

Rock 'N' Roll in Post-Mao China

后毛中国的摇滚音乐

Fall Semester, 2013 TCNJ

Instructor: Dr. Jiayan Mi

Class Time: Tuesday 5:30-8:20 p.m.

Place: Bliss Hall 235

Office: Bliss Hall 218; Office Phone: 609-771-2468

Office Hours: T 3:00-5:00 p.m. and by appointment

Email: mi@tcnj.edu

Useful Chinese Rock 'N' Roll Websites:

http://wiki.rockinchina.com/w/Main_Page

http://www.cuijian.com/ENGLISH/Pages/main_interface.html

<http://www.rockbj.com/>

I. Course Objective

This course seeks to study the Rock 'n' Roll music and culture that emerged in the Post-Mao Mainland China from the early 1980s to the present. By situating Chinese Rock (C-rock) in the dramatically changing historical, cultural and political context, the seminar examines critically how Rock 'n' Roll music shapes the heterogeneous identity of Post-Mao and Post-socialist China. Through careful analysis of the lyrics, musical style, MTV and films, the seminar explores topics such as rebellious youth culture and political ideology, influence of Western music and traditional Chinese music, underground subculture and urban space, transgressive passion and censorship, band culture, performance poetics and global capital, and, gender, sexuality and body identity.

II. Required Textbooks

1. Andrew F. Jones, *Like a Knife: Ideology and Genre in Contemporary Chinese Popular Music* (Cornell UP, 1992)
2. Nimrod Baranovitch, *China's New Voices: Popular Music, Ethnicity, Gender, and Politics, 1978-1997* (UC Press 2003)
3. Jonathan Campbell, *Red Rock: The Long, Strange March of Chinese Rock & Roll* (Earnshaw Books 2011)

Reference Books (reserved in school library under the course title)

1. Jeroen de Kloet. *China with a Cut: Globalization, Urban Youth and Popular Music* (Amsterdam UP, 210).
2. Jian-ying Zha, *China Pop: How Soap Operas, Tabloids, and Bestsellers Are Transforming a Culture* (The New Press, 1995)
3. Dennis Rea, *Live at the Forbidden City: Musical Encounters in China and Taiwan* (iUniverse 2006)

4. Geremie R. Barme, *In the Red: On Contemporary Chinese Culture* (Columbia UP, 1999)
5. Orville Schell, *Mandate of Heaven* (A Touchstone Book, 1994)
6. Marc L. Moskowitz, *Cries of Joy, Songs of Sorrow: Chinese Pop Music and Its Cultural Connotations* (University of Hawaii Press, 2009)

Suggested readings for further research online: Qian Wang, [The Crisis of Chinese rock in the Mid-1990s: Weakness in Form or Weakness in Content](#)

Dissertation Online: [http://wiki.rockinchina.com/w/The_Crisis_of_Chinese_Rock_in_the_mid-1990s: Weakness in Form or Weakness in Content](http://wiki.rockinchina.com/w/The_Crisis_of_Chinese_Rock_in_the_mid-1990s:_Weakness_in_Form_or_Weakness_in_Content)

III. Course Requirements

1. Complete all assigned reading assignments in a timely fashion before the class.
2. Group presentation of the songs/singers covered in each week (see below).
3. Weekly response reviews of the songs/MTVS screened in class posted to the Threaded Discussion Board on SOCS at least **Two Days** before the class (minimal 200-400 words; you must address (1) the overall issues/themes of the lyrics, vocal delivery, instrumentality and performance /visual style of the assigned songs; and (2) analyze specifically One or Two of your favorite songs).
4. THREE short papers (minimal 3-4 pages) on topics covered in each section.
5. One creative project to be presented on the last day of the class meeting (see below).
6. One final research paper (around 10 pages) based on the given topics or determined in consultation with the instructor. You can incorporate **ONE** of your short essays into your final essay.
7. Your critical and consistent contribution to class discussion.

The paper assignments are designed to help you learn the art of researching a scholarly project: to read through primary and secondary sources; to identify important topics of debate and discussion in the discipline; to create your own topic for exploration within the context of those discussions and debates; and then to research and write a paper which demonstrates mastery of sources, theories, and methodologies. The papers are also designed to help you distinguish between research and mere reporting. I expect to meet with you as you draft your papers in order to help guide you through your research and writing. Some class time will be devoted to such important lessons as the crafting of thesis statements, the use of topic sentences, the construction of arguments, and the citing and framing of sources. The feedback assignments, which explore various topics between major assignments, consist of one-to-two page papers that will be turned as indicated. In addition, everyone will be expected to make a 20-minute oral presentation, a ten-minute response to a presentation, and an end-of-course presentation. You will have an opportunity to choose topics for presentations and responses during our fourth class meeting.

