

In memory of Arif Dirlik (1940-2017)

CCS-CUHK students and staff - past and present - were saddened to hear that our colleague, teacher, mentor and friend passed away peacefully at home on 1 December. Prof. Dirlik was Professor of Chinese Studies at what was then the Centre for East Asian Studies from September 2007 to August 2009. He supervised RPg students, taught Chinese history on the MA programme, shared his research and his time, and enlivened the parties at the Centre!

"Ever since he was in the office right next to me here at CUHK in the year 2008-09, I have felt close to him, and looked up to him as a model, both for his political astuteness and clarity about China--they led me to invite him to participate in the *Modern Chinese Religion* project here in 2012--but also for his incredible kindness and helpfulness to students. Great scholar that he was, he always had a luxurious amount of time for students, including students that were not necessarily the best. Truly admirable!"

John Lagerwey (Full/Research Professor, 2008-present)

"In the early years of the Centre, our numbers and our resources were limited, but our commitment to learning and teaching was wide and deep. Arif Dirlik stood firmly with John Lagerwey at the center of that commitment. I will remain forever grateful for that most peculiar moment in time, for having had the chance to know just a bit of Arif's great mind, and for the kindness he showed to those of us who still had so much to learn. Rest well, Arif."

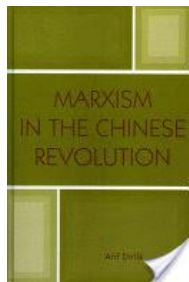
Ann Huss (Associate Director, 2006-11)

"I enjoyed his class a lot, and have always been grateful for the enlightening and joyful moments he brought to us. While it is a huge loss for Chinese studies and people who know him, Prof Dirlik lived a full life which few have experienced. And with that, I trust he could say goodbye to the world with no regret, and be remembered forever as a great scholar, professor and mentor."

Ma Yanli (MA, 2008-09)

"I will forever be grateful to his insightful analysis of China's ideology/ies and identity performances. May his soul rest in peace."

Sele Tembe (PhD, 2008-13)



"When I was a fresh PhD student at CUHK about ten years ago, I don't think I initially fully realized how lucky I was to have Professor Dirlik as one of my teachers. It was through sitting in his classes, reading his work and getting his input as I prepared my qualifying exam that I came to appreciate the sharpness of his mind, his ability to quickly find the weakness in almost any argument, and the frankness and wit with which he would deliver incisive comments. It was all slightly intimidating, to be honest! Professor Dirlik nevertheless compensated for this with a patience and helpfulness towards students that one would not usually expect from such a high-profile and outspoken scholar. He was certainly not one to believe in an afterlife, so this message is perhaps too late: thank you, Professor Dirlik, for being such a great person and teacher."

Kristof Van Den Troost (PhD, 2007-11)

"Last night [13 Nov] I attended a screening of "Raise the Umbrellas", a two-hour movie on the Occupy Central events of three years ago by a local documentary film maker whose name is Evans Chan. Suddenly, there was Arif, talking about how capitalism has taken over and undermined democracy everywhere, wondering if even in America we can still speak of the country as being democratic. At the end, Mr. Chan said that Arif had written to him not long ago, urging him to carry on." (Prof. John Lagerwey)

"Arif was a hugely formative figure, opening my mind to so many new ideas. His articles, books and lectures always stimulated, from 'modern' Chinese history to global capitalism, and the PRC to Hong Kong and Taiwan. He was the most wonderful PhD supervisor - always reading our efforts quickly, and offering encouragement and suggestions. His kindness and support extended well beyond his time at CUHK, up to his last months. The last time I saw him lecture was on 'The rise of China and the end of the world as we know it' at HKU in June 2016. As always, seeking to change the world, not just interpret it."

Tim Summers (PhD, 2008-11)



Photo courtesy of Sammy Li (MPhil, 2008-10)

Click [here](#) for a lecture by Prof. Dirlik at UBC, 2016