



by  
Herbig  
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## In the Wake of the Red Storm *Im Windschatten des roten Sturms*

### review

Spring 1967: Hans-Werner Gille was one of the few Western journalists who managed to obtain a Chinese visa and so was in the country during the Cultural Revolution. In his extraordinary new book, he revisits his records and asks what impact the Cultural Revolution has had on the country. The result is a detailed and comprehensive contemporary account with a wide frame of literary and political references.

Following the chronological sequence of his journey in 1967, Gille's account is arranged in brief episodes. He is an astute observer of the contradictions and complexities inherent in China's vast cultural, political and geographical scope, especially at this epoch of extremes. Yet he is careful not to reduce his experience to an encounter with an 'exotic' other. On the contrary, he is well informed with regards to Chinese art, music and artefacts. All this leaves the reader with a startled sense of the vastness of Mao's enterprise: to achieve total change in China, and to do it all at once.

Historians are still trying to gain a better grasp of Mao's Cultural Revolution and its excesses. This is a gripping account of the very moment the Cultural Revolution was at its peak.

### rights information

F. A. Herbig Verlagsbuchhandlung GmbH (Alemania)

Contacto: Sonja Schmidt

guarantee.

Tel: +49 89 29088 157

Email: [s.schmidt@herbig.net](mailto:s.schmidt@herbig.net)

[www.herbig.net](http://www.herbig.net)