

Name

Instructor

Course

Date

History of Communism in China

The essay critically analyzes the experiences in the history of communism in China in Mao Zedong's era in 1949-1976. The primary text source utilized in this essay comprises of the fascinating and poignant memoir by Kang Zhengguo "Confessions: An Innocent Life in Communist China" which is fluently and intelligently translated by Susan Wilf. Zhengguo's memoir. The memoir is a touching piece of literature that expresses a man's passion of reading volumes of literature across different genres including poetry, foreign fiction, warfare classics, adventure novels, and personal diligently kept diaries (Kang n.p). Zhengguo's experiences consist of extensive oppression and curtailing of personal freedoms to further entertain the freedom of mind and need to learn vastly. The conception of the oppressive regime in Communist China followed Mao Zedong's declaration that "reading of more books makes an individual more foolish" (Shapiro n.p). Therefore, leading to the burn of all schools, persecution, and death if China's intellectuals, and forcing teachers and students to lead a life among the peasants.

The memoir comprising of Zhengguo's experiences narrates his political misfortunes always being on the wrong side of the law and serving as the catalyst to misadventures bound to be experienced in his life. Zhengguo came into constant confrontation with authorities following his political will to defy the status quo and dare challenge the prevailing authority. This led to his

labeling as one of the "dregs of society" – a term used to refer to political dissident individuals in Communist China (Mirsky 3). The memoir reveals Zhenggou's deepest solace experienced in the failures of the society under an oppressive regime that curtailed the rise of intellectual Chinese and learning progress.

In his memoir, Kang explicitly narrates the ordeal experienced in prison for "sending a letter to Moscow University Library to borrow a book" (Mirsky 3). This prompted his arrest under the charges of "reactionary scheming to collude with the enemy" leading to being detained and sentenced to three years in labor camps (Mirsky 3). In prison, Zhenggou's memoirs reveal his ordeal for being under constant official surveillance and being subjected to brickyard where it was expected to provide labor in making of bricks. The involvements in student's protests led to Kang being labeled to assert "bad behavior" towards the Communist Party. "Bad behavior" in Communist China comprised of the behavior by an individual's defiance to the political structures and Communist authority.

The complications and misadventures experienced by Zhengou followed his involvement in supporting the student's protests on June 4, 1989, following Tiananmen demonstrations. The Tiananmen demonstrations culminated in the killing of thousands of students prompting further protests that Kang wore a banner pinned on his chest exhibiting the words "AIM YOUR GUNS HERE" (Kang n.p). The suffering and state punishment of China's citizens that dared defy the authorities followed severe measures in which one was subjected to labor camps in the lowest form of life. The punishment of one individual in the society attracted the wrath of the authority befalling his entire family. Thus, comprise the aspect that forced Zhenggou to forfeit his identity to ensure that no other member of his family would suffer on his account and mistakes.

Cultural Revolution in Communist China – the 1960s and '70s

Neuhauser (3) analyzes the cultural revolution in Communist China to have prevailed in the defiance of the Party's authority and order. The change of tact attracts diverse agitation and defiance from the society demanding the re-organization of the economic structures. The peasants and those subjected to labor camps questioned the authorities' punishment in China undermining the social mobility of the society. Zhenggou in his memoir questions the value of labor and if it was so glorious questions why the peasants were given the dirty work in the society while the ruling class could not do the work themselves. The discontent on part lines impacted to the increase of cultural revolutions that determined who ought to be punished or not in the society.

The subjection of people in carrying out oppressive activities such as using the shoulder pole to carry two buckets of water questioned the entire structure laid out for the functionality of the society. The point of punishing the entire family line on the account of the mistakes of one individual is a questionable course. The act questions the grounds in which the political authority determines the guilt of an individual based on another's actions. Consequently, prompt the need to defy the existing regime's authority and legitimacy to structure society.

Perry (111) the role of emotion is a critical feature that has influenced "attitudes and actions of the state authorities as well, as ordinary citizens alike". The tool is applicable to influence the social structure, organization of the governance, and ideological values in the Maoist and Post-Mao era (Meisner 8). The mass mobilization of emotions leading to a full-blown revolution was experienced on the student movement following the Tiananmen massacre of 1989 (Yang 89). As a part of counterrevolutionary events, Zhengou in his memoir was arrested again as part of the state's crackdown to enhance state security. On the contrary, this served as a major blow to the state's efforts following the questioning of the state's role in

nuisance and worthless snooping on citizens. The lack of freedom to exercise any course freely proved to be a major impediment to the Communist China functionality and inefficacy of China's Communist Party.

Perception and Analysis of the Material

On reading Kang Zhenggou's confessions memoir, I found it to exhibit fascinating experiences in Communist China. The history of Communist China is one that denied the citizens every opportunity to defy the existing authorities and political party power structures. The denial of learning prospects in Mao Zedong's era is the darkest point of the history of Chinese history (Meisner 8). The oppression of its own citizens, Communist China can be argued to have curtailed the potential of its own citizens. The need to agree and comply with the prevailing laws undermines the opportunity for progress where citizens remain illiterate and unaware of what is happening in the society.

Therefore, Zhenggou's memoir is a poignant piece that illustrates the ordeal of the citizens in an oppressive regime and lack of political space. Also, the regime denies the society the space to progress as it does not allow the literacy of its citizens. As well, Communist China history is characterized by the suffering of citizens on the basis of baseless cases and politically instigated punishment of the lower class in the society. The binding of political elite can only survive in the point where the ordinary citizens remain in the dark and compliance with unfounded authority. Thus, a paramount failure was almost certainly on the Communist China authority.

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