

Part I (50%)

Instruction: Read the following passage and answer the questions as directed.

The term ‘memory’ has become ubiquitous in recent historical writing. It is used to refer variously to historiography, to the subject matter of that historiography, and to an entire range of commemorative practices, both public and private, which constitute historical consciousness. This versatility and fluidity results in a degree of uncertainty of definition, however, and before embarking on a study of the ‘memory’ of the Great Famine, it is worth outlining two contrasting conceptions of memory which may be germane to such an inquiry.

The first and more familiar is the psychological one, the recollection of an individual, usually of events through which that person has lived. In historical writing, it is most often associated with oral history, whose practitioners have recorded the experiences, memories and life stories of individuals. A focus on individuals bring with it the problem of all microhistories, that of typicality. Oral historians have generally tackled this difficulty by taking testimony from a number of informants. Some have interviewed whole groups, such as villages, neighborhoods or the workers of a particular industry, while others have selected large numbers of scattered informants as representative of an overall population. Whatever the size of the group, however, the technique remains that of the interview aimed at recording the reminiscences of an individual.

If this first usage of memory emphasizes personal recollection, the second usage, which has become general only in recent decades, emphasizes memory as social representation. It studies the frameworks in which collectivities construct, embody and renew their shared sense of the past. These collectivities can range from small communities, whether urban or rural, through occupational groups, to nations or states. The most prominent studies of such memory deal with nations and states, and reflect a growing awareness of the public and political uses of history in the creation or evolution of nation-states, national communities and national identities. The shared memory which underlies or is created by nations is manifested in public commemoration and monuments, in state institutions such as national museums, and in official histories.

The drawback of these studies is that they have a tendency to emphasize the public or political aspects of memory, and consequently to treat memory as an extension or reflection of politics or ideology, equivalent to ‘political rhetoric about the past’. Their focus on public and official memory often leaves little room for informal or private opposition or appropriation, for the possibility that readers of historical texts or participants in public rituals may have quite different ideas about their meaning and significance.

1. Summarize the main ideas of the entire passage in your own words (around 200 words in length).

(20 %)

2. Write a critical response to the passage above in your opinion on the significance of collective memory as social representation. Use specific reasons and examples to support your statement. (30%)

Part II (50%)

Instructions: Read the following passage and answer the questions as directed.

Why the current boom in travel writing? One of the reasons is obvious: there is a greater degree of mobility in the world than ever before—a greater movement of ideas, goods, peoples; and an increasing accessibility to previously remote parts of the world owing to cheaper travel and the unprecedented expansion of worldwide transportation networks. Another reason, however, is diametrically opposed to this one: for those same globalizing processes that have helped make the world more accessible have also arguably made it less exciting, less diverse. The travel literature industry—and in this should be included both literary-minded travel narratives and more information-oriented travelogues and guidebooks—has been quick to cash in on Westerners' growing fears of homogenization, promoting its products as trilling alternatives to the sanitized spectacles of mass tourism; as evidence that the world is still heterogeneous, unfathomable, bewildering; as proof that the spirit of adventure can hold off the threat of exhaustion. In this sense, the travel (literature) business has capitalized on, while contributing to, a new *exotic*: a celebration of the modern spectacle of global cultural diversity that flies in the face of the very agency—the universal market of mass tourism—that does most to make such a spectacle, and its literary representation, possible.

It is no surprise to find, then, in a number of contemporary travel narratives, a heated defense of conventional traveler/tourist distinction. The distinction is, of course, highly specious: travelers, unlike tourists, are “nonexploitative” visitors, motivated not by the lazy desire for instant entertainment but by the hard-won battle to satisfy their insatiable curiosity about other countries and peoples. As Dean MacCannell and, more recently, James Buzard have demonstrated convincingly, this distinction has been manipulated by the tourist industry to serve its own commercial ends. For MacCannell, travelers' seemingly plaintive need to dissociate themselves from “mere” tourists functions as a strategy of self-exemption, whereby they displace their guilt for interfering with, and adversely changing, the cultures through which they travel onto tourists; see themselves as contributing toward the well-being of those cultures rather than as exploiting them for their own benefit; and view themselves as open-minded inquirers rather than as pleasure-seeking guests. The tourist industry profits from this rhetoric of moral superiority (MacCannell), using it to lure the adventure-minded traveler onto an alternative beaten track (Buzard). To see travel as merely another form of tourism is to recognize the increasing commodification of place; what travel writers offer in this context is not an insight into the “real,” but a curiosity that Paul Fussell, among others, has seen as an inducement to read travel narratives should by no

countercommodified version of what they take to be realty. The critical potential of travel writing—its capacity to expose and attack the invasive practices of mass tourism—is further diminished when it is recognized, not as an out-and-out opponent of tourism, but as a valuable adjunct to it. The armchair means be thought of as *replacing* the urge to travel; rather, travel writing sells while also helping to sell holidays. Nor are travel writers necessarily averse to taking their cut. Is it too cynical to suggest that many of today's travel writers are motivated less by the universal imperative of cultural inquiry than they are by the far more urgent need for another commission? Travel writing still remains lucrative only for a handful of recognized writers; many others ply a more moderate trade in largely part-time journalism. Nonetheless, contemporary travel writers, whatever their status or their institutional affiliation, are continuing to provide sterling service to tourism—about to become the world's largest industry—even when they might imagine themselves to be its most strident adversaries.

1. Translate the **First** paragraph of the passage above from English into Chinese. (20%)
2. Explain how and why the conventional traveler/tourist distinction is challenged by the commercial tourist industry. Support your argument with specific reasons and examples. (30%)