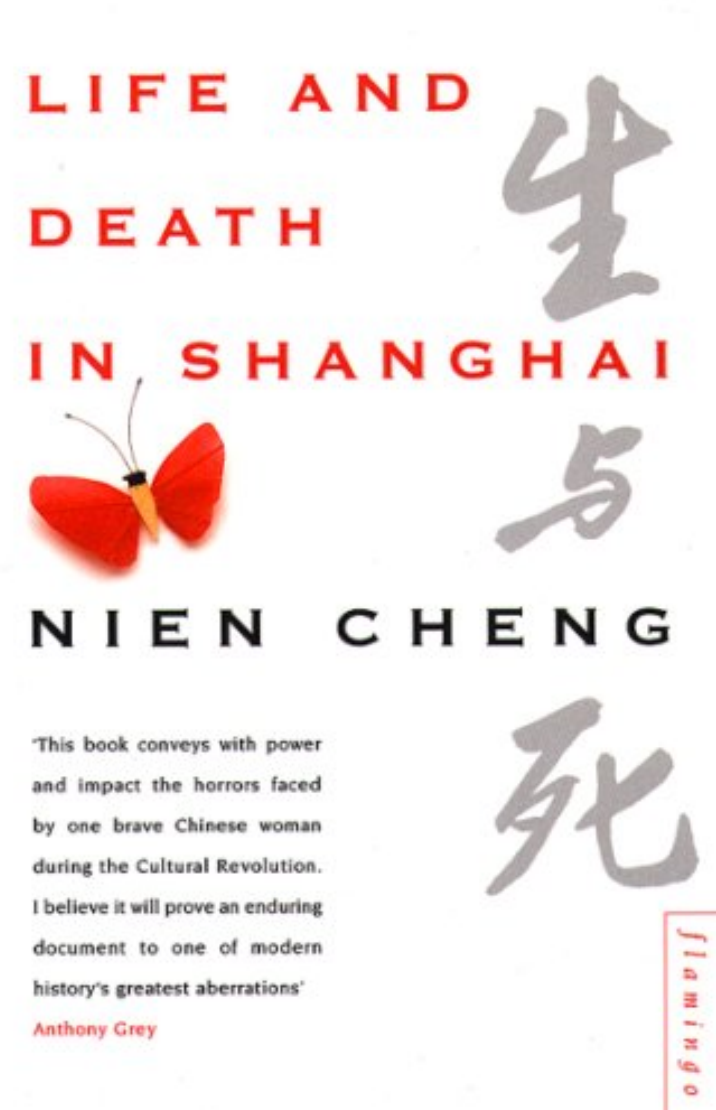


(Download) Life and Death in Shanghai

Life and Death in Shanghai

Von Nien Cheng

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Von Nien Cheng : Life and Death in Shanghai before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Life and Death in Shanghai:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Superbly written, interesting and objective.Von MaginotI never thought that I could love a true account of tragedy, suffering, and grave injustice, but I have to admit that I love "Life and Death in Shanghai". I don't mean that I read this book for entertainment or recommend it to everybody. Like some of the works of Solzhenitsyn or Elie Weisel, the subject of Nien Cheng's book is real, painful, and sometimes very difficult to read. Yet I find myself constantly rereading "Life

and Death in Shanghai" and it is one of the few books I refuse to part with. How can this be? Nien Cheng writes of personal loss, suffering, and injustice with unusually lucid and mature prose. She is impressive as story teller, an historian, but most of all as a writer. One of the most effective qualities of Nien Cheng's writing is the remarkable restraint she employs when describing unfair and frankly inhumane actions perpetrated against her and her family. She describes her arrest, captivity, and daily efforts to challenge her tormentors with cool objectivity. One of the most impressive parts of the book is the account of how Nien Cheng studied Chairman Mao's collected works in prison. Despite the fact that Mao's policies had personally harmed her and were tearing China apart, she studied his works in earnest and evaluated them objectively. She concluded that Mao was a brilliant guerrilla warfare strategist but that he was only capable of destruction, not creativity. Nien Cheng enhances her personal narrative by describing relevant Chinese historical events. As a result, the reader acquires a sense of context and is better able to understand why certain things happen to her. For example, Nien Cheng is repeatedly persecuted for her alleged support of Liu Xiaqi. During one of her interrogations she is bold enough to declare that his policies, as elucidated by her jailers, sound perfectly sensible. Then after years in captivity, she is suddenly treated with more kindness and praised for her positive remarks about Liu Xiaqi. Nien Cheng explains to the reader that during this time, political tides had turned against the radical Gang of Four and that moderate factions in the Chinese Communist Party had rehabilitated Liu Xiaqi. I recommend this book to anyone interested in modern Chinese history, in survival and triumph, or to anyone who enjoys encountering the English language at its best. My deep respect and appreciation go out to Nien Cheng.