Presentations and responses will be evaluated for their clarity, originality, research, and rhetorical effectiveness. Papers will be evaluated based on clarity and focus of argument and effectiveness in your use of primary and secondary sources in support of your thesis. In addition, your papers will be graded for style and mechanics. Sloppy writing and proofreading will adversely affect your grade, so write and revise with care. Unexcused late papers will be

penalized, so please turn in your papers *ON TIME* – at the *start* of class *in class* on the day due. You will receive a reserve reading list along with this syllabus. You will be expected to consult and use, but by no means restrict yourself to, these sources as you write your papers and prepare your presentations. In addition, you will be expected to document properly your use of sources using Chicago or MLA style. *The Chicago Manual of Style* (15th ed.) and the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (6th ed.) are available in the Reference Room of TCNJ Library.

IV. Small Group Presentation

This class will be a seminar-oriented format which is a combination of mini-lecture, discussion, and small group presentation. The seminar is, above all, a gathering of equals, in which everyone has an equal right to be heard and an equal responsibility for keeping the seminar working properly. Three students will work collaboratively to give a presentation based on the group's assigned songs. Presentations are not graded as individual endeavors, so I encourage you to work together to make them successful.

In each presentation, three aspects must be covered: (A) background knowledge of the singers and the reception of the songs; (B) major themes and critical issues of the songs; (C) the *Mise-en-scène* (the shot and the cut), the cinematography and the spectatorship of the MTVs.

Presentation must be conducted in Power-Point with well-organized screen captures/grabs.

You will introduce the class to your assigned songs by accomplishing the following things:

1. Review of the relevant biographical, social, political and historical context/background that shapes the songs.
2. Identify and provide strong thematic and theoretical issues that can bring insights to the understanding of the songs.
3. Generate thought-provoking questions for discussion.
4. An innovative approach to the songs—an interactive teaching strategy or exercise that engaged the class.
5. A discussion period in which the group engages the class with organized and well-informed teaching methodology
6. **Before your presentation, a mandatory meeting with the instructor must be scheduled** (This meeting usually lasts for about ten minutes and is held after the class. So presenters may just stay after the class is dismissed.).
7. Grading of your presentation based on four aspects: (1) your identification and discussion of the critical issues in the songs; (2) the effective and compelling screen captures in accordance with the themes/issues of the songs; (3) active interaction with class; (4) team collaboration and power-point layout.

V. Attendance and Office Conferences

The success of any course depends, in large part, on the willingness of the participants to attend each class, to read the materials in a timely fashion, to share their observations and reflections with others, and to respond openly and critically to the comments of others. Failure to heed any of these expectations will affect not only your own education and final grades, but also the whole class performance. We expect that everyone who enrolls in this course is eager to partake in this "discussion format." When in an emergency or illness, it is your responsibility to notify the instructor before your absence.

Students will be judged by their performance in class. **Any absence is considered as no participation on the absent day.** Since later arrivals disrupt discussions, three late arrivals will count as an absence. Leaving the class early before the class is finished is also disruptive and, if you do so, it will count as a late arrival. So come to the class prepared to stay the full time and come on time.

The classroom will be highly student-centered. What this means is that the instructor will be doing very little in the way of explaining or lecturing. Rather, classroom learning will be achieved mainly through group/pair work, role playing, interview, debate and other activities geared toward your active production of the Chinese music. So, it is very important to study the material and listen to the songs for a given day before coming to class.

Attendance policy: <http://policies.tcnj.edu/policies/digest.php?docId=8162>

VI. Class Participation Scoring Guide

5 Students always take a voluntary, thoughtful, and active role in their own learning, challenging themselves on a daily basis. Through participation and inquiry, they consistently demonstrate a genuine desire to learn and share ideas with the teacher and their classmates. They initiate discussions, ask significant questions, and act as leaders within the group. They are willing to take risks, to assert an opinion and support it, and to listen actively to others. These students are always well prepared to contribute to the class as a result of having thoughtfully completed assignments, and the thoroughness of their work demonstrates the high regard they hold for learning.

4 Students consistently take an active role in their own learning. They participate regularly in class discussions and frequently volunteer their ideas, ask thoughtful questions, and defend opinions. They listen respectfully to their classmates and are willing to share ideas as a result of having completed assignments. Though never causing disruption to the class, these students do not always demonstrate a consistent commitment to make the most out of our class time each and every day.

