

Course Code & Title	:	HH 3043, China's Cultural Revolution as History and Memory
Instructor	:	Els van Dongen
Academic Year	:	2020/2021, Sem 1
Academic Unit	:	3 AUs
Pre-requisite	:	HH 1001 (exceptions can be granted upon approval of instructor)
Time and Venue	:	Wednesdays, 2.30 to 5.30 pm; Venue TBC [in-class teaching depends on evolving situation and university policies]

[Seminars: 39 hours]

Learning Objectives

1. Investigate and explain the main historical processes behind the formation and demise of the Cultural Revolution and, more broadly, Maoist China;
2. Compare and contrast major approaches to and theories on the formation and demise of the Cultural Revolution and, more broadly, Maoist China;
3. Analyze and interpret primary and secondary historical sources of various types, across disciplines, and across the temporal divide between Maoist and post-Maoist China pertaining to the Cultural Revolution and Maoist China;
4. Articulate new arguments about the Cultural Revolution (history) and its fate in post-Maoist China (memory) based on critical reading of primary and secondary sources;
5. Present ideas and arguments regarding the Cultural Revolution (history) and its fate in post-Maoist China (memory) in a variety of media, making creative use of sources and formats

Content

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) was Mao's "last revolution." In the span of a decade, it radically transformed Chinese society, politics, and economy through mass mobilization and ideological campaigns that served to purge Chinese Communism from "revisionist" and "bourgeois" elements. Mao urged the youth to "bombard the headquarters," and with it, the nation became engulfed in waves of violence and frenzy. Red Guards waving Mao's *Little Red Book* became uncontrollable and factionalism spread across the various segments of society. Meanwhile, struggles among the political elite went hand in hand with military crackdowns and persecutions on an unprecedented scale. Schools and universities were closed and intellectuals became "sent-down youths" who spent years of their lives in remote areas in the countryside. When Mao died in 1976 and the Gang of Four was arrested, how did Mao's political successors assess the event in such a way that the Party could retain its legitimacy? And how did the Chinese people, some of whom referred to it as the "ten years of madness," make sense of the normalization of brutality? What media did they use to express themselves and how did this intersect with official interpretations? Was there space to remember or were people encouraged to forget?

In this course, we explore the causes, development, and consequences of the Cultural Revolution, paying attention to how it shaped and continues to shape post-Maoist reform China. We will not only explore differing interpretations in secondary literature, but we will also investigate tensions in how the Cultural Revolution has been remembered in reform China in various media, including memoirs, films, museums, novels, and oral history and online projects. Theoretically, we will draw on debates in memory studies and the friction between history and memory, whereas practically, we will analyze sources from various disciplines as historical "texts" and engage in critical discussions about historical narratives and the making and unmaking of "history."

Course Outline (*subject to change*)

Week	Topic	Readings/Activities
<i>Part 1: History</i>		
1	Introduction	Esherick, Pickowicz, and Walder
2	Mao and the Background to the Cultural Revolution	Cheek 2002 and Cheek 2010; Karl
3	Overview of Main Developments	Walder; Leese
4	Different Interpretations	MacFarquhar and Schoenhals; Dikotter; Yan and Gao
<i>Part 2: Memory</i>		
5	History, Memory, and the Cultural Revolution	Halbwachs; Nora; Assman; Veg; Foucault
6	Memoirs	Rae Yang; Ji Xianlin
7	Films	Zhang Yimou
8	Museums	Ho; Denton; Veg
9	Novels	Yan
10	Oral History and Online Projects/Social Media	Ward; Feng Jicai; Veg
<i>Part 3: Group Projects</i>		
11	Group Projects 1	
12	Group Projects 2	
13	Overview and Wrap up	

Student Assessment: 100% Continuous Assessment

Weightage of CA components:

- 10% General Participation and Discussion**
- 15% Online Posting and Group Discussion**
- 20% Short Writing Assessments**
- 30% Research Project (Individual)**
- 25% Research Project (Group)**

General Participation and Discussion: 10%:

You will be assessed on your understanding of the readings and ability to communicate your ideas. For primary sources, analytical skills and critical interpretation will be assessed. For secondary sources, you will be assessed based on your understanding of the various interpretations in the literature.

Online Posting and Group Discussion: 15%:

You will be asked to post weekly on the online discussion board and this will be the basis for discussion/presentation in group. Your contributions will be assessed based on your understanding of the readings and your ability to communicate your ideas. For primary sources, analytical skills and critical interpretation will be assessed. For secondary sources, you will be assessed based on your understanding of the various interpretations in the literature. To do well on the team assessment, it is necessary for you to demonstrate positive interdependence and teamwork. In

principle, you will receive the same marks as your team. However, your individual score may vary based on feedback about your contributions to the group discussion.

