

**Summer Assignment 2016: WORLD LITERATURE**

"In the [novel] *To Live*, a man and his family experience the effects of historical events on their own lives while living in China from the 1940s until the late 1970s. [You will] have the opportunity to contemplate historical events not as they affect the elite and high-level political or diplomatic players, but rather as they influence the lives of ordinary in a community in China [Remember] not to generalize the events in the [novel] as representative of all Chinese lives during this era in China's history. The events are artistic representations and reflections upon significant events during this period. The title resonates with *entendre*: it is at once a key theme ... the struggle in which the characters are caught, and the essential motivating force of the characters."

**Glossary of Terms:**

**"barefoot doctors"** – farmers who received minimal basic medical and paramedical training and worked in rural villages in the People's Republic of China. Their purpose was to bring health care to rural areas where urban-trained doctors would not settle.

**Cadre** - a public official holding a responsible or managerial position, usually full time, in party and government. A cadre may or may not be a member of the CCP, although a person in a sensitive position would almost certainly be a party member.

**Chinese Communist Party (CCP)** - also called **Communist Party of China (CPC)** - political party of China. Since the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the CCP has been in sole control of that country's government. The CCP was founded as both a political party and a revolutionary movement in 1921 by revolutionaries. The CCP joined with the Nationalist Party in 1924, and the alliance proved enormously successful at first. However, in 1927, after the Nationalists turned violently against the communists and ousted them from Shanghai, the CCP was driven underground.

**Counterrevolutionary** - anyone who opposes a revolution, particularly those who act after a revolution to try to overturn or reverse it, in full or in part.

**Great Leap Forward** - the campaign undertaken by the Chinese communists between 1958 and early 1960 to organize its vast population, especially in large-scale rural communes, to meet China's industrial and agricultural problems. The Chinese hoped to develop labor-intensive methods of industrialization, which would emphasize manpower rather than machines and capital expenditure.

**The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution** (1966 – 1976) - an upheaval launched by Chinese Communist Party Chairman Mao Zedong during his last decade in power to renew the spirit of the Chinese Revolution. Fearing that China would develop along the lines of the Soviet model and concerned about his own place in history, Mao threw China's cities into turmoil in a monumental effort to reverse the historic processes underway.

**Nationalists (GMD)** - Nationalist Party, also called Kuomintang - political party that governed all or part of mainland China from 1928 to 1949. Originally a revolutionary league working for the overthrow of the Chinese monarchy, the Nationalists became a political party in the first year of the Chinese republic (1912). The party participated in the first Chinese parliament, which was soon dissolved by a coup d'état (1913). The Nationalist Party owed its early successes largely to Soviet aid and advice and to close collaboration with the Chinese communists (1924–27).

**People's Liberation Army** - Unified organization of China's land, sea, and air forces. It is one of the largest military forces in the world. The People's Liberation Army traces its roots to the 1927 Nanchang Uprising of the communists against the Nationalists. Initially called the Red Army, it grew under Mao Zedong and Zhu De from 5,000 troops in 1929 to 200,000 in 1933. Only a fraction of this force survived the Long March in retreat from the Nationalists.

**Landlord** - a person, especially a man, who rents land, a building, or an apartment to a tenant.

**Land reform campaign and Collectivization** - Mao believed in land redistribution, and knew that one way to overthrow old power structures was to divide and distribute the wealth and land of the "elite." Part of the Communist program to displace the old power holding elites and to share the land and wealth more equitably made individual landlords the targets of struggle sessions and purges. Many landlords were run out of their villages and others were killed. Sometimes individuals were charged with being counterrevolutionaries or rightists, which meant that they did not support the aims of the new revolutionary rule, or perhaps had been affiliated with the Nationalists. As a result, many peasant households held the deed for their piece of land for the first time ever. A new element that was introduced in 1950 was the provision that the development of agricultural production resulting from this would pave the way for the industrialization of China.

**Red Guards** - groups of militant university and high school students formed into paramilitary units as part of the Cultural Revolution (1966–76). These young people often wore green jackets similar to the uniforms of the Chinese army at the time, with red armbands attached to one of the sleeves. They were formed under the auspices of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in 1966 in order to help party chairman Mao Zedong combat "revisionist" authorities—i.e., those party leaders Mao considered as being insufficiently revolutionary.

**"sent down youth"** - the young people who—beginning in the 1950s until the end of the Cultural Revolution, willingly or under coercion—left the urban districts of the People's Republic of China to live and work in rural areas

### 1. Read the article, "Interview with Yu Hua" by Michael Standaert from the University of Iowa's International Writing Program.

[http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic152447.files/Yu\\_Hua\\_Interview\\_Staendert.pdf](http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic152447.files/Yu_Hua_Interview_Staendert.pdf)

### 2. Read *To Live* by Yu Hua.

### 3. Complete a chart tracing symbolism as you read. A minimum of six. (sample below)

### 4. ACTIVITY: Propaganda posters

Propaganda posters became a prevalent form of social indoctrination and a sanctioned form of artistic expression from the 1950s until the late 1970s.

- Choose a powerful and symbolic scene from the novel for your poster guided by the glossary of terms above.
- Describe the scene to be depicted in the poster in very concrete terms first.
  - *For example: I see a working man carrying a bucket, a woman wearing red, also working and smiling, and a large building under construction in the distance.*
- Imagine the purpose of the poster. Some posters have captions, others do not.
- Having determined a probable purpose for the poster, analyze what might make it effective as propaganda for a social campaign.
- Create an original poster.
- Write a "brief and thoughtful explanation of 1) why you created the image the way you did AND 2) how the image conveys [that] meaning to the country."
  - A well-developed paragraph
  - Edited for grammar & usage
- Upload your Propaganda Poster to itslearning by Tuesday, September 6, 2016.

**See the following web page for examples of global propaganda posters and the meanings behind them:**

<https://designschool.canva.com/blog/examples-of-propaganda/>

**On the first day of class bring:**

- a copy of Standaert 's article
- a copy of *To Live*
- a printed copy of your analytical chart of symbols from the novel
- your Propaganda Poster and paragraph

SYMBOL	SIGNIFICANCE OF SYMBOL	TEXTUAL EVIDENCE (DIRECT QUOTES) – include page number
		1.
		2.
		3.
		1.
		2.
		3.
		1.
		2.
		3.