3 Students sometimes take an active role in their own learning, sharing relevant ideas and asking appropriate questions. Although reluctant to take risks, they contribute regularly to class discussions. These students listen to their classmates and respect their opinions. As a result of having completed assignments, these students are prepared to answer questions when called upon. They may need occasional reminders to stay on task, to make the most of our class time, and to increase their level of commitment to the course.

2 Students occasionally take an active role in their own learning. They participate and ask questions infrequently. They hesitate to share their ideas or to take risks, and they may not always listen to or respect the opinions of others. These students usually participate only when called upon. As a result of assignments being sometimes incomplete or missing, they may not be prepared to answer thoughtfully with detail or substance. These students need regular reminders to stay on task, and a conference with the teacher and parent(s) is required to re-establish the expectations for participation.

1 Students rarely take an active role in their own learning. They often do not participate and rarely share ideas or ask questions. These students display poor listening skills, and they may be

intolerant of the opinions of others. As a result of being unprepared for or disengaged from class, these students often refuse to offer ideas even when called upon. These students are more of a liability than an asset to the overall progress of the class, and a conference with the grade-level administrator and parent(s) is required to re-establish classroom expectations and identify clear consequences for inappropriate participation.

VII. Course Evaluations

The course will be graded on the following criteria:

1. Class performance/contributions 15%
2. Presentations and response reviews 15%
3. Creative Project 10%
4. Short papers 30 %
5. Final paper 30 %

VIII. Mentoring:

You will be expected to meet with me regularly during the semester for guidance and advice on your papers and to discuss your progress in the course and your academic adjustment to life at TCNJ.

Class Schedules (Other assignments to be announced separately):

- Week 1 T 8/27
Introduction to Course: Issues and Approaches in Context
Film Screen: Mabel Cheung, *Beijing Rocks* (2001)
Required readings: History of Rock in China
(http://wiki.rockinchina.com/w/History_of_Rock_in_China)
Tim Brace, pp. 115-127 from “Resources” on SOCS
- Week 2 **No Classes (Monday’s Class)**
- Week 3 T 9/10
Listen to Cui Jian’s album “ROCK’N’ROLL ON THE NEW LONG MARCH” (1989)
Lyrics Online: http://www.cuijian.com/ENGLISH/Pages/main_interface.html

Required readings: Andrews Jones, pp. 1-63; pp. 91-113
Jonathan Campbell, pp. 7-65
Jonathan Matusitz, “Semiotics of Music: Analysis of Cui Jian's “Nothing to My Name,” the Anthem for the Chinese Youths in the Post-Cultural Revolution Era”
Read PDF online: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1540-5931.2010.00735.x/pdf>
- Week 4 T 9/17
Listen to Cui Jian’s album “SOLUTION” (1991)
Lyrics Online: http://www.cuijian.com/ENGLISH/Pages/main_interface.html
Required readings: Jones, pp. 115-149

Jonathan Campbell: pp. 71-88

Week 5 T 9/24 Film Screen: Zhang Yuan, *Beijing Bastard* (1993)
Round Table Seminar
Nimrod Baranovitch, pp. 1-53

#1 Short Paper due

Week 6 T 10/1
Listen to Cui Jian's album "BALLS UNDER THE RED FLAG" (1994)
Lyrics Online: http://www.cuijian.com/ENGLISH/Pages/main_interface.html

Required readings: David Stokes, "Popping the myth of Chinese rock," pp. 32-48
from "Resources" on SOCS
Nimrod Baranovitch, pp. 190-272

Week 7 T 10/8
Listen to Cui Jian's album "THE POWER OF THE POWERLESS" (1998)
Lyrics Online: http://www.cuijian.com/ENGLISH/Pages/main_interface.html

Listen to Cui Jian's album "SHOW YOU COLOUR" (2005)
Lyrics Online: http://www.cuijian.com/CHINESE/Pages/main_interface.html

Week 8 10/15 Tang Dynasty (10 songs)
Required reading: Jiayan Mi, "The Visually Imagined Communities" on SOCS
Jonathan Campbell: pp. 91-138

Week 9 T 10/22 Listen to songs from Dou Wei (11 songs)
Required readings: Nimrod Baranovitch, pp. 108-144

Week 10 T 10/29 **Fall Break! No Classes!**

#2 Short Paper Due

Week 11 T 11/5 Songs from He Yong and Zhang Chu (10 songs)

Week 12 T 11/12 Songs from Zang Tianshuo/Xie Tianxiao/Wang Feng/Wan Xiaoli
PK 14/Zheng Jun (10 songs)

Week 13 T 11/19 Songs from Women rock 'n' roll singers. (20 songs)

Hang on the Box (<http://shmag.cn/feature/shock/> <http://edge.neocha.com/zh>).

