



Red-Color News Soldier

By Li Zhensheng

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The Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) remains one of the most catastrophic and complicated political movements of the twentieth century. Almost no visual documentation of the period exists and that which does is biased due to government control over media, arts and cultural institutions. Red-Color News Soldier is a controversial visual record of an infamous, misunderstood period of modern history that has been largely hidden from the public eye, both within China and abroad. Li Zhensheng (b.1940) - a photo journalist living in the northern Chinese province of Heilongjiang - managed, at great personal risk, to hide and preserve for decades over 20,000 stills. As a party-approved photographer for The Heilongjiang Daily, he had been granted unusual access to capture events during the Cultural Revolution. This account has remained unseen until now, except for some eight photographs that were released for publication in 1987. Red-Color News Soldier includes over 400 photographs and a running diary of Li's experience. The images are powerful representations of the turbulent period, including photographs of unruly Red Guard rallies and relentless public denunciations and Mao's rural re-education centres, as well as portraits prominent participants in the Cultural Revolution. Jonathan Spence, Yale Professor and pre-eminent historian of modern China, presents a rigorous introduction. In it, he states: 'Li was tracking human tragedies and personal foibles with a precision that was to create an enduring legacy not only for his contemporaries but for the generations of his countrymen then unborn. As Westerners confront the multiplicity of his images, they too can come to understand something of the agonizing paradoxes that lay at the centre of this protracted human disaster.' This book excels as a volume of both compelling photography and riveting historical record. It is truly unique - in terms of both its artefactual value and its deconstruction - and indispensable for anyone interested in modern Chinese history or the powerful cultural role of photojournalism.

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Editorial Review

Review

'This collection of photos, taken by Li in the north-eastern province of Heilongjiang, where he worked for the official Communist party newspaper, is unique for a simple reason. Although the post-Mao Chinese government has labelled the cultural revolution "10 years of chaos", it still tries to suppress any real inquiry into the countless human tragedies it caused ... This remarkable book, which still cannot be published on the mainland, is a salutary reminder that, in the Chinese phrase, accounts have yet to be settled with the past.' (Guardian) 'An illuminating and unique photographic collection.' (Times Higher Education Supplement) 'Fascinating ... An excellent book.' (Amateur Photographer) 'Every shot is a harrowing legacy of the brutality, cruelty, and naivety of those times, when Mao and his followers sought to destroy all traces of the past.' (The Glasgow Herald) '...An extraordinary picture of one of the most bizarre, complex and catastrophic episodes in China's history.' (New Statesman) 'Li's photographs are remarkable for their dramatic impact, but are also composed with utmost precision.' (Financial Times) 'The interweaving of autobiography, images with a strong narrative structure and an illuminating tranche of contextual writing is what makes this book so revealing and so engaging.' (Morning Star) 'What distinguishes Mr. Li's collection of 30,000 negatives is that it shows in shocking detail what was happening at a grass-roots level in a remote Chinese province far from western eyes. His work also reflects the instincts of a journalist and the eye of an artist.' (The New York Times) 'The collection offers an astonishing and invaluable record of a decade of political zealotry that veered out of control and resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands.' (Publishers Weekly) 'Mr. Li's photos graphically capture the emotional pain of the humiliation inflicted by young punks on powerful men, governors and Communist Party first secretaries... Each photo is captioned with a description, and the collection is accompanied with Mr. Li's readable text describing the impact of the Cultural Revolution on his life.' (The Washington Times) 'The first complete photo history to present China's dark Cultural Revolution (1966-76) in all its inhumanity.' (Entertainment Weekly) 'This is a startling and unique perspective.' (The Christian Science Monitor) 'These images are rare and powerful reminders of events that might otherwise have been forgotten ... By capturing that decade of shame and destruction, and preserving it forever on paper, Li has challenged the world never to forget.' (Reader's Digest) 'A minutely documented (the 285 prints were gleaned from the tens of thousands of negatives Li hid under his floorboards), scrupulously honest (the book orders all the prints strictly chronologically, and all are uncropped) record of the revolution.' (The Atlantic Monthly) 'With Red-Color News Soldier...Li, now 63, has brought forth an unprecedented vision of this dark chapter in Chinese history.' (US News & World Report) 'Taken at enormous personal risk, the photographs collected here depict extraordinary events...It's their unadorned straightforwardness that makes Red Color News Soldier such a profoundly disturbing document.' (Photo District News) '[A] groundbreaking book.' (Newsweek International) 'A straightforward and open account of that era giving valuable insight into a tormented period of history.' (The Asian Review of Books on the Web) 'One of the great events of the 20th Century at last is found to have received coherent visual expression. Moreover, it's the only complete record of the Cultural Revolution known to exist. It is impossible to overrate the historical value of this densely packed volume.' (The Chicago Tribune) 'Li Zhensheng's disturbing photographs of the rise and fall of Mao's Cultural Revolution are a truly stunning achievement...A brilliant book!' (Worldview) '...[O]ne of the most important photo books in recent memory.' (American Photo) 'Red-Color News Soldier documents the spectacular nitty-gritty of everyday totalitarian fanaticism, with pictures culled from the thousands taken by photojournalist Li Zhensheng in the mid 1960s...The trove of negatives hidden for two decades below the floorboards of his house constitute the single most extensive record of the Cultural Revolution.' (The Village Voice) 'One of the most unforgettable books of the past year...It is utterly engrossing, even when you can barely look at it.' (Slate)

About the Author

Li Zhensheng was born in Dalian, China, in 1940. After studying film, he joined The Heilongjiang Daily as a photojournalist in 1963 and documented the Chinese Cultural Revolution in its entirety. In 1987, a collection of 20 of his photos were released, bearing the title *Let History Tell the Future*, and won the Grand Prize at China's National Press Association Photo Competition. Since 1996 he has been a visiting scholar, lecturing on the Cultural Revolution at the universities of Harvard and Princeton. His work has appeared in major magazines worldwide including *Time*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *Der Spiegel*, and *Le Nouvel Observateur*. Jonathan Spence is Sterling Professor of History at Yale University. He is the author of a distinguished body of work on the history of modern China, including the seminal book, *The Search for Modern China* (1990). His book *The Gate of Heavenly Peace: The Chinese and Their Revolution 1895-1980* (1981) was awarded the Los Angeles Times Book Prize for History. Spence was named a MacArthur Fellow in 1988 and is established as one of the foremost experts on the history and culture of modern China.

Users Review

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Suzanne Jensen:

The book *Red-Color News Soldier* make you feel enjoy for your spare time. You need to use to make your capable a lot more increase. Book can to become your best friend when you getting strain or having big problem with the subject. If you can make examining a book *Red-Color News Soldier* to be your habit, you can get far more advantages, like add your own capable, increase your knowledge about many or all subjects. You are able to know everything if you like available and read a e-book *Red-Color News Soldier*. Kinds of book are several. It means that, science e-book or encyclopedia or other folks. So , how do you think about this reserve?

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Jeremy Robinson:

In this era globalization it is important to someone to obtain information. The information will make a professional understand the condition of the world. The condition of the world makes the information quicker to share. You can find a lot of personal references to get information example: internet, classifieds, book, and soon. You will see that now, a lot of publisher that will print many kinds of book. The particular book that recommended to you is Red-Color News Soldier this e-book consist a lot of the information of the condition of this world now. This kind of book was represented just how can the world has grown up. The terminology styles that writer value to explain it is easy to understand. Often the writer made some investigation when he makes this book. Honestly, that is why this book ideal all of you.

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