Short Writing Assessments: 20%

You will submit two short writing assessments. The first one will be a review of a work of your choice in any medium (memoir, film, museum exhibition, or novel) in which you discuss the work critically in relation to the course theme (comprehension of course content). As with longer research papers, assessment criteria will be: clarity of argument and analysis; structure of the review; writing; use of sources in this case will be your ability to include references to the work to make your case. The second short writing assessment is a creative writing exercise/historical fiction based on the life of a person who experienced the Cultural Revolution, details of which will be provided in a separate document.

Research Project (Individual): 30%

You will conduct an individual research project of your choice. Assessment criteria will be: clarity of argument and analysis; structure; writing; and use of sources. For the latter, the exercise is about using a primary source (be it a museum, film, or novel) as a historical document and you will be assessed based on your competence regarding the use of sources beyond traditional “texts.” Primary sources can include “texts” pertaining to the Cultural Revolution and Maoism in a Southeast Asian context for those more interested in transnational histories and effects of the Cultural Revolution closer to home. You are allowed to build on the review from the short writing assessment for this project.

Research Project (Group): 25%

The group project will also be on a topic of your choice, again making use of “texts” pertaining to the Cultural Revolution and Maoism, including those in a Southeast Asian context. In addition to the criteria of clarity of argument and analysis; structure and coherence; and use of sources, you will also be assessed on how you communicate the findings of your research to your audience, as well as your ability to work as a team. For this project, there is also a creativity component, details of which will be shared in a separate document. In addition to the group mark (15%), there is also an individual mark (10%) based on your section of the project. The group mark may vary based on feedback regarding your contribution. You are allowed to bring in elements from your individual research projects into the group research project, as long as they are reworked as part of the argument you present in the group project.

Reading and References (selective)

Texts subject to changes.

Assmann, Jan. “Communicative and Cultural Memory,” in Astrid Erli, Ansgar Nünning, and Sara B. Young, eds. *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*. De Gruyter: Berlin; New York, 2008, 109-118.

Cheek, Timothy. *Mao Zedong and China’s Revolutions: A Brief History with Documents*. Bedford: St. Martin’s, 2002.

Cheek, Timothy, ed. *A Critical Introduction to Mao*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Denton, Kirk. *Exhibiting the Past: Historical Memory and the Politics of Museums in Postsocialist China*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2014.

Dikotter, Frank. *The Cultural Revolution: A People’s History, 1962-1976*. London: Bloomsbury, 2016.

Esherick, Joseph W., Paul G. Pickowicz, and Andrew G. Walder, eds. *The Cultural Revolution as History*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006.

Feng Jicai. *Voices from the Whirlwind: An Oral History of the Cultural Revolution*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1991.

Foucault, Michel. *Language, Counter-memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews by Michel Foucault*. Ed. Donald F. Bouchard. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1992.

Halbwachs, Maurice, *On Collective Memory*. Trans. Lewis Coser. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992. (excerpts)

Ji Xianlin, Chenxin Jiang, Jianying Zha. *The Cowshed: Memories of the Chinese Cultural Revolution*. New York: New York Review Books, 2016.

Ho, Denise Y. *Curating Revolution: Politics on Display in Mao's China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.

Karl, Rebecca. *Mao Zedong and China in the Twentieth-Century World*. Durham; London: Duke University Press, 2010.

Leese, Daniel. *Mao Cult: Rhetoric and Ritual in China's Cultural Revolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

MacFarquhar, Roderick and Michael Schoenhals. *Mao's Last Revolution*. Cambridge, MA; London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006.

Nora, Pierre. "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire," *Representations*, Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory (Spring 1989), 7-24.

Rae Yang. *Spider Eaters*. University of California Press, 1997.

Veg, Sebastian, ed. *Popular Memories of the Mao Era: From Critical Debate to Reassessing History*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2019.

Walder, Andrew. *China under Mao: A Revolution Derailed*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017.

Ward, Sandi. "Collecting Oral History in an Academic Library: The CR/10 Project," *Journal of East Asian Libraries* 167 (2018).

Yan Jiaqi and Gao Gao. *Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution*. Transl. and ed. D.W.Y. Kwok. Honolulu, School of Hawaiian, Asian and Pacific Studies, University of Hawaii (English transl.), 1996.

Yan Lianke, *Serve the People*. Trans. Julia Lovell. Grove Press, Black Cat, 2008.

Zhang Yimou. *To Live (Huozhe)*. Santa Monica, CA: MGM, 2000.