Required readings: Nimrod Baranovitch, pp. 144-189; 247-268

Week 14 T 11/26 Film Screen: Kevin Fritz, *Wasted Orient* (2007) or
Karen Winther, *Rock Heart Beijing*

Listen to songs from various bands (pick 10 out of 40 songs)

Required reading: Nimrod Baranovitch, pp. 54-107

Jonathan Campbell: pp. 141-257

Suggested Reading: Maureen Fan, "Punks and Posers in China."

Online: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/08/08/AR2006080801548.html>

#3 Short Paper Due

Happy Thanksgiving Break! No Classes! 感恩节快乐!

Week 15 T 12/3

Creative Project Presentation

****** Final Research Papers Due: Monday, December 9**
(Please drop them off in my office BL 218)

❖ Study Guide to Understanding and Analysis of Rock ‘N’ Roll Music

1. Lyrics

- a) What are the song’s major themes? Does it tell a story? Suggested topical classifications: romance, love, sex, alienation/justice, introspection, identity crisis, quest, anxiety, rock/pop music, and others.
- b) Is there an explicit or underlying political or cultural message?
- c) Aesthetical value of the words, metaphors and images

2. Music

- a) Ensemble: What instruments are present?
- b) Rhythmic emphasis: What is the dominant beat? What instrument or instruments carry the beat?
- c) Vocal Style: What words would you use to describe the vocal delivery? What musical styles does this vocal style come from?
- d) Instrumental Solo: Is there an instrumental solo (generally defined as an improvised melody in the absence of lyrics of one verse or more in duration)? What is its stylistic derivation?
- d) Harmonic Structure: What chords are present?

3. Artistic History

What are the important elements of the artist’s personal history and career that enhance your understanding of the music? This information can be divided into three areas:

- a) Psychological, social, and economic conditions during youth;
- b) Musical history; and
- c) Important career landmarks
- d) Important musical influences

4. Societal Context

How did the surrounding political and cultural climates influence the artists and their work? This information can be divided into four areas:

- a) youth culture and its relationship to society;
- b) cultural and political movements, including civil and human rights movements, countercultural alternatives, peace and antiwar movements, environmental movements;
- c) the music industry and its current point of development
- d) fandom and media

5. Stance

Which elements of the artist’s live performances and public actions or behaviors provide us with a clearer understanding of the music itself?

6. Musical Videos

What kind visual narrative is created for the song? Any particular camera work, lighting and moods and cinematography involved? Which one is more dominant, the visuals or the music? See more in Alf Bjornberg’s essay on “Structural Relationships of Music and Images in Music Video.”

❖ Grading Rubric

Grading papers is an art, not a science. The following table, therefore, provides guidelines only. It breaks down the course's grading criteria into four categories: argument, evidence, style, and mechanics. These are not, however, entirely discrete categories, and, in fact, your performance in one area may very well affect your performance in another. For example, readers may have difficulty grasping your argument if they have to struggle to understand the sentences that convey it. Sometimes an overwhelmingly good or bad performance in one area may outweigh other factors.

CRITERIA GRADE	ARGUMENT	EVIDENCE	STYLE	MECHANICS/ GRAMMAR
A	Argument clearly stated at beginning and developed logically throughout the paper to a conclusion. Paragraphs organized around concepts with strong topic sentences. Argument is bold, fresh, and compelling.	Extensive and varied factual evidence supports argument. No significant omissions, irrelevancies, or errors of fact. Quoted and paraphrased material is introduced fluidly, with varying and helpful framing.	Excellent prose style: clear, elegant, persuasive. Language and phrasing are precise and, in some cases, memorable. Writer has an identifiable and coherent voice.	Minimal errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc.
B	Argument generally clear, but some digressions or failures to develop fully to a conclusion. Papers in the B-/C+ range generally have a routine argument, one that rehashes class discussion rather than breaking new ground.	Generally good evidence, but some lack of variety of sources, errors of omission, and/or irrelevant data. Quoted and paraphrased material is framed properly, though at times mechanically.	Clear, serviceable prose that does not obscure understanding. Writer has used varying sentence patterns, although the sentences lack the rhythm and precision of an A paper. Writer's voice is emerging.	Occasional errors such as typographical errors, spelling mistakes, and inappropriate use of the passive voice.
C	Argument is implied, but not explicitly stated and/or not well developed to a conclusion. When organized, paragraphs and topic sentences emphasize sequence (time, scenes, etc.) rather than concepts. Unnecessary plot summary. These papers often recognize an image or thematic pattern and display that pattern, but do not advance an argument.	Some evidence, but excessive dependence on a single scene or source, substantial omissions or irrelevancies, and/or minor errors of fact. Quoted and paraphrased materials are dropped into the text without adequate attribution or framing.	Understandable writing, but sometimes vague, wooden, or choppy. Sentences are haphazardly constructed, giving the impression that the writer has little control.	Repeated, significant errors which detract from overall effect of paper or suggest a wavering commitment to the assignment.*

