

PAAS 356: The Literature of the People's Republic of China 1949 to the Present in English

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(Image from Hu Jie's film *Thought I Am Gone*, 2006)

Course description:

This course investigates the diverse and complex ways in which recent history and memory have been represented in Chinese literature from the 1980s to the present day. We will read and analyze texts drawn from a diverse range of genres and media, including memoir, short stories, essays, poetry, and film in order to explore the ways in which various forms of literature transmit and shape history, whether by elucidating or distorting cultural memory. The first part of the class (Weeks 1–4) focuses on literature written in the immediate aftermath of the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) in the 1980s. In the second portion of the class (Weeks 5–7) we will read firsthand autobiographical narratives, followed by more recent fiction (Weeks 8–11), and conclude with independent documentary film (Week 12). Additional secondary readings in English may be assigned.

Proposed assignments:

Attendance, Participation	10 %
Weekly online commentaries	20%
Midterm take home exam	25%
Group presentation	15%
Final Paper	30%

Proposed reading list:

Dai Sijie. <i>Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress</i> (2000)
Wang Anyi. <i>The Song of Everlasting Sorrow</i> (1995)
Young, Rae. <i>Spider Eaters: A Memoir</i> (1997)
Additional selected readings