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Transcultural Intellectuals Throughout the Cultural Revolution in China

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Transcultural Intellectuals Throughout the Cultural Revolution In China

Charis Birkholz

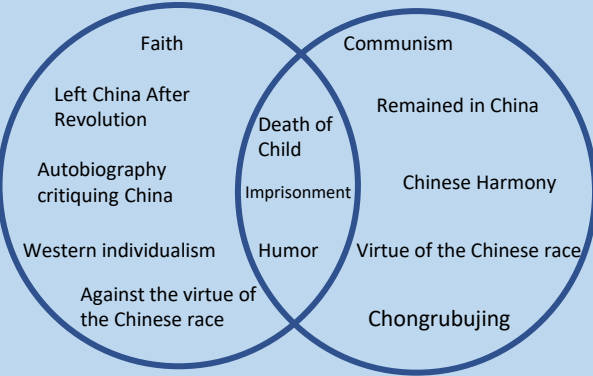
Faculty Advisor: Professor Sophia Geng

College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University

"If poisonous weeds are not removed, scented flowers cannot grow."
-Mao Zedong



Nien Cheng Yang Xianyi



Chong Ru Bu Jing 宠辱不惊

Chong ru bu jing describes the expected actions of those who face both fortune and misfortune. Always be relaxed and easy flowing. Take life and its events naturally no matter if clouds fly high or low. In short, it is a way to deal with the happenings of life. This is ideal of devout Chinese.

Summary/Overview

Nien Cheng and Yang Xian Yi were intellectuals that lived through The Great Proletariat Cultural Revolution of China that lasted from 1966-1976. Being of upper class, educated abroad, and transcultural, they were victims of the People's Communist party's regime under Chairman Mao Zedong, who aimed to purge the country of all capitalistic fervor. Nien Cheng and Yangxianyi both tapped into different western and Chinese values during their oppression and imprisonment throughout then cultural revolution.

"Otherwise, all the prisoners were treated right. Those who were ill and got a fever were sent to the clinic. The guards were very disciplined. They had strict orders never to beat or kick prisoners, nor to commit and form of bodily assault.

"All Chinese have this feeling of attachment to our native country. No matter how far we travel or how long we are absent, eventually we want to return to die in China.

Methods/Process

1. Read Autobiographies
2. Compared western/Chinese values
3. Outside citations
4. Book Reviews

Purpose

The cultural Revolution resulted in the deaths of millions of Chinese individuals. Maozedong aimed to purge the country of all capitalistic fervor. Although many years ago, the events are still relevant today. Niencheng and Yangxianyi were both survivors of the revolution, and were the victims of the government's anti-capitalism regime. Their stories of survival invoke Chinese relationships as well as Western, while inspiring the readers.

Skills

1. Gathering Citations
2. Outside Source Integration
3. Cultural Connections
4. Philosophical Understanding

Conclusions

These two intellectuals individually took different approaches against the political pressure they were receiving to survive, both tapping into their transcultural wisdom and intellect aiding them in their survival. Niencheng used her Christianity, dichotomy of right and wrong, and love for her daughter. YangXianyi tapped into more Communism and Chinese social order harmonious relationships with his home country. Whether a western or Chinese audience, all can take inspiration from their determination and will to live.