D	Argument is barely discernable and/or poorly developed.	Very little, or largely irrelevant evidence, and/or substantial errors of fact. Problems in quoted and paraphrased material ranging from misquotations to passages that arouse suspicions of plagiarism.	Writing is confusing, vague, and/or hard to understand.	Frequent and serious errors which make paper hard to understand or suggest a profound lack of commitment to the assignment.*
F	No discernable argument or paper totally digresses from argument.	Virtually no relevant evidence and/or very serious errors of fact. Problems in quoted and paraphrased material that indicate irrelevance or plagiarism.	Writing is nearly unintelligible.	Massive errors which render paper nearly unintelligible.*

*Note: At this level, my response to errors in mechanics, grammar, spelling, and diction will be targeted, not comprehensive.

Students who clearly do not understand a grammatical or stylistic principle (e.g., passive voice, comma splice) will not be markedly penalized before the problem is noted; once the instructor has explained the principle (in class, in office hours, or in comments on a paper), repetition of these errors in future assignments may significantly reduce students' grades.

Policy on Religious Holidays: If you will be observing any religious holidays this semester which will prevent you from attending a regularly scheduled class or interfere with your fulfilling any course requirement, inform your instructor of the dates of your religious holiday(s) within two weeks of the beginning of the semester or immediately if your holiday is near the beginning of the semester so that we may make appropriate alternative plans.

Policy on Cell Phones and Pagers: *Cell phones and pagers must be turned off during class* except with special permission from your instructor.

RELEVANT COLLEGE-WIDE POLICIES APPLICABLE TO OUR COURSE

Academic Integrity:

Please consult the college-wide policy on Academic Integrity. Information on the policy is at: Academic Integrity policy: <http://policies.tcnj.edu/policies/digest.php?docId=7642> Any and all violations of academic integrity will be reported to the Academic Integrity Officer for Culture and Society.

Final Exam Policy

Final Evaluations are an important component of the high-quality and rigorous educational experience at The College of New Jersey. All courses are to have a final evaluation that takes place during final exam period. The time designated as the "final exam period" contains both reading days and final exam days. For more information please go to:

<http://www.tcnj.edu/~academic/policy/finaevaluations.htm>.

Attendance Policy

Every student is expected to participate in each of his/her courses; the attendance and class participation policies for this course are spelled out in detail above. For more information, please view the College's attendance policy at:

<http://www.tcnj.edu/~academic/policy/attendance.html>.

Differing Abilities

The College of New Jersey is committed to ensuring equal opportunity and access to all members of the campus community in accordance with Section 503/504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). The College prohibits discrimination against any student, employee, or applicant on the basis of physical or mental disability, or perceived disability. The College will provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations to enable employees and students to participate in the life of the campus community. Individuals with disabilities are responsible for reporting and supplying documentation verifying their disability. Requests for accommodations must be initiated through the Office of Differing Abilities Services. For more information on differing abilities please see the Differing Abilities website:

Americans with Disabilities Act policy: <http://affirm.pages.tcnj.edu/key-documents/>

Plagiarism and Academic Honesty: All students are expected to be familiar with, and adhere to, the College's policies regarding [academic integrity](#) as well as the definition and description of plagiarism on the College's [Writing Program homepage](#). Technical plagiarism (i.e., sloppy, incomplete, or erroneous citation of consulted materials) can result in failure of an assignment. Instances of suspected academic dishonesty will be dealt with in conjunction with the College's Office of Academic Integrity.

School Tutoring Center website: <http://tutoringcenter.pages.tcnj.edu/>