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Documenting a Strong but Overproud Personality Von Ein Kunde I read this book to prepare for my final presentation in a class on conscience and political struggle. As Nien Cheng describes her experiences during China's Cultural Revolution, the reader cannot help but feel for her. What distinguishes this tale is the fact that Ms. Cheng does not need flowery prose to illustrate her story. Instead, the language is straightforward, telling nothing but the facts. Those facts speak for themselves. Bare, raw details of her daily struggles with torture (both physical and mental), disease, and discomfort over her six and a half years in solitary confinement provide all the illumination the reader needs. Stanley Karnow, of Washington Post Book World, calls the book a "chronicle of her courage, fortitude, and...stubborn integrity." As an autobiography, the story does draw much of its success from the subject's character. For the most part, I agree with Mr. Karnow about Ms. Cheng's personality. However strong the story, one aspect of it bothered me. When Ms. Cheng finally is released (no, that is not a giveaway- she writes her memoirs in the past tense, so you know from the start that she gets out and publishes this document), she states (and shows) that she is hardly changed by her experience. The Communists locked her up on charges of being a capitalist and an elitist, a member of the bourgeois. While I do not agree with their treatment of her, their assessment of her character may not be far off. Ms. Cheng is issued an apartment upon her release, but she soon considers agitating for a whole house to herself. In the meantime, the street in front of her apartment complex is lined with makeshift shacks, home to Chinese peasants unable to afford housing. The whole time, she considers them a nuisance, trespassing on her private property. Though she could not possibly help them all, Ms. Cheng does not even display sympathy for their plight. Perhaps the author had some particular reason for this apparent lack of feeling. If she did, it is not addressed. Thus, though I appreciated her vitality and strong spirit in enduring hardship, I left the book believing that she did in fact feel she was above her fellow citizens.

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. High marks for this story of survival and hope. Von Ein Kunde "Life and Death in Shanghai" is the story of a survivor! In her simply told tale, Nien Cheng allows the reader to experience the nightmare of her life in Shanghai throughout the turbulent years of the 1960s and 70s. All passion seems wrung out of Cheng as she relates her story. It is this matter-of-fact presentation that makes one realize that it is precisely this lack of emotion that allowed her to survive not only 6 1/2 years in No. 1 Detention House, but also her so-called "freedom" in Shanghai throughout the mid- to late-70s. She is inspirational because a lesson she teaches is to conserve passion and energy by concentrating on a goal. She survives prison because she focused on intelligent discussion of reasons why she was imprisoned. She survived Shanghai because she focused on learning about her daughter's death. She would not allow anything else to interfere with her goals. Physical and mental fortitude allowed her to survive prison, the death of her beloved daughter, faithless friends, traitorous neighbors, and turbulent times. People like Nien Cheng are a tribute to the human spirit and an inspiration to the rest of us.

Kurzbeschreibung A first-hand account of China's cultural revolution. A first-hand account of China's cultural revolution. Nien Cheng, an anglophile and fluent English-speaker who worked for Shell in Shanghai under Mao, was put under house arrest by Red Guards in 1966 and subsequently jailed. All attempts to make her confess to the charges of being a British spy failed; all efforts to indoctrinate her were met by a steadfast and fearless refusal to accept the terms offered by her interrogators. When she was released from prison she was told that her daughter had committed suicide. In fact Meiping had been beaten to death by Maoist revolutionaries. From Publishers Weekly This gripping account of a woman caught up in the maelstrom of China's Cultural Revolution begins quietly. In 1966, only the

merest rumblings of political upheaval disturbed the gracious life of the author, widow of the manager of Shell Petroleum in China. As the rumblings fast became a cataclysm, Cheng found herself a target of the revolution: Red Guards looted her home, literally grinding underfoot her antique porcelain and jade treasures; and she was summarily imprisoned, falsely accused of espionage. Despite harsh privation even tortures she refused to confess and was kept in solitary confinement for over six years, suffering deteriorating health and mounting anxiety about the fate of her only child, Meiping. When the political climate softened, and she was released, Cheng learned that her fears were justified: Meiping had been beaten to death when she refused to denounce her mother. The candor and intimacy of this affecting memoir make it addictive reading. Its intelligence, passion and insight assure its place among the distinguished voices of our age proclaiming the ascendancy of the human spirit over tyranny. Cheng is now a U.S. resident. BOMC main selection; author tour. Copyright 1987 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Cheng's widely acclaimed book recounts in compelling specifics her persecution and imprisonment at the hands of Mao Zedong's "Cultural Revolution" (1966-1976). Inquisitors accused her of being a "spy" and "imperialist," but during the harrowing years of solitary confinement she never gave in, never confessed a lie. We read this, not so much for historical analysis, but, like the literature of the Gulag in Russia, for an example of a humane spirit telling terrible truths honestly, without bitterness or cynicism. Highly recommended. BOMC main selection. Charles W. Hayford, History Dept., Northwestern Univ., Evanston, Ill. Copyright 1987 Reed Business Information, Inc.